



UNITED STATES ADVISORY COMMISSION ON PUBLIC DIPLOMACY

2015 Comprehensive Annual Report on Public Diplomacy and International Broadcasting

Focus on Fiscal Year 2014 Budget Data

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Edited by:

Katherine Brown, Ph. D.
Executive Director, U.S. Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy

Chris Hensman
Senior Advisor, U.S. Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy

Palak Bhandari
Summer Associate, U.S. Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy



The Views represented herein are those of the Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Commission's administrative home, the Department of State.

Executive Summary

The U.S. Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy continues to witness, in the U.S. and abroad, how increasingly relevant public diplomacy is to U.S. foreign policy. Modern public diplomacy strategies and tools are consistently being implemented with larger national security objectives in mind. Non-state actors are rapidly shaping the international system. We believe strongly that people, such as civil society leaders, journalists, youth, and religious leaders, cannot be excluded from the conduct of international relations. Forming relationships with critical foreign audiences requires commitment and patience, and the strategic investment of limited resources to inform, engage and influence foreign publics over the very long term.

ACPD's overarching and persistent concern, however, is whether or not the proper structures and processes are in place to support the strategic and long-term application of these programs. Ensuring that robust infrastructure exists at the State Department and Broadcasting Board of Governors requires consistent and tireless investment in the details: databases that can help personnel plan strategies and tactics, track their results, and use the feedback to course correct future activities; training programs to keep professionals sharp; and cutting-edge virtual and physical platforms to inform, and develop and maintain relationships with foreign citizens.

Per ACPD's congressional mandate, the 2015 Comprehensive Annual Report on Public Diplomacy and International Broadcasting Activities itemizes major public diplomacy and international broadcasting activities conducted by the State Department and the Broadcasting Board of Governors (BBG). It is based on data collected from the BBG, every public diplomacy Bureau at the State Department, six regional and 10 functional bureaus in the State Department, and Public Affairs Sections (PAS) at U.S. embassies worldwide. Two-thirds of this report serves as a reference document for worldwide strategies and tactics to advance U.S. foreign policy through information and engagement programs, divided by agency and global region. It includes the cost per participant for 84 academic, professional, youth, cultural and sports programs; the cost and focus of PD activities at roughly 180 missions

abroad; in addition to the cost and programs for 72 international broadcasting services. In FY 2014, the State Department spent \$1.069 billion of public diplomacy funding and the BBG spent \$733.5 million, amounting to \$1.803 billion. While this is an increase from the \$1.759 billion spent in FY 2013, it is still just 3.53 percent of the entire International Affairs Budget.

The 2015 report also offers an analysis section, which includes in-depth reviews of ACPD priority issues this past year (research and evaluation; openness and accessibility of American spaces; and the professional development of PD officers) and priorities for U.S. foreign policy (countering violent extremism; countering negative Russian influence in Europe and Central Asia; the young leaders initiatives in Africa, Southeast Asia and the Western Hemisphere; and international broadcasting in Africa).

Due to reform-minded leaders at the BBG and the State Department, ACPD has seen an improvement in the conduct of PD and international broadcasting in the short eight months since we released the 2014 report on Dec. 11, 2014. ACPD makes more than 20 recommendations in this 2015 report, which are meant to iteratively strengthen and modernize public diplomacy and broadcasting strategy and tactics. We believe strongly that in order to make a compelling argument to Congress and the American taxpayers for maintaining, if not increasing, investment in public diplomacy for the sake of U.S. national security, State Department PD offices' and the BBG's communication with the Hill on both progress and setbacks must deepen and expand, as should the evidence that these activities matter. Currently, both the State Department and BBG dedicate 1 percent or less of their budgets toward audience research, analytics, and process and impact evaluations; and there continues to be a deficit of research experts and methodologists on staff. ACPD continues to make it a priority to help advance the measurement and evaluation capacity at the State Department and the BBG so that understanding the outcomes of their work can become more systematic, and we can support Congress in understanding which programs best advance U.S. foreign policy goals and which fall short.

The Public Diplomacy & International Broadcasting Budgets

OVERALL STATE DEPARTMENT PUBLIC DIPLOMACY & BBG BUDGETS: FY 2013 – FY 2016

Public Diplomacy and international broadcasting continues to operate on compact budgets, although an increase in the FY 2014 actual D&CP and ECE combined budget of roughly \$24 million from FY 2013 is welcome, as well as the \$20 million increase at the BBG. The changes were largely consistent with increases in the overall International Affairs Budget, however. The percentage increase of these funds to the overall International Affairs (IA) budget, which is just 1 percent of the overall U.S. federal government budget, bounced slightly from 3.4 percent to 3.5 percent.

FY 2013 Actual

Diplomatic and Consular Programs (D&CP) - Public Diplomacy:	\$341.632 million
Diplomatic and Consular Programs (D&CP) - PD American Salaries:	\$130.136 million
Educational and Cultural Exchange (ECE):	\$574.000 million
State Department PD Combined:	\$1.045 billion
PD Percentage of Total State/USAID Budget:	2.14% of \$48.906 billion
Broadcasting Board of Governors:	\$713.486 million
Total State Department PD & BBG:	\$1.759 billion
PD & BBG Percentage of International Affairs Budget:	3.38% of \$52.019 billion

FY 2014 Actual

Diplomatic and Consular Programs (D&CP) - Public Diplomacy:	\$364.179 million
Diplomatic and Consular Programs (D&CP) - PD American Salaries:	\$129.312 million
Educational and Cultural Exchange (ECE):	\$574.439 million
State Department PD Combined:	\$1.070 billion
PD Percentage of Total State/USAID Budget:	2.28% of \$46.853 billion
Broadcasting Board of Governors:	\$733.480 million
Total State Department PD & BBG:	\$1.803 billion
PD & BBG Percentage of International Affairs Budget:	3.53% of \$51.011 billion

FY 2015 Planned

Diplomatic and Consular Programs (D&CP) - Public Diplomacy:	\$368.273 million
Diplomatic and Consular Programs (D&CP) - PD American Salaries:	\$133.029 million
Educational and Cultural Exchange (ECE):	\$589.900 million
State Department PD Combined:	\$1.091 billion
PD Percentage of Total State/USAID Budget:	2.14% of \$47.480 billion
Broadcasting Board of Governors:	\$742.067 million
Total State Department PD & BBG:	\$1.833 billion
PD & BBG Percentage of International Affairs Budget:	3.59% of \$51.009 billion

FY 2016 Request

Diplomatic and Consular Programs (D&CP) - Public Diplomacy:	\$397.115 million
Diplomatic and Consular Programs (D&CP) - PD American Salaries:	\$134.634 million
Educational and Cultural Exchange (ECE):	\$623.079 million
State Department PD Combined:	\$1.155 billion
PD Percentage of Total State/USAID Budget:	2.30% of \$50.278 billion
Broadcasting Board of Governors:	\$751.500 million
Total State Department PD & BBG:	\$1.906 billion
PD & BBG Percentage of International Affairs Budget:	3.47% of \$54.954 billion

DIPLOMATIC AND CONSULAR PROGRAMS PUBLIC DIPLOMACY FY 2014 BUDGET - BY MISSION

Mean: \$1,935,019, Standard Deviation: \$1,538,425.64 (Excluding Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Iraq)

*Afghanistan, Pakistan and Iraq Budget Figures Include Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO) Funding

	Country Name	FY13 Actual	FY14 Actual		Country Name	FY13 Actual	FY14 Actual		
1	Afghanistan	\$65,133,000	\$56,482,000*	↓	36	Saudi Arabia	\$1,992,986	\$2,053,000	↑
2	Pakistan	\$49,232,000	\$36,345,000*	↓	37	Belgium	\$1,776,410	\$2,001,000	↑
3	Iraq	\$10,713,000	\$10,713,000*	-	38	Philippines	\$1,543,052	\$1,985,029	↑
4	Japan	\$8,474,231	\$8,422,185	↓	39	Kazakhstan	\$1,728,773	\$1,953,582	↑
5	India (and Bhutan)	\$6,573,156	\$8,409,687	↑	40	Greece	\$1,876,230	\$1,927,000	↑
6	Brazil	\$7,656,695	\$8,105,000	↑	41	Ecuador	\$1,689,950	\$1,863,000	↑
7	China	\$6,383,297	\$7,266,213	↑	42	Thailand	\$1,689,950	\$1,858,466	↑
8	Germany	\$6,547,723	\$6,757,000	↑	43	Bolivia	\$1,657,800	\$1,844,000	↑
9	Mexico	\$4,910,982	\$5,327,000	↑	44	Austria	\$1,707,231	\$1,836,000	↑
10	Indonesia	\$4,334,518	\$5,106,672	↑	45	Malaysia	\$1,480,588	\$1,803,970	↑
11	Russia	\$4,864,143	\$4,938,000	↑	46	Bangladesh	\$1,300,108	\$1,641,922	↑
12	France	\$3,703,605	\$4,279,000	↑	47	Kenya	\$1,818,112	\$1,593,291	↓
13	Israel	\$4,162,159	\$4,242,000	↑	48	USEU	\$1,133,000	\$1,534,000	↑
14	Nigeria	\$3,500,247	\$4,238,219	↑	49	Czech Republic	\$1,566,636	\$1,501,000	↓
15	South Korea	\$3,748,614	\$4,145,021	↑	50	Lebanon	\$1,342,500	\$1,492,000	↑
16	Italy	\$3,532,444	\$3,899,000	↑	51	Zimbabwe	\$1,439,994	\$1,485,807	↑
17	Palestinian Territories	\$3,446,156	\$3,757,000	↑	52	Burma	\$940,254	\$1,485,045	↑
18	Turkey	\$3,525,448	\$3,637,000	↑	53	United Arab Emirates	\$1,630,584	\$1,471,000	↓
19	Argentina	\$2,581,066	\$3,212,000	↑	54	Romania	\$1,417,266	\$1,453,000	↑
20	Colombia	\$2,812,654	\$3,135,000	↑	55	Serbia	N/A	\$1,432,000	
21	South Africa	\$3,215,838	\$3,127,100	↓	56	Slovakia	\$1,263,406	\$1,390,000	↑
22	Spain	\$2,815,531	\$2,986,000	↑	57	Nepal	\$1,336,051	\$1,372,570	↑
23	Vietnam	\$1,528,531	\$2,867,814	↑	58	Kyrgyzstan	\$1,343,827	\$1,364,517	↑
24	Africa Regional Services	\$2,504,000	\$2,782,986	↑	59	Hong Kong	\$1,295,000	\$1,361,110	↑
25	Egypt	\$2,565,128	\$2,702,000	↑	60	Netherlands	\$1,259,303	\$1,335,000	↑
26	Canada	\$2,581,058	\$2,662,000	↑	61	Tajikistan	\$1,053,395	\$1,314,722	↑
27	United Kingdom	\$2,273,662	\$2,570,000	↑	62	Bosnia and Herzegovina	\$1,302,673	\$1,293,000	↓
28	Australia	\$2,522,642	\$2,540,844	↑	63	Uruguay	\$1,183,900	\$1,264,000	↑
29	Venezuela	\$2,509,315	\$2,512,000	↑	64	Croatia	\$1,182,321	\$1,220,000	↑
30	Peru	\$2,203,751	\$2,386,000	↑	65	New Zealand	\$1,048,990	\$1,219,507	↑
31	Poland	\$2,084,588	\$2,382,000	↑	66	Panama	\$1,049,613	\$1,214,000	↑
32	Ukraine	\$1,923,829	\$2,364,000	↑	67	Haiti	\$1,207,992	\$1,203,000	↓
33	Chile	\$2,236,731	\$2,232,000	↓	68	Cote d'Ivoire	\$1,008,744	\$1,183,040	↑
34	Morocco	\$1,995,103	\$2,159,000	↑	69	Hungary	\$1,158,087	\$1,175,000	↑
35	Jordan	\$1,342,500	\$2,068,000	↑	70	Sweden	\$1,091,670	\$1,170,000	↑

	Country Name	FY13 Actual	FY14 Actual			Country Name	FY13 Actual	FY14 Actual	
71	Yemen	\$1,389,402	\$1,140,000	↓	109	Bahrain	\$654,170	\$686,916	↑
72	Georgia	\$713,846	\$1,124,000	↑	110	Latvia	\$623,764	\$681,041	↑
73	Guatemala	\$1,004,160	\$1,121,000	↑	111	Belarus	\$587,832	\$673,342	↑
74	Singapore	\$784,315	\$1,100,916	↑	112	Nicaragua	\$715,437	\$671,205	↓
75	El Salvador	N/A	\$1,089,000		113	Burkina Faso	\$777,039	\$661,880	↓
76	Dominican Republic	\$1,113,932	\$1,077,000	↓	114	Angola	\$608,480	\$655,862	↑
77	Costa Rica	\$948,499	\$1,056,000	↑	115	Jamaica	\$809,045	\$642,682	↓
78	Dem. Republic of Congo	\$1,031,283	\$1,005,865	↓	116	Lithuania	\$645,623	\$637,767	↓
79	Finland	\$946,752	\$997,132	↑	117	Switzerland	\$532,065	\$636,656	↑
80	Portugal	\$939,381	\$993,247	↑	118	Guinea	\$383,700	\$632,527	↑
81	USNATO	\$875,101	\$974,734	↑	119	Sudan	\$613,938	\$629,270	↑
82	Turkmenistan	\$764,074	\$956,659	↑	120	Madagascar	\$553,141	\$628,369	↑
83	Qatar	\$855,094	\$948,775	↑	121	Albania	\$639,921	\$626,758	↓
84	Bulgaria	\$875,042	\$930,697	↑	122	Kosovo	\$539,619	\$616,805	↑
85	Azerbaijan	\$586,881	\$922,108	↑	123	Benin	\$539,619	\$607,578	↑
86	Ethiopia	\$926,938	\$921,465	↓	124	Rwanda	\$521,892	\$579,597	↑
87	Mozambique	\$920,946	\$917,061	↓	125	Liberia	\$448,967	\$575,754	↑
88	Senegal	\$895,369	\$906,162	↑	126	Ireland	\$619,226	\$569,444	↓
89	Norway	\$1,259,303	\$905,006	↓	127	Armenia	\$639,922	\$566,182	↓
90	Denmark	\$850,355	\$902,589	↑	128	Togo	\$517,645	\$559,213	↑
91	Tunisia	\$930,808	\$898,345	↓	129	Ghana	\$736,701	\$549,873	↓
92	Sri Lanka (& Maldives)	\$906,555	\$885,163	↓	130	Botswana	\$368,977	\$536,318	↑
93	Barbados	\$580,882	\$857,486	↑	131	Trinidad and Tobago	\$506,893	\$534,360	↑
94	Uganda	\$877,124	\$829,656	↓	132	Mali	\$647,600	\$531,962	↓
95	Honduras	\$771,257	\$811,741	↑	133	Malawi	\$490,272	\$510,596	↑
96	Tanzania	\$812,275	\$798,761	↓	134	Moldova	\$436,198	\$486,606	↑
97	Paraguay	\$702,833	\$798,539	↑	135	Mongolia	\$442,539	\$473,808	↑
98	Cameroon	\$833,807	\$794,960	↓	136	Oman	\$476,783	\$456,751	↓
99	Macedonia	\$698,994	\$765,512	↑	137	Cuba	\$413,869	\$456,666	↑
100	Uzbekistan	\$659,339	\$761,374	↑	138	Namibia	\$541,627	\$453,446	↓
101	Estonia	\$713,846	\$753,179	↑	139	Fiji	\$411,673	\$444,709	↑
102	Slovenia	\$698,608	\$750,248	↑	140	Laos	\$412,347	\$442,800	↑
103	Zambia	N/A	\$734,025		141	OSCE Vienna	\$390,624	\$414,588	↑
104	Niger	\$717,253	\$716,308	↓	142	Montenegro	\$430,555	\$361,930	↓
105	Cyprus	\$698,862	\$712,903	↑	143	Chad	\$372,568	\$353,117	↓
106	Cambodia	\$570,349	\$711,001	↑	144	Mauritius	\$358,564	\$347,528	↓
107	Kuwait	\$655,089	\$690,598	↑	145	Swaziland	\$383,297	\$341,411	↓
108	Algeria	\$612,426	\$689,955	↑	146	Luxembourg	\$248,530	\$333,944	↑

	Country Name	FY13 Actual	FY14 Actual	
147	Libya	\$507,234	\$330,517	↓
148	Iceland	\$266,768	\$325,774	↑
149	Eritrea	\$277,461	\$323,430	↑
150	Mauritania	\$416,595	\$318,901	↓
151	Papua New Guinea	N/A	\$315,686	
152	Somalia	\$637,646	\$249,889	↓
153	Brunei	\$202,030	\$243,650	↑
154	Sierra Leone	\$194,922	\$243,319	↑
155	Burundi	\$339,100	\$242,259	↓
156	Bahamas	\$237,292	\$241,077	↑
157	Republic of Congo	\$178,457	\$239,646	↑
158	Syria	\$280,992	\$214,050	↓
159	Gambia, The	\$136,200	\$208,850	↑
160	Djibouti	\$200,457	\$194,358	↓
161	Cabo Verde	\$161,733	\$187,597	↑
162	South Sudan	\$178,904	\$159,760	↓
163	Malta	\$170,730	\$159,484	↓
164	Gabon	\$184,688	\$158,500	↓
165	Suriname	\$119,009	\$153,552	↑
166	Equatorial Guinea	\$204,200	\$142,154	↓
167	Vatican City	\$123,600	\$136,815	↑
168	Timor-Leste	\$235,758	\$132,154	↓
169	Central African Republic	\$128,000	\$129,156	↑
170	Belize	\$94,916	\$119,590	↑
171	Lesotho	\$130,318	\$101,426	↓
172	Guyana	\$90,306	\$98,003	↑
173	Samoa	N/A	\$61,674	
174	Guinea-Bissau	\$62,400	\$59,095	↓
175	Marshall Islands	N/A	\$36,307	
176	Micronesia	N/A	\$33,816	
177	Palau	N/A	\$14,350	

EDUCATIONAL AND CULTURAL EXCHANGE PROGRAM BUDGET (ECE) – FY 2014 ACTUAL

Below is a list of the 84 ECA programs ranked by cost per participants or project. Also this year, we include rankings of estimated cost per day in an attempt to factor in program length when comparing program costs. **No individual metric can be used to accurately compare the costs of these diverse programs.** Programs are structured in a variety of ways, for example some require different levels of travel and logistics whereas other performance or speaker programs may have higher individual costs that do not reflect the impact the traveler is having on the foreign audience members they interact with. Also, many programs have varying lengths which can impact the costs significantly. Here we have used our best estimate of the average program length to calculate the average cost per participant day.

Top 10 Most Expensive Exchanges (Cost by Day)

		Cost per Day	Avg. Program Length in Weeks
1	International Visitor Leadership Program Division	\$1,137.98	3
2	Institute for Representative Government	\$1,098.42	1
3	TechWomen	\$894.66	5
4	Fortune/U.S. State Department Global Women's Mentoring Partnership	\$776.40	2
5	Congress-Bundestag Staff Exchange – Germany	\$727.27	2
6	Center Stage	\$628.93	4
7	TechGirls	\$582.01	3
8	IWP Between The Lines - The Writing Experience	\$563.91	2
9	Community College Administrator Program	\$539.68	6
10	Teaching Excellence and Achievement Program	\$512.26	6

Top 10 Least Expensive Exchanges (Cost by Day)

		Cost per Day	Avg. Program Length in Weeks
1	German-American Partnership Program (GAPP) - Germany	\$11.33	3
2	Fulbright Foreign Language Teaching Assistant (FLTA) Program	\$39.02	52
3	Congress-Bundestag Youth Exchange (CBYX) – Germany	\$50.08	39
4	Kennedy-Lugar Youth Exchange & Study (YES) Abroad -- U.S. Students	\$52.12	39
5	Tibetan Scholarship Program	\$65.23	78
6	U.S.-Timor-Leste Scholarship Program	\$66.21	235
7	Fulbright Regional Network for Applied Research (NEXUS) Program	\$75.34	52
8	Fulbright English Teaching Assistant Program (ETA)	\$77.78	39
9	American-Serbia & Montenegro Youth Leadership Exchange	\$80.36	39
10	Fulbright U.S. Student Program	\$80.37	39

PROGRAMS RANKED BY COST PER PARTICIPANT – FY 2014

Cost by participant rankings alone are not enough to compare the costs of various programs. Programs are structured in a variety of ways requiring different levels of travel and logistics, for performance and speaker programs the higher individual costs do not reflect the impact the speaker or performer is having on foreign audience members they interact with. Also, many programs have varying lengths which can impact the costs significantly. Here we have used our best estimate of the average program length to provide some context.

		Cost per Participant	Avg. Length of Program in Weeks			Cost per Participant	Avg. Length of Program in Weeks
1	Mike Mansfield Fellowship Program	\$151,800.00	52	25	Fulbright Regional Network for Applied Research (NEXUS) Program	\$27,500.00	52
2	U.S.-South Pacific Scholarship Program	\$108,750.00	156	26	Kennedy-Lugar Youth Exchange & Study (YES) -- Foreign Participants	\$26,659.29	39
3	U.S.-Timor-Leste Scholarship Program	\$108,750.00	235	27	Mandela Washington Fellowship for Young African Leaders	\$24,740.00	8
4	Cultural Antiquities Task Force (CATF)	\$99,500.00	52	28	Community Solutions	\$23,809.52	17
5	U.S. Ambassadors Fund for Cultural Preservation (AFCP)	\$92,741.94	52	29	Future Leaders Exchange (FLEX)	\$23,679.49	39
6	Hubert H. Humphrey Fellowship Program	\$75,342.00	52	30	Fulbright Program	\$23,137.50	39
7	American Arts Incubator	\$62,500.00	4	31	Fulbright-Fogarty Fellowships in Public Health	\$23,000.00	39
8	Community Engagement Through Mural Arts	\$62,500.00	4	32	Fulbright Foreign Student Program	\$23,000.00	39
9	Teachers of Critical Languages Program	\$56,591.00	39	33	Afghanistan Junior Faculty Development Program (AJFDP)	\$22,727.27	10
10	Community College Initiative Program	\$44,594.59	52	34	Community College Administrator Program	\$22,666.67	6
11	Tunisia Community College Scholarship Program	\$44,047.62	52	35	Iraqi Institute for the Conservation of Antiquities and Heritage	\$21,850.00	52
12	Fulbright Distinguished Awards in Teaching Program	\$42,267.00	17	36	Fulbright U.S. Student Program	\$21,700.00	39
13	Fulbright U.S. Scholar Program	\$40,000.00	30	37	American-Serbia & Montenegro Youth Leadership Exchange (A-SMYLE)	\$21,698.11	39
14	English Language Fellows and Specialists	\$40,000.00	43	38	Teaching Excellence and Achievement Program (TEA):	\$21,515.00	6
15	J. William Fulbright-Hillary Rodham Clinton Fellowship	\$39,000.00	43	39	Teachers for Global Classrooms Program	\$21,149.00	Varies
16	Tibetan Scholarship Program	\$35,714.00	78	40	IVLP Division (formerly known as the Regional Programs Division)	\$21,052.63	3
17	International Leaders in Education Program (ILEP)	\$33,648.00	17	41	Fulbright English Teaching Assistant Program (ETA)	\$21,000.00	39
18	TechWomen	\$31,313.13	5	42	Vietnam Economics Teaching Program/Fulbright Economics Teaching Program	\$19,000.00	104
19	Arts in Collaboration - Next Level	\$30,769.23	3	43	Center Stage	\$18,867.92	4
20	Global Undergraduate Exchange Program (UGRAD)	\$30,326.00	28	44	American Film Showcase	\$18,750.00	9
21	Fulbright-National Geographic Digital Storytelling Fellowship	\$30,000.00	39	45	American Overseas Research Centers (ORCs)	\$17,777.00	19
22	Fulbright Visiting Scholar Program	\$30,000.00	39	46	Critical Language Scholarship (CLS) Program	\$16,363.64	9
23	Fulbright mtvU Fellowship	\$28,178.00	39	47	Young South-East Asian Leaders Initiative (YSEALI)	\$15,625.00	5
24	Fulbright Short-Term Visiting Scholar Program	\$28,171.00	13				

		Cost per Participant	Avg. Length of Program in Weeks			Cost per Participant	Avg. Length of Program in Weeks
48	Future of Babylon Project	\$15,279.17	52	74	Partners of the Americas	\$6,118.50	3
49	Sport(s) for Community	\$14,814.81	5	75	American Council of Young Political Leaders (ACYPL)	\$5,914.66	2
50	National Security Language Initiative for Youth (NSLI-Y)	\$14,516.13	26	76	Fulbright Specialists Program	\$5,000.00	4
51	Study of the U.S. Institutes for Student Leaders and Scholars	\$14,285.00	6	77	International Writing Program (IWP)	\$5,000.00	Varies
52	Fulbright Foreign Language Teaching Assistant (FLTA) Program	\$14,243.00	52	78	Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarship Program	\$4,458.00	Varies
53	Kennedy-Lugar Youth Exchange & Study (YES) Abroad -- U.S. Student	\$14,073.00	39	79	Center for Cultural & Technical Interchange (East-West Center)	\$4,085.00	Varies
54	Congress-Bundestag Youth Exchange (CBYX) - Germany	\$13,521.13	39	80	Arts Envoy Program	\$3,846.15	4
55	Sports Envoy Program	\$13,374.56	7	81	Sports Visitor Program	\$2,934.59	2
56	The Ngwang Choephel Fellows Program	\$13,372.09	5	82	English Access Microscholarship Program	\$1,646.00	77
57	Summer Institutes for European Student Leaders	\$12,500.00	5	83	E-Teacher Scholarship Program	\$1,309.00	39
58	Professional Fellows Program	\$12,329.03	5	84	German-American Partnership Program (GAPP) - Germany	\$11.33	3
59	TechGirls	\$12,222.22	3				
60	Institute for Representative Government	\$10,984.23	1				
61	American Center for International Labor Solidarity	\$10,928.57	2				
62	Fortune/U.S. State Department Global Women's Mentoring Partnership	\$10,869.57	2				
63	Professional Fellows "On Demand" Program	\$10,526.32	3				
64	Empowering Women and Girls through Sports Initiative	\$9,758.06	1				
65	American Youth Leadership Program	\$9,724.41	4				
66	Youth Leadership Programs	\$9,368.93	4				
67	National Youth Science Foundation/ National Youth Science Camp	\$8,125.00	4				
68	Congress-Bundestag Staff Exchange - Germany	\$8,000.00	2				
69	IVLP On Demand Division (formerly the Voluntary Visitors Division)	\$7,997.87	3				
70	IWP Between The Lines - The Writing Experience (BTL)	\$7,894.74	2				
71	U.S. Congress-Korea National Assembly Youth Exchange	\$7,798.75	5				
72	International Sports Programming Initiative	\$7,288.21	3				
73	Youth Ambassadors	\$7,100.94	3				

BBG LANGUAGE SERVICES RANKED BY FY 2014 BUDGETS

	Service Name	FY13 Actual	FY14 Actual		Service Name	FY13 Actual	FY14 Actual		
1	MBN Alhurra	\$28.580 million	\$29.089 million	↑	38	RFE/RL Radio Azatutyun (Armenian)	\$1.926 million	\$1.897 million	↓
2	OCB Radio/Television Marti	\$26.881 million	\$26.706 million	↑	39	RFA Vietnamese Service	\$2.033 million	\$1.792 million	↓
3	VOA Persian Service	\$21.459 million	\$19.821 million	↓	40	VOA Kurdish Service	\$1.635 million	\$1.738 million	↑
4	MBN Radio Sawa (Arabic)	\$19.309 million	\$18.758 million	↓	41	VOA Somalia Service	\$1.560 million	\$1.720 million	↑
5	VOA Mandarin Service	\$13.060 million	\$14.310 million	↑	42	VOA Ukrainian Service	\$1.709 million	\$1.685 million	↓
6	VOA Global English	\$12.955 million	\$16.916 million	↑	43	RFE/RL Radio Ozodi (Tajik)	\$1.599 million	\$1.684 million	↑
7	RFE/RL Radio Farda (Persian)	\$11.242 million	\$10.857 million	↓	44	RFE/RL Radio Azattyq (Kazakh)	\$1.602 million	\$1.676 million	↑
8	RFE/RL Radio Svoboda (Russian)	\$8.529 million	\$7.269 million	↓	45	VOA Central Africa Service (Kinyarwanda, Kirundi)	\$1.104 million	\$1.697 million	↑
9	VOA Afghan Service	\$7.398 million	\$6.232 million	↓	46	RFA's Uyghur Service	\$1.706 million	\$1.659 million	↓
10	RFE/RL Radio Azadi	\$6.272 million	\$6.204 million	↓	47	RFE/RL Radio Ozodlik (Uzbek)	\$1.516 million	\$1.540 million	↑
11	RFA Mandarin Service	\$6.241 million	\$6.072 million	↓	48	VOA Zimbabwe Service (Ndebele, Shona, English)	\$873,000	\$1.530 million	↑
12	VOA Urdu Service	\$8.001 million	\$5.939 million	↓	49	VOA Vietnamese Service	\$1.612 million	\$1.544 million	↓
13	MBN Al Hurra Iraq	\$6.054 million	\$5.903 million	↓	50	VOA Swahili Service	\$1.193 million	\$1.468 million	↑
14	RFA's Tibetan Service	\$5.518 million	\$5.665 million	↑	51	VOA Serbian Service	\$1.537 million	\$1.472 million	↓
15	VOA Indonesian Service	\$5.486 million	\$5.591 million	↑	52	VOA Turkish Service	\$1.024 million	\$1.325 million	↑
16	VOA English to Africa	\$5.136 million	\$5.124 million	↓	53	RFE/RL North Caucasus Languages Services (Avar, Chechen, Circassian)	\$1.342 million	\$1.300 million	↓
17	RFE/RL Balkan Service	\$4.616 million	\$4.685 million	↑	54	RFA Lao Service	\$1.508 million	\$1.214 million	↑
18	VOA Radio deewa	\$3.641 million	\$4.024 million	↑	55	VOA Creole Service	\$1.204 million	\$1.199 million	↓
19	VOA Russian Service	\$3.040 million	\$3.844 million	↑	56	VOA Portuguese to Africa Service	\$1.196 million	\$1.169 million	↓
20	RFE/RL Radio Mashaal	\$3.672 million	\$3.723 million	↑	57	VOA Bangla Service	\$1.104 million	\$1.235 million	↑
21	RFE/RL Radio Svoboda (Ukrainian)	\$2.663 million	\$3.644 million	↑	58	RFA Cantonese Service	\$1.063 million	\$1.060 million	↓
22	VOA Korean Service	\$3.956 million	\$3.611 million	↓	59	VOA Cantonese Service	\$1.053 million	\$1.006 million	↓
23	VOA French to Africa	\$3.096 million	\$3.572 million	↑	60	RFA Cambodian Service (Khmer)	\$1.202 million	\$964,000	↓
24	VOA Tibetan Service	\$3.507 million	\$3.430 million	↓	61	VOA Bosnian Service	\$810,000	\$956,000	↑
25	RFA Korean Service	\$4.044 million	\$3.342 million	↓	62	RFE/RL Radio Azatliq (Tatar, Bashkir, Crimean Tatar)	\$885,000	\$783,000	↓
26	VOA Spanish Service	\$2.757 million	\$3.027 million	↑	63	RFE/RL Radio Azatlyk (Turkmen)	\$836,000	\$746,000	↓
27	VOA Burmese Service	\$2.501 million	\$2.690 million	↑	64	VOA Lao Service	\$707,000	\$725,000	↑
28	VOA Horn of Africa	\$2.388 million	\$2.543 million	↑	65	VOA Uzbek Service	\$700,000	\$708,000	↑
29	VOA Hausa Service	\$1.752 million	\$2.505 million	↑	66	VOA Thai Service	\$639,000	\$683,000	↑
30	RFE/RL Radio Svoboda (Belarusian)	\$2.724 million	\$2.494 million	↓	67	VOA Azerbaijani Service	\$569,000	\$646,000	↑
31	RFE/RL Radio Tavisupleba (Georgian)	\$2.537 million	\$2.463 million	↓	68	VOA Georgian Service	\$722,000	\$603,000	↓
32	RFA Burmese Service	\$2.318 million	\$2.136 million	↓	69	VOA Macedonian Service	\$480,000	\$603,000	↑
33	RFE/RL Radio Azattyk (Kyrgyz)	\$2.020 million	\$2.123 million	↑	70	MBN Afia darfur	\$495,000	\$548,000	↑
34	RFE/RL Radio Free Iraq* (Arabic)	\$2.225 million	\$2.119 million	↓	71	VOA Armenian Service	\$400,000	\$528,000	↑
35	VOA Khmer Service (Cambodia)	\$2.006 million	\$2.069 million	↑	72	VOA Bambara Service	\$198,000	\$150,000	↓
36	RFE/RL Radio Azadliq (Azerbaijani)	\$1.886 million	\$1.939 million	↑					
37	VOA Albanian Service	\$1.799 million	\$1.930 million	↑					

ACPD's Top 10 of 2015

ACPD applauds several areas of progress in the last few months at the State Department and the Broadcasting Board of Governors. We start with the field, where public diplomacy's effectiveness is ultimately determined.

1 PD Officers on the Frontlines: ACPD was privileged to visit five U.S. Missions this year: Algeria; ♦ Kenya and South Africa; Hungary and Moldova. Each visit was informative, and we left in admiration of the PD professionals' work and grateful for the time they gave us. We were struck particularly, however, with the more under-resourced embassies facing considerable challenges with their local political environments. The PD professionals based in Algeria, Moldova, and central African countries (i.e. Rwanda, Congo, DRC) discussed with us the daily dilemmas they face in balancing copious administrative work with actually engaging local publics. We repeat our recommendation from the 2014 report to review PD staffing levels – Foreign Service and Locally Employed Staff – worldwide, but in Africa especially. In Algeria, where curiosity about America is increasing and the demand for English is overwhelming, the PAS has augmented its small base budget of \$400,000 with several supplemental funds. Yet base funding closer to the worldwide median of \$1.94 million would go very far in a country where the potential for PD is ripe, and alleviate the administrative work the PAS needs to conduct to apply for extra money. Our visit to Moldova stuck with us in particular because of the relatively easy fixes that could be made to support a small staff trying to counter endless Russian media narratives and to keep Moldovan youth pro-Europe. This includes a renewal of at least \$1 million in ESF funds to support Moldovan independent media and civil society; a finalization of the lease for the new American Center across the street from Moldova State University; and the addition of a permanent Information Officer to meet the increasing demand from local media to hear America's views on issues in Moldova and eastern Europe.

2 Progress in Research & Evaluation at the State Department: ACPD is pleased to see PD leadership ♦ begin to focus more on front-end audience identification and research, digital analytics, and process and impact evaluations of various activities. The National Security Council (NSC) and Office of Management and Budget (OMB) noted the significance of this work in their budget guidance for FY 2017, and the State Department's Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review (QDDR) also stressed the need for data-driven policy throughout the department. The Office of Policy, Planning and Resources (R/PPR) has started work on expanding and reforming its Evaluation and Measurement Unit (EMU) and established a new Director of Research and Evaluation to help support the R family advance in this area. ACPD was also happy to provide technical support to the Public Affairs Bureau, which is considering how to design and outfit its research office. A data scientist hired at CSCC was also a positive improvement, as is the expansion

of the analytics team in IIP. However, persistent challenges remain in reforming this space, not the least of which are the restrictions placed by the Privacy Act of 1974, the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1980, the Office of Acquisitions Management, and the stalled hiring process to expand the amount of trained methodologists on staff. Overcoming these hurdles and accelerating progress will take persistent, high-level support from State Department leadership and Congress.

3 Advancement In Strategic Planning Processes & Databases: Consistent with the above focus on ♦ research and evaluation tools, there has been movement in at least two offices in the State Department to improve how officials plan strategically for public diplomacy and stay in touch with alumni. This includes R/PPR's plans to overhaul the Mission Activity Tracker.

4 Commitment to Opening Access to American Spaces: IIP has made considerable progress in the ♦ last two years itemizing and prioritizing the more than 700 American Spaces worldwide. What was once a "let a thousand flowers bloom" approach is increasingly becoming more strategic with the establishment of a tier system to determine funding; a handbook for program operations; a model design created with the Smithsonian Institution; more robust training for American officers, local staff and partner organizations running the spaces; and a dashboard to track the development of priority spaces more consistently. Now, IIP is in a place to work constructively and regularly with the Overseas Building Operations (OBO) Bureau and the Bureau of Diplomatic Security (DS), which are responsible for the architectural design and security, respectively, of U.S. government-owned or leased American Spaces. As ACPD wrote in its May 2015 white paper, "Public Diplomacy at Risk: Keeping American Centers Open and Accessible," 21 of the remaining 32 free-standing, urban-located American Centers are at risk for being colocated in a New Embassy Compound (NEC). While OBO has always worked very closely with Public Affairs Sections overseas, until now there was no mechanism to coordinate public diplomacy facilities' needs with Washington-based stakeholders, including R/PPR, IIP, ECA, and the regional bureaus. This dialogue will hopefully create a systemic approach to handle American Centers on a case-by-case basis, in addition to discussing the implementation of open access principles in the spaces that have already been or will become colocated with a NEC or New Consulate Compound (NCC).

5 Advancing PD Professionals' Training: ACPD and the Meridian International Center's June 2015 report, ♦ "Getting the People Part Right II: The Human Resources Dimension of Public Diplomacy in 2015," authored by Ambassador Laurence Wohlers, goes through details of how we can improve greater recruitment, selection, training and advancement of our PD professionals. R/PPR is currently making some incremental changes to play a more robust role

in the professional development of Foreign Service Officers and Civil Servants, including the addition of a distinct position to oversee and coordinate these efforts.

6. The ECA Collaboratory: ACPD has found the young, zero cost office in the ECA Bureau to be particularly refreshing this last year. It designs and pilots new ways for furthering educational and cultural diplomacy, like the Massive Open Online Courses (MOOC) Camp initiative, and cultivates best practices for the use of technology in exchanges. The Collaboratory also works to advance new work methods, like human-centered design, that allow State Department teams to better perform in today's networked world. In the past year, the Collaboratory worked on a student-centered approach to countering violent extremism, called "Peer to Peer (P2P): Challenging Extremism," with partners from the Department of Defense and the firm Edventure Partners. And in August 2015, the Collaboratory helped to implement a design-thinking course at the Rhode Island School of Design (RISD) for several members of the State Department and interagency community. The course received high praise from many participants for helping them build new skills for more efficient program design. We look forward to seeing what the Collaboratory does in its next year to modernize how ECA approaches global educational and cultural exchanges.

7. Presidential Attention to Academic & Professional Exchanges: The oldest and most iconic PD tools involve in-person engagement and robust follow-up platforms. The Young Leaders Initiatives, which are focused primarily on professional development of emerging leaders in areas critical for U.S. foreign policy, have energized such programs by bestowing them with presidential attention. A skeptical ACPD became increasingly convinced of the value of the Young African Leaders Initiative (YALI) and its Mandela Washington Fellowship after meeting with alumni in Africa and reviewing several process and early impact evaluations completed by ECA's implementing partner, IREX. In order for YALI, the Young Southeast Asian Leaders Initiative (YSEALI) and the Young Leaders of the Americas (YLAI) to have long-term impact, however, it is essential that they receive sustained attention and consistent evaluations to measure their progress and relevance to changing foreign policy priorities. Future presidential initiatives should always include pertinent State Department professionals, as well as input from other departments and agencies across the government, from the outset of program planning to make sure that they can succeed with existing personnel resources and infrastructures.

8. Voice of America's Role in Sub-Saharan Africa: This year, ACPD was reminded of the importance of Voice of America's local reporting in Africa, especially given the lack of a BBG surrogate station on the continent (with the exception of MBN's Radio Sawa and Afia Darfur's reach into some areas). VOA helped to fill a critical, transnational void in reporting on the Ebola crisis in western Africa, joining forces with the BBC to advance public service

announcements. Of the 50 countries in sub-saharan Africa, Freedom House has determined just 3 percent to have a free media. VOA reporting in Burundi, Rwanda, Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and South Sudan, to name a few, has provided professional local news, while also educating African audiences about the United States and its policies. We support increases in the budget for VOA's FM expansion and launching a service in the Lingala language for the Democratic Republic of the Congo, in addition to delivering more original programming in areas where Gallup has found listenership to be particularly significant.

9. Encouraging Risk-Taking: A common refrain in the Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs' communication with PD professionals is the need to "get caught trying." In such an incredibly and traditionally risk-averse environment as the State Department, we agree that this is a message that needs to be repeated regularly. We applaud a changing culture where calculated risk taking is supported and the demand signal for it that the Under Secretary is personally sending.

10. PA's Media Hubs: While traveling in both Africa and Eastern Europe, ACPD consistently heard praise for the Media Hub directors from PAOs and journalists alike. These hubs—in Brussels, Johannesburg, Dubai, London, and Miami—amplify U.S. foreign policy messages to regional media as well as organize media tours and trainings with a regional focus. This fills a need that PAOs, who are focused on bilateral issues, cannot. Examples include coordinating media messaging and supporting journalists understanding of the Ebola crisis; coordinating media tours for Eastern European journalists of NATO and the EU to discuss TTIP; and organizing advanced foreign language spokesperson training in Arabic and Russian. These Hubs are not another bureaucratic layer; they offer a valuable platform to augment post programs and regional efforts.

§

ACPD looks forward to tracking progress in FY 2016. Next, we offer a full list of recommendations, followed by more in-depth analysis of ACPD priorities—research and evaluation; supporting public diplomacy professionals; and how to keep American Spaces open and accessible—and presidential priorities—Young Leaders Initiatives in Africa, Southeast Asia and the Americas; countering violent extremism; and countering negative Russian influence in Europe and Central Asia; and Voice of America in Africa.

2015 RECOMMENDATIONS LIST

This is a list of all the major recommendations that the U.S. Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy is making based on data it has collected and analysis it has conducted in the last year. The recommendations are first categorized by the major areas of the report where ACPD put emphasis: research and evaluation; supporting public diplomacy professionals; and how to keep American Spaces open and accessible. It also includes recommendations on the President's Young Leaders Initiatives in Africa, Southeast Asia and the Americas; countering violent extremism; and countering negative Russian influence in Europe and Central Asia. The suggestions are then broken out by specific agencies, offices and U.S. missions abroad. In 2015, ACPD officially visited Public Affairs Sections in Algeria; Hungary and Moldova; and Kenya and South Africa.

Most of the recommendations are repeated throughout the report, and there is some overlap in recommendations that fall under multiple categories—especially emphasis on strategic planning and database improvement; audience identification and research; and process and impact evaluations. There are also several repeat recommendations from the 2014 report, which indicates the enduring need to work steadily toward improving the quality of foreign public engagement and information activities to support U.S. foreign policy.

RESEARCH AND EVALUATION OF PUBLIC DIPLOMACY AND INTERNATIONAL BROADCASTING ACTIVITIES

*Also see “Data-Driven Public Diplomacy: Progress Toward Measuring the Effectiveness of Public Diplomacy and International Broadcasting”: <http://www.state.gov/pdcommission>

- **Increase State Department and BBG Research and Evaluation Budgets Closer to 3 percent of Overall Budget:** This vital work remains greatly underfunded at the State Department and the BBG. While a small bump in funding for this was requested in FY 2016 at the State Department, it is still under 1 percent of the total public diplomacy budget. Public Diplomacy bureaus at the State Department should move toward 3 percent of the overall PD budget over the next few years, which is the percentage that US-AID uses to review its programs and the standard for U.S.-based philanthropies and foundations. We recommend that the BBG move toward 3 percent as well. In the FY 2016 budget request, the BBG decreased its combined funding request for the Office of Performance Review and Office of Research Assessment from \$8.533 million in FY 2015 to \$8.334 million, which is a drop to 1.1 percent of the total BBG budget.
- **Expand the Office of Policy, Planning and Resources (R/PPR)'s Evaluation and Measurement Unit Under New Director:** This year, R/PPR established a new Director of Research and Evaluation to provide more strategic leadership for audience research and understanding program impact. This position and the team that the Director will lead will take time to develop, but it is a positive step forward to give more organizational legitimacy and authority to research, advocate for researchers' needs, and prioritize research activities in ways that reflect strategic short-, middle-, and long-term objectives.
- **Review Privacy Act and Paperwork Reduction Act Restrictions:** The Privacy Act of 1974 contains restrictions that may impact certain types of digital audience research and analytics in the International Information Programs Bureau (IIP) and Center for Strategic Counterterrorism Communications (CSCC) as they relate to the identification of influential figures online. Further, the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1980 limits the State Department's ability to conduct measurement research in a timely fashion as research officials must, with limited exceptions, submit each study involving requests for information from the public to OMB for its approval. These statutory restrictions hinder the ability to assess the impact of the Department's public diplomacy initiatives impact over time. ACPD recommends that the State Department join its efforts to work with Congress to update the law.

STRENGTHENING PUBLIC DIPLOMACY PERSONNEL AT THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE

*Also see “Getting the People Part Right II: The Human Resources Dimension of Public Diplomacy in 2015”: <http://www.state.gov/pdcommission>

- **Strengthen the Office of Policy, Planning and Resources (R/PPR) for Public Diplomacy's Role in Strategic Professional Development:** Public Diplomacy practice at the State Department needs a functional core. R/PPR provides much guidance already in strategic planning and budgeting, but it could also help direct how the department recruits, selects and advances public diplomacy professionals in both the Foreign and Civil Service. This involves supporting the development of PD officers and identifying the skill sets they will increasingly need to merge digital fluency with traditional in-person engagement.

- **Be more Involved with Recruitment and Selection Processes:** While the Department spends roughly \$60,000 on recruitment per successful applicant, it does not recruit for PD skills, and other skills specific to cones. Recruitment should not be an exclusive activity for the Bureau of Human Resources or Diplomats in Residence, and PD leadership should actively engage in recruitment throughout the year. R/PPR should also identify questions for the written and oral exams to ensure PD skills are evaluated, and that PD officers participate on the Board of Examiners to better assess Foreign Service candidates.
- **Improve Training and Education of PD Professionals:** The generalist nature of the hiring process places a considerable responsibility on the training and mentoring capacities of the State Department to prepare new entrants to function effectively. Education reform begins with establishing a meaningful standard for professional competency in public diplomacy positions, working closely with the Foreign Service Institute (FSI) to support entry-level practicums, ongoing coursework for Foreign and Civil Service professionals, and developing modules on public diplomacy for non-PD courses and seminars.
- **Further Examine Public Diplomacy Advancement at State Department:** In the last seven years, no PD-coned officer has been promoted to Career Minister or Career Ambassador, while 22 Political-coned officers have been promoted to that level. In addition, only 4 percent of FSOs serving as Ambassadors are PD-coned, an increase from 3 percent in 2008. Yet this may change soon as 13 percent of Deputy Chiefs of Missions are PD-coned. R/PPR should continue to examine these numbers closely to identify opportunities where advancement can occur, while also exploring potential pathways for Civil Service officers working in PD to progress in their careers and contributions.

KEEPING AMERICAN SPACES OPEN AND ACCESSIBLE

*Also see “Public Diplomacy at Risk: Keeping American Centers and Open and Accessible”: <http://www.state.gov/pdcommission>

- **Conduct a Study of the Impact of American Spaces:** A study on the value and impact of these spaces—American Centers, IRCs, Binational Centers and American Corners—for U.S. foreign policy goals, especially in the “top tier” spaces. The appraisals should link their efforts to mission goals and develop a research-based strategic plan for each space, identifying key publics and the public diplomacy impact objectives for those publics.
- **Continue Dialogue Between Public Diplomacy, Office of Overseas Building Operations and the Bureau of Diplomatic Security Leadership:** We are encouraged by the regular dialogue between public diplomacy leadership, the Bureau of Overseas Building Operations (OBO) and the Bureau of Diplomatic Security (DS) through the new permanent working group to address several policy, planning and funding concerns with the remaining free-standing American Centers and the IRCs. We hope that these conversations will continue to be constructive and tackle the accessibility of these spaces on a case-by-case basis.
- **Aim to Make Existing IRCs Open and Accessible Through a New Policy:** A policy for open access to IRCs that applies to worldwide posts is necessary. This would lift “by appointment only” restrictions where they exist; create a separate security screening from the main chancery; permit unescorted access; and allow use of personal electronic devices and wireless internet access.
- **Communication from Congress:** A new “Sense of Congress” from Congress would communicate to Diplomatic Security and OBO that the Secretary of State should exercise his/her waiver authority under section 606(a)(2)(B) of the Secure Embassy Construction and Counterterrorism Act of 1999 (22 U.S.C. 4865(a)(2)(B)) in order to permit these spaces to remain separate from U.S. embassies abroad and to also ensure that IRCs on U.S. embassy, consulate and annex compounds remain open and accessible. This would help to simplify co-location waiver requests at the State Department and emphasize the need for a flexible, case-by-case approach that takes into consideration the centrality of public diplomacy to fulfilling U.S. policy objectives.

THE YOUNG LEADERS INITIATIVES IN AFRICA (YALI), SOUTHEAST ASIA (YSEALI) AND THE AMERICAS (YLA I)

- **Prioritize Process Evaluations and Long-Term Impact Studies:** Initial impact studies, process evaluations and a host of anecdotes all indicate that the Mandela Washington Fellowship for Young African Leaders under the Young African Leaders Initiative (YALI) has been successful in its first two years. The Young Southeast Asian Leaders Initiative (YSEALI) would also benefit from central in-depth process evaluations to examine how the Fellows program, the regional workshops, “Seeds for the Future,” and

the YSEALI network facilitated in the region are progressing. Long-term impact studies will also help determine how the Fellows continue to – or do not continue to – apply their educational experiences to their everyday lives, and how their relationship and impressions of the United States change. Attention should focus on how the programs advance U.S. foreign policy priorities in the targeted regions. R/PPR is in the process of designing an impact study for YALI, including for its Mandela Washington Fellowship, and USAID gathered baseline data from YALI Fellows on their views on selected issues affecting Africa, which ACPD strongly supports. The need for continued process evaluations incorporating the Fellows, host institutions, and U.S. embassies for all of the Young Leaders Initiatives should continue their iterative approach over time and assess the continued relevance of the programs to U.S. foreign policy priorities. As much as possible, process and impact evaluations should be expanded to include the programs' several components, such as the YALI Network, YALI Spaces and the YALI Regional Leadership Centers in Africa, USADF entrepreneurship grants, and the YSEALI virtual network in Southeast Asia.

- **Increase YALI-dedicated Department of State Staff for U.S. Missions in Africa and in Washington:** New educational and cultural affairs and leadership development programs can support presidential priorities and reflect modern foreign policy goals. Yet each time a new program is created, rarely is an older program eliminated. While Washington is forced to juggle staffing in the short term to manage these programs, posts have not been able to increase their staff to properly manage them and maintain the relationships with an ever-increasing and diverse alumni. This is especially acute in Africa, where Public Affairs Sections are sometimes under-staffed and under-resourced. ACPD strongly supports the increase of roughly 20 full-time employees to handle the increase in Mandela Washington Fellows in PAS's, in addition to TDY support from Washington and the Africa Regional Services Office in Paris. It is also important that the exchanges' support budget is maintained for staffing in the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs for its lead role in administering the Fellowship.
- **Communicate more directly how targeted recruits fit into YALI Mandela Washington Fellowship:** The three tracks of the Fellowship -- public management, civic leadership and business and entrepreneurship -- are central to the character of the program and are meant to be all-encompassing themes. Yet it is not always immediately obvious to targeted recruits how their skillsets may fit within those themes. People who define themselves by traditional careers -- education, agriculture, medicine, law, journalism -- may be uncertain about where they fit. During the recruitment process, we suggest that more efforts be made to explain the all-encompassing themes and how they are relevant to young leaders.

PUBLIC DIPLOMACY AND COUNTERING VIOLENT EXTREMISM

- **Create a “Center of Gravity” for Public Diplomacy (PD) to Support CVE Strategy:** For public diplomacy professionals to effectively advance U.S. foreign policy efforts to counter violent extremism, there needs to be clear CVE strategy across the U.S. government. Once that is clearly established, we recommend a cell that provides a “center of gravity” at the State Department to coordinate short-term messaging and communications with longer-term PD activities. This group would work to provide clear guidance and support to the field. To ensure that PD tactics are in synch with and advancing the larger CVE strategy, the working group should include representatives from the Office of the Under Secretary of State for Civilian Security, Democracy, and Human Rights (J); the Office of the Special Presidential Envoy for the Global Coalition to Counter ISIL; and the Office of the Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy and offices in the “R” family, including the Center for Strategic Counterterrorism Communications (CSCC); and the regional bureaus. The Broadcasting Board of Governors and USAID should also be included, and it would work closely with the National Security Council. Currently, CSCC runs a whole-of-government strategic messaging coordination cell, which is important. But research, best practices for on-the-ground programming, guidance to embassies, and clear lines of funding for CVE efforts must also be established.
- **Broaden the Congressional View of CVE to Understand How PD Is -- Or Is Not -- Supporting It:** In order for Congress to understand where and how public diplomacy and international broadcasting activities fit within the larger CVE strategy for the U.S. government, we recommend that professional staff members from the House Foreign Affairs and Senate Foreign Relations committees, work with their counterparts in the Armed Services, Select Intelligence and Homeland Security committees to examine interagency collective efforts to counter violent extremism. There is some precedent for this on the House side with the now-retired Caucus for Strategic Communication and Public Diplomacy, which was launched in 2010 by Republican and Democratic members of the House Armed Services Committee. The caucus worked to understand how the State Department, Defense Department and NSC were working together on a joint, global strategic communications plan. A hearing on this issue with interagency leaders would also be of significant value.

- **Leverage External and Internal Expertise:** The administration should consider pulling together a small advisory group— composed of former CVE-focused government officials, social scientists, tech industry representatives and non-governmental CVE experts—with whom current officials responsible for CVE strategy and tactics can interact and consult with on a regular basis. Additionally, State Department public diplomacy and BBG officials need to better leverage the expertise within the government, utilizing reporting from the intelligence community and matching local trends with appropriate on-the-ground programs. Embassies should also continue to work with outside organizations that can tap into local networks of community leaders, teachers and public figures who are more likely to resonate with intended audiences.
- **Establish a Foundation of Knowledge for CVE:** A core challenge to current CVE efforts is that a solid foundation of knowledge about extremism and its root causes, in addition to past effective and ineffective efforts, has not been fully established. While the threat has morphed based on new environments, there is much to learn from previous attempts to counter extremism on- and off-line, both inside the United States and internationally. A comprehensive review from an external partner, such as a think tank, working with critical offices such as CSO, CSCC and the CT bureau, would support leadership in making decisions based on feedback loops of history and research. This would include not just information activities online, but educational and cultural programs, and connections with program alumni. ACPD is happy to support this effort.
- **Provide Personnel with the Technology to Understand CVE Trends:** Currently, CSCC is working to develop an electronic “dashboard,” which will function as a real-time social media monitoring device to allow analysts to track trends and developments. This will help CSCC counter disinformation. But it is important that such a platform be expanded to support CVE practitioners globally to use real-time data to understand trends and plan programming accordingly. For example, if there was a growing number of people in a given city who were talking about joining ISIL because they had no other economic opportunity, a PAO in that country could implement an entrepreneurship program that was directed at the targeted population. ACPD believes such a tool would be instrumental in giving officers the tools to build effective CVE programs.
- **Add CVE Expertise to Critical Missions Abroad:** As the State Department recognizes, CVE efforts on-the-ground are critical. Every city presents distinct challenges that only local leaders can influence, which requires officials who can carry out global policy directives in local contexts. Ideally, missions in critical countries should have CVE experts who work from Public Affairs Sections or Political Sections with each other and USAID missions to decentralize and tailor local CVE efforts.
- **Acknowledge that Both Responsibility and Success with CVE Ultimately Lie with Local Actors:** The U.S. government has unique convening power in bringing international players to the table, but local actors -- community and religious leaders, parents and families, and educators -- are essential to CVE efforts. Support and attention from heads of state and international government officials alone is insufficient. Sometimes foreign leaders can use their attendance at U.S.-organized events to “check the box” on working with the U.S. to counter extremism. This is especially important to remember as the administration convenes additional high-level international summits. If additional ones are to be held on this issue, it is critical to include ground-level working groups with the people who will ultimately carry out the work.

COUNTERING NEGATIVE RUSSIAN INFLUENCE IN EUROPE AND CENTRAL ASIA

- **Develop a Strategy to Counter all Forms of Negative Russian Influence in Europe and Central Asia:** Russia’s efforts go far beyond media propaganda and U.S. efforts to reach Russian-speaking populations should go well beyond messaging. A strong public diplomacy strategy from Washington should be rooted in a broader Department strategy to use security, diplomatic, economic tools alongside informational, educational, and cultural tools. The development of a strategy in Washington should include all relevant regional and functional bureaus and interagency representatives with policy interests related to the impact of harmful Russian activities. It will also highlight where U.S. embassies can work together in the region. A multilateral approach to enlist the help of U.S. allies is also essential, especially since external state and non-state actors may have more credible voices in countering Russian influence in the media, civil society and political spaces. To localize efforts and make sure they resonate with local audiences, it is also vital that affected embassies produce an annual, integrated strategy to employ simultaneous informational, educational and cultural tools to counter negative Russian influence as embassies promote U.S. policies and values.

- **Expand Current Messaging Efforts to Reflect at Least Three Major Audience Segments:** Currently, U.S. messages focus largely on Russia's incursion into Ukraine. While this messaging is well suited to audiences in frontline states, other European and Central Asian audiences may dismiss the same messages. Instead, the State Department should begin to tailor its messaging to reflect at least three audience segments including: frontline populations, and both supportive and skeptical populations in partner nations.
- **Review PD Programs in Frontline States to Increase Program Participation Among Key Audience Segments, Especially Russian Minorities:** Ethnic Russians in frontline states largely feel that they have been excluded and ignored by their capitals. Though some countries have taken admirable steps to connect and engage these populations, the United States should play its role to provide beneficial programming to them, such as English-language activities and opportunities to participate in cultural, educational and professional development exchanges, such as IVLP. Treating them as an integral part of U.S. programming will send a strong signal to host governments that they should also treat these segments as an integral part of their populations.
- **Provide Additional Support to Countries in Crisis:** The management of limited staffing resources in Public Affairs Sections is challenging worldwide. Yet critical threat posts especially need adequate staffing to deliver effective messaging and programming. For instance, as stated elsewhere in this report, given the significance of influencing the media environment in Moldova, the Public Affairs Section needs an additional, permanent FSO, an Information Officer.
- **Posts with Increased U.S. Military Operations Need Appropriate Support from the Military to Support their Public Affairs Requirements:** Increased military training exercises, equipment movements, and other operations are critical to showing U.S. support for NATO allies. However, some of the frontline posts that U.S. military teams visit, for example Latvia and Estonia, are staffed with only one or two public diplomacy officers. Even at larger posts it is near impossible for PD officers to provide quality support to their own missions as well as to visiting military officers, whose public affairs officers have varying degrees of experience in the field. The department should work with regional military commands to develop a regional military media support cell that can help support the increased tempo of military activity in the region. [Note: This is a separate issue from Military Information Support Operation units that work closely with some Public Affairs Sections worldwide.]
- **Retain a PD Footprint in Russia:** The Kremlin has closed almost all American public diplomacy facilities in the country and it actively prevents their reopening. To continue to show U.S. commitment to the Russian people, the United States should ensure that public diplomacy programs sustain in spite of these attempts to block them. This includes maintaining the current PD funding level for the U.S. mission in Moscow at \$4.55 million in addition to the still functioning exchange programs, such as Fulbright scholarship and the International Visitor Leadership Program.
- **Continue to Expand RFE/RL and VOA Coverage in Response to Russia's Expanding Negative Influence in Europe and Central Asia:** ACPD continues to understand that the RFE/RL and VOA staff in Eastern Europe and Central Asia face numerous constraints to produce daily content. Despite this, there have been rapid expansions to RFE/RL coverage in response to the crisis in Ukraine. The Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs has made countering Russian disinformation a priority and given seed money to RFE/RL and Voice of America for expanded programming, which has resulted in the joint RFE/RL and VOA program Current Time. In Central Asia specifically, expanded programming in local languages would provide a compelling alternative source of information to the flood of Russian language content dominating the media space. To maximize the impact of their work, we strongly recommend that RFE/RL and VOA continue to increase their reach to key audiences. In particular, RFE/RL should continue to build on its new Digital Media Response Team (DIGIM) platform, continue to seek new distribution streams for the Current Time project, and expand research on the best practices for getting their content to the impacted zones.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS

OFFICE OF THE UNDER SECRETARY (R) AND OFFICE OF POLICY, PLANNING AND RESOURCES (R/PPR)

- **Continue Course on Strategic Planning to Connect PD to Foreign Policy:** R/PPR has a great opportunity to become more of a support hub for public diplomacy offices in Washington and the field. ACPD is supportive of the various databases and encourages R/PPR to further integrate its tools such as Public Diplomacy Implementation Plan (PDIP), Public Diplomacy Resource Allocation Module (PD-RAM), Public Diplomacy Country Context (PDCC), Public Diplomacy Resource Profile (PDRP) and Mission Activity Tracker (MAT). By further integrating systems, officers may have less of a data entry burden and may be able to quantify more of their impact. Its movement toward also helping the functional bureaus develop their public diplomacy and public affairs plans is a welcome development.
- **Guide Washington-directed Activities to be Responsive to Field Needs:** Given the copious administrative tasks the Public Affairs Section (PAS) needs to complete, and that the effectiveness of PD is ultimately determined in the field, R/PPR should keep in mind and constantly remind ECA, IIP, PA, CSCC and the regional and the functional bureaus to think about how their priorities fit into the PAS's local context and priorities.
- **Protect Public Diplomacy Funds:** Public Diplomacy at the State Department is funded primarily between two different buckets of funding: the Educational and Cultural Exchange (ECE) budget and the .7 funds in the Diplomatic and Consular Programs (D&CP) budget. In order to have a holistic look at how ECE funds affect .7 funds, and vice versa, it is imperative that the Director of Resources and the Budget Director have full access to data in both buckets. Since .7 funds are essential to implementing ECE programs, it is also important that these funds get the same kind of protection in the appropriations process as ECE does and/or that the Under Secretary for Management protects the public diplomacy budget line so that it matches the original budget request.
- **Close Examination of Overseas Staffing Model:** R/PPR has recently completed a comprehensive review of the criteria the department uses to analyze staffing models for public diplomacy operations. They expect to make significant changes and clarifications in the baseline services public diplomacy will provide an embassy in each category and, most significantly, the specific resources that investment will require. ACPD strongly recommends that this pay special attention to Africa, where PAS are greatly understaffed and managing an increasing load of ECA and countering violent extremism programs.
- **Continue to Encourage PD Professionals to Embrace Risk And Leadership to Tolerate Mistakes:** The Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs regularly reminds PD professionals to “get caught trying.” As is the case with almost all bureaucracies, suggestions of limited or negative outcomes may inhibit future funding and administrative support. This creates a climate that inhibits risk-taking and inhibits honesty about setbacks when they arise. Such a culture stifles creativity and also keeps activities from successfully adjusting to rapidly changing environments.

BUREAU OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS (PA)

- **Continue to Move toward Research, Analytics, and Evaluations Office:** Presently, the PA Bureau does not have a central office to systematically collect metrics on its information activities and programs. We recommend that the bureau, with support from the Under Secretary and R/PPR, develop its own capacity to better collect data on the reach of and reaction to PA messaging activities.
- **Condense Media Monitoring Activities:** PA's Rapid Response Unit (RRU) produces very quick turnaround reports with narratives that enable officials to confirm and enhance their effectiveness in responding to foreign audiences. IIP and Open Source Center (OSC) both produce longer-term, but deeper, analytic documents, often on similar topics. Posts and regional bureaus also produce their own media summaries. The department needs to better coordinate media monitoring and analysis across bureaus and between Washington and the field. This includes coordination with IIP in the area of social media and strengthening its relations with the Open Source Center to look for ways to increase capacity for media analysis, make more efficient use of resources, and avoid duplication of effort.

BUREAU OF INTERNATIONAL INFORMATION PROGRAMS (IIP)

- **Conduct a Study of the Impact of American Spaces:** A study on the value and impact of these spaces—American Centers, IRCs, Binational Centers and American Corners— for U.S. foreign policy goals, especially in the IIP-determined “top tier” spaces. The appraisals should link their efforts to mission goals and develop a research-based strategic plan for each space, identifying key publics and the public diplomacy impact objectives for these publics.
- **Raise Congressional Cap for an IIP Assistant Secretary:** Due to the congressional cap on the number of assistant secretaries, a coordinator leads IIP. The lack of an assistant secretary rank in IIP continues to limit the coordinator’s effectiveness and the State Department’s perceptions and inclusion of the bureau, which is especially inopportune given that the State Department as a whole is increasingly focusing on digital strategies to reach foreign publics and counter violent extremism. The ACPD agrees with multiple Office of Inspector General reports and strongly supports raising the legislative cap to allow for an Assistant Secretary for International Information Programs. We encourage the Under Secretary for Management, the Bureau of Legislative Affairs, and the Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs, to actively push for raising the cap.
- **Further Increase Capacity for Analytics Office:** IIP’s Analytics Office has made considerable strides this last year in supporting audience research and strategic planning and evaluations for IIP products and campaigns. ACPD supports an increase in staff support and funding to expand the amount of analytics that can realistically be done given current legal restrictions.

BUREAU OF EDUCATIONAL AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS (ECA)

- **Conduct a Thorough Review of ECA Programs:** There are currently 84 ECA programs. The norm is for programs to be added as the deliverables of various administrations, yet rarely do they replace other programs. Sometimes, new brands are created for existing program models. But the proliferation of programming can put added administrative strain on ECA, and especially the Public Affairs Sections at U.S. embassies who work to implement ECA-directed programs in the field. We recommend that the Policy Office complete an assessment of the brands and models of the current academic, professional and cultural programs to assess those that do/do not connect with foreign policy objectives. This involves making sure that programs are meeting the needs of critical foreign audiences and resonate with them, while also cutting back on duplicative overhead costs.
- **Focus on U .S. Mission Needs:** To meet local mission goals, it is essential that Public Affairs Sections have access to ECA programs that meet the needs of their local audiences. U.S. embassies consistently ask for more funding for English teaching and teacher training, youth exchanges, alumni engagement, culture and sports while keeping core programs such as Fulbright and the International Visitor Leadership Program strong. ACPD recommends that ECA continue to serve posts’ various needs depending on their local environments and that Washington-directed ECA activities remain responsive to the field.
- **Link Alumni Affairs Closely to PD Program Evaluation:** Alumni are a valuable constituency for understanding the long-term impact of exchange programs. We encourage strongly that the alumni office be more systematically linked with research and evaluation activities throughout the public diplomacy cone at the State Department.

CENTER FOR STRATEGIC COUNTERTERRORISM COMMUNICATIONS (CSCC)

- **Embrace New Technologies and Mobile Platforms:** As digital environments and mobile platforms proliferate, ACPD encourages CSCC in its efforts to establish a presence on mobile-based interactive environments and to distribute audio files over mobile devices to reach less literate audiences.
- **Further Improve CSCC’s Audience Research and Analytics Capacity:** To advance CSCC’s research and evaluation work and understand the long-term outcomes of digital engagement, it must expand its team to include more data analysts and program evaluation specialists. Without hard data to measure the effectiveness of the CSCC’s efforts, it is possible that the center is missing opportunities to increase its reach and influence.
- **Continue to work with Posts to Understand local Audiences and Priorities:** ACPD is encouraged by

the role that CSCC plays within the U.S. government interagency to work transparently to counter violent extremism in concert with the intelligence community. Its new programming arm also is working with Public Affairs Officers and their local staff working in target areas in Near East Asia, South Central Asia and Africa. However, CSCC could benefit from more funds and staff support to work with the field more consistently and respond to their distinctly complex environments.

SPOTLIGHT COUNTRY -- ALGERIA (BUREAU OF NEAR EAST ASIAN AFFAIRS)

- **Increase the Mission's Base Budget:** The base PD budget for Algeria should be increased closer to the median of \$1.9 million in worldwide PD spending to account for the enormous demand for engagement with the United States and for English-language education, which provides a vehicle for messages about countering violent extremism and the principles of a liberal democracy.
- **Highlight American Spaces:** The Information Resource Center in Algeria should receive increased support from IIP and the NEA Bureau given its new prioritization as a "top tier" space.
- **Increase English Language Fellows from One to Four:** With the enormous demand for English-language in Algeria and the restrictive travel environment that impedes embassy staff's mobility, the amount of English Language Fellows should increase from one to four.
- **Add Local Media Specialists to the Public Affairs Section:** The Public Affairs Section at the U.S. embassy in Algeria has a small team of roughly 17 people, which will likely grow to 19 by 2016 with the arrival of an Assistant Cultural Affairs Officer and an Alumni Coordinator. The PAS needs two additional local media specialists to ensure that the section has the bandwidth to engage with print, broadcast and social media simultaneously.

SPOTLIGHT COUNTRY -- HUNGARY (BUREAU OF EUROPEAN AND EURASIA AFFAIRS)

- **Increase Information Operations Support:** Given the creeping increase of anti-American rhetoric and pro-Russian sentiment in the Hungarian news media environment, the Public Affairs Section could use more personnel support for its Information Operations to focus on countering negative Russian influence in the country.
- **Continue Use of Strategic Planning Calendar:** The recently departed Public Affairs Officer employed the use of a strategic planning calendar to ensure that all information, educational and cultural activities work to support the goals of the integrated country strategy. We encourage the continued use of this practice with the new PAO, especially as it works to encourage the Ambassador and the entire mission to be involved in PD activities.

SPOTLIGHT COUNTRY -- MOLDOVA (BUREAU OF EUROPEAN AND EURASIAN AFFAIRS)

- **Finalize Lease on American Center:** The mission has identified a new space for the American Resource Center (ARC) in Chisinau that is in a prime location across the street from Moldova State University and downstairs from the current, less accessible, location. At the moment, the finalization of the lease for the new space is on hold as funding issues are resolved. Once funding is identified, OBO and IIP must agree on the design concept of the space to include security requirements. It is critical that the lease be finalized as soon as possible as other foreign embassies in Chisinau are considering the new space for their engagement activities with the Moldovan public and the U.S. mission is unlikely to find a comparable replacement.
- **Add an Information Officer:** Given the significance of influencing the media environment in Moldova, the Public Affairs Section needs an additional FSO, an Information Officer. Though approved for FY16, at the moment, this position is not finalized for FY17, leaving a gap that impacts the ability to affect the information environment.
- **Continue ESF Funds for Independent Media and Civil Society Grants:** The additional \$1 million in ESF funds given to the PAS in FY14 has been impactful for the embassy's civil society and independent media partners, yet it was one-time funding. If the U.S. is to support generational goals of building civil society and independent media in Moldova to move the country toward European integration, this funding must be more sustainable and strategic.

SPOTLIGHT COUNTRY: KENYA (BUREAU OF AFRICAN AFFAIRS)

- **Communicate More Directly How Targeted Recruits Fit into the YALI Mandela Washington Fellowship:** The three tracks of the Fellowship -- public management, civic leadership and business and entrepreneurship -- are central to the character of the program and are meant to be all-encompassing themes. Yet it is not always immediately obvious to targeted recruits how their skillsets may fit within those themes. People who define themselves by traditional careers -- education, agriculture, medicine, law, journalism -- may be uncertain about where they fit. During the recruitment process, we suggest that more efforts be made to explain the all-encompassing themes and how they are relevant to young leaders.
- **Support Kenyan Civil Society in Countering Violent Extremism:** The U.S. Mission and Public Affairs Section should continue to work with civil society leaders who are able to identify core issues at a more grassroots level. Training on countering narratives for civil society and Government of Kenya officials alike should continue. Supporting local law enforcement is also essential, and communities must view themselves in participants in countering extremist influences. We hope that the Kenyan Government will not be restrictive of civil society and their participation in these efforts.
- **Examine Progress of American Spaces in Kenya:** The American Spaces in Kenya are under tight security restrictions, with the American Corners in Moi University's Nairobi Campus and Nakuru Public Library (central Kenya) being the most open and accessible. It was difficult to gauge the overall impact that the Mission's six spaces have had on the Kenyan public given these restrictions. We encourage the adoption of the open access principles for the American Resource Center in the embassy compound, especially given the recent improvements to Internet connectivity, and also a close assessment of the amount of visitors and the quality of their engagement with the spaces before determining how to further allocate resources in this restrictive environment.

SPOTLIGHT COUNTRY: SOUTH AFRICA (BUREAU OF AFRICAN AFFAIRS)

- **Close Examination of Overseas Staffing Model for Public Affairs Sections in Africa:** The Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs' Office of Policy, Planning and Resources (R/PPR) has recently completed a comprehensive review of the criteria the department uses to analyze staffing models for public diplomacy operations. They expect to make significant changes and clarifications in the baseline services public diplomacy will provide an embassy in each category and, most significantly, the specific resources that investment will require. ACPD strongly recommends that this pay special attention to Africa, where there are many small Public Affairs Sections that are managing an increasing load of educational, cultural and countering violent extremism programs.
- **Ensure that Washington Visits Directly Connect to U.S. Mission Priorities:** Because South Africa is relatively more developed, has the largest PD staffing in the Africa region, and offers good international air connections, it is a go-to country for the State Department. However, public diplomacy speakers and events directed by Washington can often be forced upon the post with little clarity on how they fit with South Africa's Integrated Country Strategy and local priorities. Before deciding on South Africa as a destination for their efforts, PD and functional bureaus that want to advance their agendas should give the post sufficient lead time and consider what may or may not resonate with a South African audience.
- **Advance Messages of Cultural Heritage Preservation and the Global Slave Trade:** The discovery of the Portuguese slave ship São José off the coast of Cape Town, and the collaboration between the Smithsonian Institution and the Iziko Museums, is a tremendous opportunity for the State Department to broaden the conversation beyond Africa and the United States into a global one about the worldwide slave trade and to highlight the work of Ambassador Fund for Cultural Heritage Preservation.

BROADCASTING BOARD OF GOVERNORS (BBG) SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Increase Research and Evaluation Budgets Closer to 3 percent of Overall Budget:** In the FY 2016 budget request, the BBG decreased its combined funding request for the Office of Performance Review and Office of Research Assessment from \$8.533 million in FY 2015 to \$8.334 million, which is a drop to 1.1 percent of the total BBG budget. The rationale given is that the agency is cutting back on more costly quantitative polling and focusing more on qualitative interviews to give real time feedback on programming. The focus group discussions, interviews and panels are important, but it must be complemented with robust quantitative polling to understand audiences on a larger scale. Relying on general information from Gallup's global database, which is not catered to BBG's specific needs, is not an adequate replacement. We strongly encourage Congress to fund more than the current BBG research and evaluation request and for BBG to increase this office's allocation toward at least 3 percent in upcoming budget requests.
- **Increase VOA Original, Local News Reportage in Critical Areas in Africa:** Voice of America is the only U.S. broadcasting agency that reports across Africa (with the exception of Darfur, parts of eastern Chad and Sudan, which MBN reaches) and it has filled a critical void in the last year especially with its local reporting on the Ebola crisis, elections and political crises, and the actions of Boko Haram and al Qa'ida in the Islamic Maghreb. ACPD is encouraged by new delivery methods, affiliates and programs to expand VOA's impact in a region where just three percent of the population lives in countries with fully free media, according to Freedom House. This is actively advancing broad U.S. foreign policy goals in the region, while also educating African audiences about the United States. We support increases in the budget for VOA to expand its FM transmitters and to increase broadcasting in local languages, such as the Lingala language for the Democratic Republic of the Congo.
- **Continue to Expand RFE/RL and VOA Coverage in Response to Russia's Expanding Negative Influence in Europe and Central Asia:** ACPD continues to understand that the RFE/RL and VOA staff in Eastern Europe and Central Asia face numerous constraints to produce daily content. Despite this, there have been rapid expansions to RFE/RL coverage in response to the crisis in Ukraine. The Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs has made countering Russian disinformation a priority and given seed money to RFE/RL and Voice of America for expanded programming, which has resulted in the joint RFE/RL and VOA program Current Time. In Central Asia specifically, expanded programming in local languages would provide a compelling alternative source of information to the flood of Russian language content dominating the media space. To maximize the impact of their work, we strongly recommend that RFE/RL and VOA continue to increase their reach to key audiences. In particular, RFE/RL should continue to build on its new Digital Media Response Team (DIGIM) platform, continue to seek new distribution streams for the Current Time project, and expand research on the best practices for getting their content to the impacted zones.

Public Diplomacy and Countering Violent Extremism

ACPD RECOMMENDATIONS:

CREATE A “CENTER OF GRAVITY” FOR PUBLIC DIPLOMACY (PD) TO SUPPORT CVE STRATEGY: For public diplomacy professionals to effectively advance U.S. foreign policy efforts to counter violent extremism, there needs to be a clear CVE strategy across the U.S. government. Once that is clearly established, we recommend a cell to provide a “center of gravity” at the State Department and coordinate near-term messaging and communications with longer-term PD activities. This group would work to provide clear guidance and support to the field. To ensure that PD tactics are in synch with and advancing the larger CVE strategy, the working group should include representatives from the Office of the Under Secretary of State for Civilian Security, Democracy, and Human Rights (J); the Office of the Special Presidential Envoy for the Global Coalition to Counter ISIL; and the Office of the Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy and offices in the “R” family, including the Center for Strategic Counterterrorism Communications (CSCC); and the regional bureaus. Outside the Department, the cell should include the Broadcasting Board of Governors, USAID, and intelligence community and coordinate its efforts closely with the National Security Council. Currently, CSCC runs a whole-of-government strategic messaging coordination cell, which is important. But research, best practices for on-the-ground programming, guidance to embassies, and clear lines of funding for CVE efforts must also be established.

BROADEN THE CONGRESSIONAL VIEW OF CVE TO UNDERSTAND HOW PD IS – OR IS NOT – SUPPORTING IT: In order for Congress to understand where and how public diplomacy and international broadcasting activities fit within the larger CVE strategy for the U.S. government, we recommend that professional staff members from the House Foreign Affairs and Senate Foreign Relations committees work with their counterparts in the Armed Services, Select Intelligence and Homeland Security committees to examine interagency collective efforts to counter violent extremism. There is some precedent for this on the House side with the now-retired Caucus for Strategic Communication and Public Diplomacy, which was launched in 2010 by Republican and Democratic members of the House Armed Services Committee. The caucus worked to understand how the State Department, Defense Department and NSC were

working together on a joint, global strategic communications plan. A hearing on this issue with inter-agency leaders would also be of significant value.

LEVERAGE EXTERNAL AND INTERNAL EXPERTISE: The administration should consider pulling together a small advisory group— composed of former CVE-focused government officials, social scientists, tech industry representatives and non-governmental CVE experts—with whom current officials responsible for CVE strategy and tactics can interact and consult with on a regular basis. Additionally, State Department public diplomacy and BBG officials need to better leverage the expertise within the government, utilizing reporting from the intelligence community to match local trends with appropriate on-the-ground programs. Embassies should also continue to work with outside organizations that can tap into local networks of community leaders, teachers and public figures who are more likely to resonate with intended audiences.

ESTABLISH A FOUNDATION OF KNOWLEDGE FOR CVE: A core challenge to current CVE efforts is that a solid and shared foundation of knowledge about extremism and its root causes, in addition to past effective and ineffective efforts, has not been fully established. While the threat has morphed based on new environments, there is much to learn from previous attempts to counter extremism on- and off-line, both inside the United States and internationally. A comprehensive review from an external partner, such as a think tank, working with critical offices such as CSO, CSCC and the CT bureau, would support leadership in making decisions based on feedback loops of history and research. This would include not just information activities online, but educational and cultural programs, and connections with program alumni. ACPD is happy to support this effort.

PROVIDE PERSONNEL WITH THE TECHNOLOGY TO UNDERSTAND CVE TRENDS: Currently, CSCC is working to develop an electronic “dashboard,” which will function as a real-time social media monitoring tool to allow analysts to track trends and developments. This will help CSCC counter disinformation, but it is important that such a platform be expanded to support CVE practitioners globally to use real-time data to understand trends and plan programming

accordingly. For example, if a growing number of people in a given city are talking about joining ISIL because they have no other economic opportunity, a PAO in that country could implement an entrepreneurship program directed at the targeted population. ACPD believes such a tool would be instrumental in giving officers the means to build effective CVE programs.

ADD CVE EXPERTISE TO CRITICAL MISSIONS ABROAD:

As the State Department recognizes, CVE efforts on-the-ground are critical. Every city presents distinct challenges that only local leaders can influence, which requires officials who can carry out global policy directives in local contexts. Ideally, missions in critical countries should have CVE experts who work from Public Affairs Sections or Political Sections to coordinate efforts within and between missions. This allows experts to better share lessons learned and tailor local CVE efforts.

ACKNOWLEDGE THAT BOTH RESPONSIBILITY AND SUCCESS WITH CVE ULTIMATELY LIE WITH LOCAL ACTORS.

The U.S. government has unique convening power in bringing international players to the table, but local actors -- community and religious leaders, parents and families, and educators -- are essential to CVE efforts. Support and attention from heads of state and international government officials alone is insufficient. Sometimes foreign leaders can use their attendance at U.S.-organized events to "check the box" on working with the U.S. to counter extremism. This is especially important to remember as the administration convenes additional high-level international summits. If additional summits are to be held on CVE, it is critical to include ground-level working groups and civil society leaders.

OVERVIEW

The U.S. government has been grappling with how to utilize foreign public information and engagement tools to counter violent extremism for nearly 15 years. While countering violent extremism through on- and off-line activities is not new, we find ourselves in 2015 dealing with a complex and unprecedented intersection of technological expediency, conflicting identity issues in rapidly changing environments, and simultaneous ideological and ground wars. It is a context at once dangerous and ripe with opportunity. The U.S. must iteratively adjust its countering violent extremism strategy and tactics both globally and locally. ACPD staff spoke with roughly 20 current and former officials, in addition to external experts, to assess their views and recommendations for how we can capitalize on past and current public diplomacy efforts in a way that fits within the current context.

Today, violent extremists are increasingly adapting to

the digital age and embracing new methods of communication and interaction. The objective of violent extremism has changed under the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL). Unlike al-Qa'ida and al-Shabaab, ISIL's immediate and urgent focus is on the Caliphate. Bin Laden spoke of a Caliphate as an aspirational goal, yet ISIL's territorial gains and governance of those territories, as well as the proclamation of al-Baghdadi as a living Caliph, provides potential recruits with a tangible and realistic message: "Come and live in an Islamic State. We can help you make it happen." ISIL is amplifying this message with digital media tools. As both a magnet for foreign fighters and an inspiration for individual acts of terrorism (i.e. "lone wolf" attacks), ISIL has far outpaced al-Qa'ida in its prolific use and mastery of social media. Whereas al-Qa'ida relied mainly on videos that had to be smuggled to al-Jazeera or other television networks to reach mass audiences, ISIL sympathizers can follow specific Twitter accounts or YouTube channels and have immediate access to information, videos, songs, and depictions of life in ISIL-held territories.

J.M. Berger, an expert on ISIL's use of social media at the Brookings Institute, explains: "ISIS (ISIL) conveys and reinforces this sense of urgency with a remarkably high pace of media creation and dissemination. The pace only accelerates as ISIS (ISIL) gains territory and establishes branches around the world, each of which includes a media-generating division." He continued that while ISIL disseminated at least 250 pieces of propaganda in one month, from April to May 2015, al-Qa'ida has been mainly silent since late 2014. The last time al-Qa'ida communicated with any frequency or consistency was during the start of the Arab Spring in 2010.

As such, the administration's public diplomacy structures for countering violent extremism must have the agility to constantly adapt to the changing nature and the urgency of the threat. Although we cannot hope to fully eradicate extremism, the U.S. government, with the cooperation and support of partners in the international community, can reduce the space in which extremism thrives, in part by adapting messaging, communication and in-person interaction with local populations. As the current and future administrations formulate and strengthen public diplomacy programs to support CVE, it is important to target audiences on a global scale based on the common factors that lead to extremism, not on geographic location or religion. It is important to remember that not all programs implemented in Muslim communities are necessarily CVE programs.

THE WHOLE-OF-GOVERNMENT APPROACH TO CVE

This section is meant to provide an overview of what we understand to be the U.S. Government's approach to CVE. As this is an unclassified report, we do not address intelligence-related or other classified CVE efforts.

On February 17, 2015, the White House hosted the first International Summit on Countering Violent Extremism to “highlight domestic and international efforts to prevent violent extremists and their supporters from radicalizing, recruiting, or inspiring individuals or groups in the United States and abroad to commit acts of violence.” Held in Washington over two days, the conference brought together foreign leaders, senior officials from the United Nations and regional organizations, and private and civil society representatives “to discuss a broad range of challenges” nations face in preventing and countering violent extremism.

During the summit, the White House explained its approach to CVE as one that “encompasses the preventative aspects of counterterrorism as well as interventions to undermine the attraction of extremist movements and ideologies that seek to promote violence.” The administration lists the following three programs as necessary to a holistic and effective CVE strategy:

- Building awareness on the drivers and indicators of radicalization and recruitment to violence;
- Countering extremist narratives to discredit recruitment tactics, including encouraging civil society-led counter narratives online; and
- Emphasizing community-led intervention to empower community efforts to disrupt the radicalization process before an individual engages in criminal activity.

The U.S. government's current CVE efforts span the interagency community and are both domestic and internationally focused. At the White House, in concert with the Counterterrorism, Transborder, Defense and Regional Directorates, the Senior Director for Global Engagement coordinates outreach with the Department of State, Department of Defense and the U.S. Agency for International Development, as well as cooperation with international partners. The NSC Director for Countering Violent Extremism and Counter Terrorism focuses mainly on the domestic landscape and coordinates efforts between the Department of Homeland Security, the National Counterterrorism Center, the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Department of Defense. The Department of Homeland Security is the hub for domestic CVE efforts, focusing on three distinct and broad efforts: understanding violent extremism; supporting local communities; and supporting local law enforcement. To address these objectives, DHS works closely with both domestic and international partners, to include stakeholders throughout the community, state and local levels throughout the country.

STATE DEPARTMENT PUBLIC DIPLOMACY EFFORTS

The State Department's approach focuses on countering the extremist narrative as well as building capacity and resiliency across local communities through U.S. embassies in critical areas. Various efforts are led by the Office of the Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy; the Office of the Under Secretary of State for Civilian Security, Democracy, and Human Rights (J); and the Office of the Special Presidential Envoy for the Global Coalition to Counter ISIL. This includes efforts by the Bureau of Conflict and Stabilization Operations (CSO), the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor, and the Bureau of Counterterrorism which contribute to CVE research and implement programs that address the root causes of extremism.

During the February CVE summit, the State Department outlined its collective efforts as improving and sharing analysis, in addition to developing skills, expertise and strategies within the government to counter extremist narratives through strategic communications. On the ground, it plans to work more to promote the role of civil society, religious and education leaders in preventing and combatting extremism; to strengthen community-police and community security force relations; to build community resilience to recruitment and radicalization to violent extremism; and to prevent radicalization in prisons and promote rehabilitate/reintegrate violent extremists. All of these efforts involve engaging the private and charitable sectors to support community-led solutions and strengthen multilateral initiatives for CVE.

Yet despite the cross-cutting nature of CVE efforts, information sharing, expertise and intelligence is not well utilized for foreign public engagement efforts. PD programs are inherently the most flexible and localized, yet officers rarely collaborate with colleagues in the intelligence community who produce important material on influencers and violent extremism trends. Many Public Affairs Officers who should be on the frontlines of CVE efforts abroad do not hold sufficient higher level clearances for this material, nor do they regularly access less classified intelligence products that would inform this type of work. Funding sources also need to be leveraged across State Department bureaus and departments to ensure the continuity of programs or to more appropriately fund existing programs. Additional dedicated personnel are also required to focus on research and activities to support the field and inform a better integrated public diplomacy strategy. Personnel are also needed in the field to focus on CVE at critical posts. These officers need to work along side their political and PD officer colleagues. Public Affairs Officers should also ensure that they are part of country

team conversations and decisions to counter extremism locally.

Center for Strategic Counterterrorism Communications (CSCC)

*See also: CSCC Section of the report

When it comes to public diplomacy, the most concentrated CVE efforts lie in the Center for Strategic Counterterrorism Communications (CSCC). As explained elsewhere in this report, the CSCC was established at the direction of the White House and State Department in 2010 and codified by President Obama's Executive Order 13584 in September 2011 to "coordinate, orient, and inform government-wide strategic communications focused on violent extremists and terrorist organizations." Its work is based on the National Strategy for Counterterrorism and focuses on the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL); al-Shabaab in the Horn of Africa; al-Qa'ida senior leadership and its affiliates and allies in Pakistan; AQIM and its associates across the Sahel through Northern and Western Africa; and al-Qa'ida in the Arabian Peninsula.

At the White House Summit on Countering Violent Extremism (CVE), the President announced that CSCC would be led by a Special Envoy and Coordinator for Strategic Counterterrorism Communications. The addition of a Special Envoy role was intended to increase international engagement and partnerships to counter violent extremism and to develop and coordinate strategic counterterrorism communications with global allies. There are four core components to CSCC's work: message development; digital outreach; partner engagement and outreach; and U.S. government coordination. It aims to "contest the space" of violent extremists through the development and coordination of messaging broadcast through traditional media, digital engagements, and CVE programming. Online, it communicates in Arabic, Urdu, Somali, and English and focuses on highlighting the victims of terrorism; emphasizing the testimony of former radicals; exposing battlefield losses by ISIL and other extremist groups; revealing living conditions in terrorist-controlled areas; and amplifying credible voices. Under the new direction, it works less to directly engage the extremists. On the ground, CSCC's Partner Engagement and Outreach office works to identify partner opportunities and to encourage governments and non-governmental organization (NGO) partners to become active messengers and, when possible and appropriate, to coordinate efforts. It also works with U.S. embassies to design or solicit CVE communication project proposals via third-party organizations.

A critical dimension of this work is knowledge and data management. As described in the Research and Evaluation analysis in the report, CSCC has made progress with the hiring of a new data scientist to track Digital Outreach Team's (DOT) activities, but its audience research and digital analytics suffers from restrictions involving the Privacy Act of 1974 and complications in hiring full-time employees who are data experts and methodologists. While it

is inherently difficult to measure the effectiveness of long-term online and offline public engagement efforts, the administration should place more emphasis and resources on mapping the online spaces where violent extremists are engaging, analyze their tactics, propose counter messages, and then track the response to those messages. A dashboard to help analysts track online trends will be a useful development, but it is also critical that this tool be extended to other CVE practitioners so they can coordinate messaging and on-the-ground programming abroad.

On-the-Ground Educational, Cultural and Information Programming

Not all public diplomacy programs in areas that can be vulnerable to extremism are countering violent extremism programs. Labeling them as CVE can risk alienating communities with which the U.S. would like to establish long-term relationships with, and harm the credibility of more traditional public diplomacy activities. However, there are several programs underway in U.S. missions abroad to specifically counter extremist narratives through informational, educational, cultural and civil society development activities. With the support of the regional bureaus and PD offices in Washington, critical embassies combine English-language education, professional development, and information programs for vulnerable and underserved populations. By working closely with embassies and local partners, they can represent the mix of programming needed to respond to the unique environments, which vary not just by country, but by city and by district.

In the Near East Asia (NEA) region, for instance, the NEA bureau has worked with ECA, PA and other State Department elements to implement exchange programs with visiting leaders from anti-ISIL coalition countries; to create spokesperson trainings to sharpen anti-extremist messaging; and to organize social media workshops in the region to coordinate anti-ISIL messaging and amplify a counter narrative of tolerance and coexistence online. In July 2015, the United States and the United Arab Emirates established the new anti-ISIL communications hub, the Sawab Center. Its goal is to quickly and effectively counter ISIL messaging, communications and recruitment and help to place the region on "sawab," the right path, by increasing the volume and intensity of online debate representing moderate, tolerant, and constructive approaches in the region. Launched as a partner to the Center for Strategic Counterterrorism Communications (CSCC), the Sawab Center is expanding to connect with select Coalition partners and others in the region to launch coordinated messages, photos and videos that undermine ISIL's claim to legitimate leadership and strategic successes. The center is also increasing the current network of independent influencers and voices in the region that can compete effectively with ISIL's online supporters.

In South Asia, considerable FY 2014 Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO) funds were spent specifically to counter violent extremism in Afghanistan and Pakistan.

The U.S. embassy in Kabul spent 31 percent of its funds (\$17.52 million) on programs that included strengthening the police's capacity to conduct community outreach. The U.S. embassy in Islamabad spent 4.8 percent of its FY 2014 budget (\$1.745 million) on specific CVE activities, such as a program that aims to build the capacity of community, civil society, and non-governmental leaders in remote districts to identify violent falsehoods, provide alternate perspectives, and counter violent extremist narratives with positive messages. CSCC also coordinates Washington support and contributions for the Pakistan CVE Communications Framework and the Community Engagement Office at the U.S. embassy in Islamabad, while CSCC's Digital Outreach Team reaches online audiences through Urdu language engagement.

And in Africa, CSCC has worked with U.S. embassies in Nigeria and Cameroon to block Boko Haram recruitment, and with the U.S. embassy in Kenya to coordinate local CVE efforts to stop al-Shabaab's recruitment of local youth. Select U.S. embassies also work with USAID and the Department of Defense's Military Information Support Operations (MISO) teams. It would be worthwhile to examine one or two case studies of this cooperation to determine if there are best practices that can be implemented in other missions.

BROADCASTING BOARD OF GOVERNORS EFFORTS

See also: BBG Section of the report and Voice of America in Africa

The Broadcasting Board of Governors also plays a role in USG countering violent extremism efforts with its programming and news outlets such as the Voice of America, and the Middle East Broadcasting Network's Radio Sawa and Alhurra Television. As the U.S. government's largest communication outlet, the BBG can offer reliable sources of news and information that can counter extremist disinformation and poisonous narratives, while encouraging dialogue. For instance, MBN's Raise Your Voice platform for Alhurra Iraq encourages citizens to communicate their concerns to each other and with Iraqi leadership. VOA is also using its global platform to disseminate content that delegitimizes ISIL to audiences tuning into the VOA Kurdish Service and VOA Turkish Service, in addition to services in Africa, Eurasia and Southeast Asia, where young people can be vulnerable to recruitment as foreign fighters. By providing information through news and investigative reporting, commentary and talk shows that engage citizens, BBG offers platforms to amplify local voices.

There is, however, a challenge with incorporating the BBG's long-term, news-focused efforts into the daily interagency policy rhythm. As the administration adapts its CVE strategy, it should aim to strengthen day-to-day coordination with the BBG, as well as ensure that BBG's programming fits into a comprehensive long-term strategy, while maintaining the editorial integrity of BBG entities.

CONGRESSIONAL REVIEW OF CVE EFFORTS

For Congress to more completely understand how public diplomacy fits, or does not fit, into whole-of-government CVE strategy, members and staffers should be aware of the cross-functional aspects of CVE. This summer, Congress has taken action to improve the U.S. government's international and domestic response to extremist threats. On July 15, 2015, for instance, House Homeland Security Committee Chairman McCaul held a hearing to investigate whether the U.S. government is doing enough to counter domestic and international terrorism. The previous month, Chairman Michael McCaul introduced a bill, the Countering Violent Extremism Act of 2015, H.R. 2899, which was aimed at streamlining and prioritizing the Department of Homeland Security's efforts to counter

violent extremism. A hearing on the role of foreign public engagement and information activities, which includes interagency representatives, would also be beneficial.

To address the issue in a whole-of-government manner, professional staff members of the House and Senate Foreign Relations/Foreign Affairs, Armed Services, Select Intelligence and Homeland Security committees could work together on a consistent basis to understand the different dimensions of the approach counterterrorism and CVE, and offer cross-functional oversight, rather than each committee only looking at one agency's approach to the issue.

LEVERAGING EXTERNAL AND INTERNAL EXPERTISE

Perhaps the biggest weakness in current CVE efforts is the lack of institutional memory and knowledge regarding previous ones. Despite the current context being significantly different than that of the immediate post 9/11 era, we are stuck asking the same questions: Where should U.S. government be focusing its efforts? How can the United States communicate effectively with vulnerable communities and build credible platforms to amplify anti-extremist voices? What should we the government avoid doing?

A comprehensive review of past successful and failed strategies and tactics would help the interagency community move forward with adapting CVE strategies to changing times. This involves harnessing the expertise and experience of former government officials and practitioners through consistent dialogue. A regular advisory board to supplement State Department efforts like the Counter-ISIL Information Coordination Cell (ICC) could help avoid repeating past mistakes, reinvest in previously successful efforts, and maintain focus on overall strategy and objectives, not just the tactics. It is also crucial that there be a shared foundation of knowledge on the root causes of terrorism and how they may vary depending on context. Here, the work of the Bureau of Conflict Stabilization Operations (CSO) and the Bureau of Counterterrorism (CT), in addition to interagency partners and

academia, could be especially valuable.

This also requires acknowledging what external organizations are doing to connect with key audiences worldwide to counter extremism. There are several essential people-to-people programs underway that can empower youth worldwide, including the United States Institute of Peace's (USIP's) Generation Change, a program that works with young leaders across the world to foster collaboration, build resilience and strengthen capacity as these youth seek to transform their local communities; USIP's Women Preventing Extremism Violence, a program designed to increase women's influence and engagement so that they can play a part in strengthening their communities' resilience; and innovative tech-savvy programs such as the incubator at Affinis Labs, which provides Muslim youth the opportunity to develop and launch applications to address global problems, including violent extremism.

These examples constitute a tiny fraction of the work that is being done outside government to address the problem of extremism. By recognizing and understanding these efforts, the players involved, and the resulting impact, the U.S. government can better understand where its own efforts can fit in—where it should be the primary player, where it should provide a supporting role, and where it should stand back and allow local communities to change their environments for the better.

Countering Negative Russian Influence in Europe and Central Asia

ACPD RECOMMENDATIONS:

DEVELOP A STRATEGY TO COUNTER ALL FORMS OF NEGATIVE RUSSIAN INFLUENCE IN EUROPE AND CENTRAL ASIA: Russia's efforts go far beyond media propaganda and U.S. efforts to reach Russian-speaking populations should go well beyond messaging. A strong public diplomacy strategy from Washington should be rooted in a broader Department strategy to use security, diplomatic, economic tools alongside informational, educational, and cultural tools. The development of a strategy in Washington should include all relevant regional and functional bureaus and interagency representatives with policy interests related to the impact of harmful Russian activities. It will also highlight where U.S. embassies can work together in the region. A multilateral approach to enlist the help of U.S. allies is also essential, especially since external state and non-state actors may have more credible voices in countering Russian influence in the media, civil society and political spaces. To localize efforts and make sure they resonate with local audiences, it is also vital that affected embassies produce an annual, integrated strategy to employ simultaneous informational, educational and cultural tools to counter negative Russian influence as embassies promote U.S. policies and values.

EXPAND CURRENT MESSAGING EFFORTS TO REFLECT AT LEAST THREE MAJOR AUDIENCE SEGMENTS: Currently, U.S. messages focus largely on Russia's incursion into Ukraine. While this messaging is well suited to audiences in frontline states, other European and Central Asian audiences may dismiss the same messages. Instead, the State Department should begin to tailor its messaging to reflect at least three audience segments including: frontline populations, and both supportive and skeptical populations in partner nations.

REVIEW PD PROGRAMS IN FRONTLINE STATES TO INCREASE PARTICIPATION AMONG KEY AUDIENCE SEGMENTS, ESPECIALLY RUSSIAN MINORITIES: Ethnic Russians in frontline states largely feel that they have been excluded and ignored by their capitals. Though some countries have taken steps to connect and engage these populations, the United States should play its role to provide beneficial programming, such as English-language activities and opportunities to participate in cultural, educational and professional development exchanges, such as

IVLP. Treating them as an integral part of U.S. programming will send a strong signal to host governments that they should also treat these segments as an integral part of their populations.

PROVIDE ADDITIONAL SUPPORT TO COUNTRIES IN CRISIS: The management of limited staffing resources in Public Affairs Sections is challenging worldwide. Yet critical threat posts especially need adequate staffing to deliver effective messaging and programming. For instance, as stated elsewhere in this report, given the significance of influencing the media environment in Moldova, the Public Affairs Section needs an additional, permanent FSO, an Information Officer.

POSTS WITH INCREASED U.S. MILITARY OPERATIONS NEED APPROPRIATE SUPPORT FROM THE MILITARY TO SUPPORT THEIR PUBLIC AFFAIRS REQUIREMENTS: Increased military training exercises, equipment movements, and other operations are critical to showing U.S. support for NATO allies. However, some of the frontline posts that U.S. military teams visit, for example Latvia and Estonia, are staffed with only one or two public diplomacy officers. Even at larger posts it is near impossible for PD officers to provide quality support to their own missions as well as to visiting military officers, whose public affairs officers have varying degrees of experience in the field. The department should work with regional military commands to develop a regional military media support cell that can help support the increased tempo of military activity in the region. [Note: This is a separate issue from Military Information Support Operation units that work closely with some Public Affairs Sections worldwide.]

RETAIN A PD FOOTPRINT IN RUSSIA: The Kremlin has closed almost all American public diplomacy facilities in the country and it actively prevents their reopening. To continue to show U.S. commitment to the Russian people, the United States should ensure that public diplomacy programs sustain in spite of these attempts to block them. This includes maintaining the current PD funding level for the U.S. mission in Moscow at \$4.55 million in addition to the still functioning exchange programs, such as Fulbright scholarship and the International Visitor Leadership Program.

CONTINUE TO EXPAND RFE/RL AND VOA COVERAGE IN RESPONSE TO RUSSIA'S EXPANDING NEGATIVE INFLUENCE IN EUROPE AND CENTRAL ASIA: ACPD continues to understand that the RFE/RL and VOA staff in Eastern Europe and Central Asia face numerous constraints to produce daily content. Despite this, there have been rapid expansions to RFE/RL and VOA coverage in response to the crisis in Ukraine. The Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs has made countering Russian disinformation a priority and given seed money to RFE/RL and Voice of America for expanded programming, which facilitated the launch of the joint RFE/RL and VOA program *Current Time*. In Central Asia too, expanded programming in local languages would provide a compelling alternative source of information to the flood of Russian language content dominating the media space. To maximize the impact of their work, we strongly recommend that RFE/RL and VOA continue to increase their reach to key audiences. In particular, RFE/RL should continue to build on its new Digital Media Response Team (DIGIM) platform, the International Broadcasting Bureau (IBB) should continue to seek new distribution streams for the *Current Time* project, and IBB should expand research on the best practices for getting content to the impacted zones. We recommend that VOA and RFE/RL continue to increase viewership by looking for new platforms and channels to distribute their material.

OVERVIEW

Over the last year, ACPD representatives were able to travel to Belgium, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Moldova, Poland, and Ukraine. After speaking to a number of government, media and civil society contacts, it is evident that many are seriously concerned that Russia has designs to reunify majority ethnic Russian parts of former Soviet states after its incursions into South Ossetia, Crimea and Donetsk. Russia has invested in a multi-pronged strategy to sow discontent and doubt among European and Central Asian populations, international organizations, governments, and political parties to fracture support for sanctions against Russia and regional security initiatives. It appears to be taking a “poisoned well” approach, which means they are not seeking to directly improve regional and global public opinion about Russia, but instead are trying to erode European, Central Asian, and global public opinion about the U.S., EU, and their respective civil societies and media institutions.

This approach allows Russia to generate doubt on single issues rather than clarify the much more complex and interconnected realities global citizens face. For instance, Russia wants to undermine NATO's regional security role by convincing member states that NATO's focus on Russia

is misguided and overlooks greater threats to individual countries. It is also intent on deepening domestic divides in European countries to distract publics from larger issues that affect the European Union. This is observed through Russia's funding of political parties across Europe as well as Russia's influence of European-based think tanks through funding or the establishment of new organizations. In conjunction, Moscow is emphasizing how not all E.U. countries, like Greece, can afford to levy economic sanctions against Russia and should be focusing instead on their own serious economic challenges.

The most visible signs of these propaganda efforts are in the government-controlled Russian media. Misleading news reports and outright fabricated stories saturate Russia, in addition to Russian speaking communities throughout Eastern Europe and Central Asia. Many of these audiences have no comparable alternatives to Russian-language television since local news broadcasts and entertainment programming are in the local vernacular. As a result, they watch almost exclusively Russian produced entertainment and news content. For example, according to TNS Emor market researchers, viewership of Russian-language Estonian produced content is very low and ratings have recently been further depressed due to channels switching from analog to digital signals. Most ethnic Russians in Estonia live close to the border and they are able to view analog signals from Russia with existing equipment, giving them little need to purchase digital equipment.

Our concern is not with Russian influence as a whole. Russia has a right to communicate its position on world events alongside other state actors and to inform domestic and foreign publics about its affairs. However, we are deeply concerned about Russia's multi-pronged efforts to propagandize, mislead, and sow mistrust among Russian, European, Central Asian, and global audiences. The best way to counter this propaganda is to foster mutual understanding, dispel misinformation, and acknowledge Russian contributions to the international community, such as U.S.-Russian cooperation on space and nuclear disarmament issues.

In response, the U.S. needs to employ traditional bilateral and multilateral diplomacy and public diplomacy tools in a coordinated fashion with U.S. allies to present a systemic challenge to Russia's efforts. These tools must recognize that there are varying audiences that need tailored information, in addition to educational and cultural program options.

INFORMATION PROGRAMS

Messaging efforts from State Department headquarters, regional media hubs, and U.S. embassies in Europe and Central Asia seem to be effective at countering fabricated Russian news media stories. These efforts should continue. However, the messages also need to be appropriately contextualized to local environments.

Currently, U.S. messages focus largely on Russia's incursion into Ukraine. While this is well suited to audiences in frontline states, it misses two other important audience segments: those who are generally supportive of countering Russian influence and aggression, and those who are skeptical. For generally supportive audiences who live in E.U. and NATO states, messages can acknowledge that support and ask them to take additional steps and to work with skeptical countries to help them recognize the risks. For skeptical audiences living in these states, messages need to address their points of confusion over Russia's incursions while recognizing the other domestic challenges they are facing.

Public Affairs Officers at critical posts should have the lead in tailoring and amplifying messages to local audiences, with support from Washington. Since messages from the formal State Department podium and by senior officials often cascade to broad audiences, they should be used infrequently and only for the most egregious cases, such as the January 2015 rocket attack on eastern Ukraine that killed 30 people. Social media messages should also be used to target specific audiences and require more significant localization.

Messages should also be better coordinated with critical allies, such as NATO and European Union member state government and non-governmental organizations. Existing efforts through the Friends of Ukraine group, for instance, have been positive and can be built upon. Many

partners are looking to the U.S. to lead them in helping to organize and align their efforts to counter negative Russian influence. Since the U.S. is not always the most credible messenger with key audiences, however, officials must identify markets where allies may be more impactful, and routinely provide them with support. Working more to enlist partner nations, especially frontline states, to maintain pressure on Russia through E.U. and NATO action needs to be done with the recognition that member countries face a plurality of threats, such as violent extremism and illegal migration, and that they need to address multiple concerns in their public communications, and not just Russia.

The Broadcasting Board of Governors (BBG) can also play a positive role in the region through its broadcasting and web presence. BBG's efforts in the region have traditionally been focused through single country Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL) and Voice of America (VOA) services, in addition to their fairly new collaborative product, Current Time. Current Time is a 30-minute Russian language daily news program that aims to provide a more balanced alternative to Russian state news. The program's biggest challenge, however, is that it's mostly aired on non-Russian language channels. While some Russian-speaking audiences can access the content through the Internet, there is opportunity to expand this content to new markets and platforms. The BBG also needs more support in its efforts to procure content from the American entertainment industry to frontline states, especially content that is not already provided to Russian speaking markets. This entertainment content would attract bigger audiences for news programs that could air before or after comedy and drama programs.

EDUCATIONAL, CULTURAL AND CIVIL SOCIETY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

U.S. educational and cultural programs can also be better employed to establish relationships with Russian speaking segments of frontline populations. The expansion of the FLEX program in Ukraine after it was shut down in Russia was a significant redirection of PD resources in 2014. Professional development programs, like IVLP, can work to bring Eastern European and Central Asian business and civil society leaders to the U.S. to focus on issues such as reconciliation, diversity, and integration. Since the U.S. often needs to build trust with key audiences before discussing sensitive issues, cultural preservation programs, sports diplomacy, or music programs can offer a softer opening.

The Public Affairs Bureau's Media Coops program, which enable foreign television and radio stations to send

producers and crews to the United States to collect various coverage, could also be used to help augment Russian-language news content about the U.S. In addition, there is significant opportunity to expand the training and professional education of local journalists through IVLP programs, regional media tours, and in-country workshops. If successful, these programs can be broadened to include civil society and alumni. One example of an effort underway is the use of the TechCamps model in Ukraine, which aims to connect civil society representatives with technology leaders in supporting and defending Ukrainian civil society. To further support and develop the skills of local civil society actors, Public Affairs Sections can also work with resources developed by the Democracy, Human Rights and Labor bureau (DRL) that are available to

several U.S. embassies in the region.

The alumni of U.S. exchange programs are also critical to engage in discussion about their respective countries' needs, and how to counter the stream of negative Russian influence. For instance, in Moldova, alumni of U.S. programs have created their own organization to stay connected to the U.S. embassy and meet regularly to discuss local and regional issues. While each embassy has different models for alumni engagement, strengthening the connection is imperative. The Office of Alumni Affairs in the Educational and Cultural Affairs Bureau (ECA) can positively support greater alumni outreach in critical areas.

The International Information Programs Bureau (IIP) speakers programs can also cover topics such as the need for economic sanctions against Russia, the importance of diversity and reconciliation, and the negative influence of Russian propaganda in Europe and Central Asia, especially. U.S. embassies should work with IIP to ensure that speakers' careers and messages are a match to local audiences. This may mean widening the speakers budget for these spaces, since it is important that speakers deliver a well-suited message for the audience. Alumni should also be considered potential speakers.

For all of these informational, educational and cultural programs, however, audience research, digital analytics and impact evaluations are necessary to ensure that they are reaching and impacting critical audiences. While some

data may be available at the national level, it is not always available at more granular, local levels. To ensure more data-driven programming, the State Department and the BBG must increase their research and evaluation personnel and budgets.

It is also important that these programs be inclusive. Ethnic Russians in frontline states, for instance, feel that they have been excluded and ignored by their capitals. Though some countries have taken admirable steps to connect and engage these populations, the United States should play its role to provide beneficial programming to them, such as English-language activities and opportunities to participate in cultural, educational and professional development exchanges, such as IVLP. Treating them as an integral part of U.S. programming will send a strong signal to host governments that they should also treat these segments as an integral part of their populations.

Last, this inclusivity means maintaining U.S. outreach to the Russian people despite the Russian government's active efforts to shutter American public diplomacy activities in the country. To continue to show America's commitment to the Russian people, the State Department should ensure that public diplomacy programs continue in spite of these attempts to block them. This includes maintaining the funding level at \$4.55 million in addition to the exchange programs that continue, such as Fulbright scholarships and the International Visitor Leadership Program.

Young Leaders Initiatives: Africa, Southeast Asia, the Americas

ACPD RECOMMENDATIONS:

PRIORITIZE PROCESS EVALUATIONS AND LONG-TERM

IMPACT STUDIES: Initial impact studies, process evaluations and a host of anecdotes all indicate that the Mandela Washington Fellowship under the Young African Leaders Initiative (YALI) has been successful in its first two years. The Young Southeast Asian Leaders Initiative (YSEALI) would also benefit from a central in-depth process evaluations to examine how the Fellows program, the regional workshops, “Seeds for the Future,” and the YSEALI network facilitated in the region are progressing. Long-term impact studies will also help determine how the Fellows continue to – or do not continue to – apply their educational experiences to their everyday lives, and how their relationship and impressions of the United States change. Attention should focus on how the programs advance U.S. foreign policy priorities in the targeted regions. R/PPR is in the process of designing an impact study for YALI, including its Mandela Washington Fellowship and USAID gathered baseline data from YALI Fellows on their views on selected issues affecting Africa, which ACPD strongly supports. The need for continued process evaluations incorporating the Fellows, host institutions, and U.S. embassies for all of the Young Leaders Initiatives should continue their iterative approach over time and assess the continued relevance of the programs to U.S. foreign policy priorities. As much as possible, process and impact evaluations should be expanded to include the programs’ several components, such as the YALI Network, YALI Spaces and the YALI Regional Leadership Centers in Africa, USADF entrepreneurship grants, and the YSEALI virtual network in Southeast Asia.

INCREASE YALI-DEDICATED DEPARTMENT OF STATE STAFF FOR U.S. MISSIONS IN AFRICA AND IN WASHINGTON:

New educational and cultural affairs and leadership development programs can support presidential priorities and reflect modern foreign policy goals. Yet each time a new program is created, rarely is an older program eliminated. While Washington is forced to juggle staffing in the short term to manage these programs, posts have not been able to increase their staff to properly manage them and maintain the relationships with an ever-increasing and diverse alumni. This is especially

acute in Africa, where Public Affairs Sections are sometimes under-staffed and resourced. ACPD strongly supports the increase of roughly 20 full-time employees to handle the increase in Mandela Washington Fellows in PAS’s, in addition to TDY support from Washington and the Africa Regional Services Office in Paris. It is also important that the exchanges support budget is maintained for staffing in the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs for its lead role in administering the Fellowship. Similarly, staff resources need to be available for USAID to oversee the YALI Regional Leadership Centers, and support the classes of Mandela Washington Fellows upon their return to Africa.

COMMUNICATE MORE DIRECTLY HOW TARGETED RECRUITS FIT INTO YALI MANDELA WASHINGTON FELLOWSHIP:

The three tracks of the Fellowship -- public management, civic leadership and business and entrepreneurship -- are central to the character of the program and are meant to be all-encompassing themes. Yet it is not always immediately obvious to targeted recruits how their skillsets may fit within those themes. People who define themselves by traditional careers -- education, agriculture, medicine, law, journalism -- may be uncertain about where they fit. During the recruitment process, we suggest that more efforts be made to explain the all-encompassing themes and how they are relevant to young leaders.

Recognizing that youth worldwide are increasingly contributing to their societies on profound levels and building interconnected global platforms, the Obama administration began to prioritize engagement with global young professionals in 2010. The Young Leaders Initiative programs are meant to focus on young professionals who are driving change in public policy, civil society and entrepreneurship in critical regions for U.S. foreign policy. They aim to increase participants’ leadership skills to generate change while creating networks with American citizens, businesses, organizations, and each other. The first focus was on the Africa region with the Young African Leaders Initiative (YALI), followed by the Young Southeast Asian Leaders Initiative (YSEALI) and the Young Leaders of the Americas Initiative (YLA).

As a presidential priority, the Young Leaders Initiative programs are directed by the White House, primarily

through staff at the National Security Council, and implemented by an interagency team including State Department's Educational and Cultural Affairs Bureau (ECA), African Affairs Bureau (AF), East Asian and Pacific Affairs Bureau (EAP), and Western Hemisphere Affairs Bureau (WHA); USAID's Bureau for Africa, Bureau for Asia, and Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean; and the U.S. African Development Foundation (USADF). U.S. embassies and USAID mission offices are the focal points for activity overseas. Contributing to their success, the programs ultimately adopted versions of existing ECA models for the Washington portion of the programs (i.e. the Study of the U.S. Institutes and Professional Fellows Program), and worked with U.S. embassy Public Affairs Sections' youth council networks at targeted embassies. Because of President Obama's attention, the Young Leaders Initiatives have energized public diplomacy programs in the Africa and Southeast Asian, and there are similar

expectations that it will do so the Western Hemisphere. ACPD applauds the president's focus on public diplomacy as part of his national security strategy through these initiatives. Presidential public diplomacy initiatives should always include pertinent State Department professionals, as well as input from departments and agencies across the government including USAID, the Department of Commerce, Small Business Administration, and Department of Defense from the outset to make sure the efforts are not duplicative of existing programs. These programs should be developed with a policy-first mentality, ensuring that the U.S. foreign policy goals for the program are clear from the beginning. Public diplomacy professionals should also utilize research, polling, intelligence, and data-based trends to shape these programs to most effectively achieve their stated foreign policy objectives.

YOUNG AFRICAN LEADERS INITIATIVE (YALI)

The Young African Leaders Initiative was originally launched in 2010 to support U.S. foreign policy objectives to grow trade and commerce with Africa, strengthen democratic institutions, empower civil society, and forge security partnerships. Investing in Africa's youth also acknowledges Africa's economic rise. YALI was designed to capitalize on the U.S.'s convening power and create a platform for African young professionals from 49 countries in sub-Saharan Africa to "spur growth and prosperity, strengthen democratic governance, and enhance peace and security across the continent."

In 2013, President Obama launched the Washington Fellowship for Young African Leaders in a speech in South Africa; in 2014, with its first cohort, it was renamed the Mandela Washington Fellowship. ACPD applauds the Educational and Cultural Affairs Bureau and the Press and Public Diplomacy Office in the African Affairs Bureau for their work in implementing the Mandela Washington Fellowship, along with the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), which is responsible for supporting fellows upon their return to their home countries and running the YALI Regional Leadership Centers to broaden YALI's reach in Africa. The State Department also identified a very capable implementing partner in IREX, which has diligently worked with ECA to adapt the lessons learned from the first year of the program. The International Information Programs Bureau (IIP) also plays an innovative role in creating and managing the virtual YALI Network, and the U.S. African Development Foundation has supported seed funding for Fellows. The Mandela Washington Fellowship program's success thus far is due to all of these actors' extraordinary efforts, and overtime put in the Public Affairs Sections, and other embassy sections, in the field.

Mandela Washington Fellowship: The Fellowship is comprised of a six-week academic and executive leadership program at a U.S. university or college, a three-day Presidential Summit in Washington D.C., an optional six week professional development experience (or internship) in the U.S. (Note: In 2014, it was an eight-week internship), and follow-on activities in their home countries including professional practicums, mentorships, travel grants to speak at major conferences and industry events around the world, and YALI Regional Conferences in Africa. Fellows participate in one of three tracks: business and entrepreneurship (business ethics; intersection of business with civil society and government; innovation and technology; financial management); civic leadership (advocacy; strategic planning; organizational development; civil society, business and government); or public management (citizen engagement; human resources management systems; financial management systems; government, business and civil society). At the U.S. universities/colleges, referred to as Institutes, Fellows also take part in leadership development, and have access to peer mentoring, networking in their field of interest, community service activities, and other professional development opportunities as well as cultural events. Those who remain in the U.S. for internships have more time for professional development. Once all of the Fellows return home, the U.S. embassies, USAID missions, the United States African Development Foundation, and other partners work to continue to support them, including regional conferences, seed funding, professional development experiences, and mentorship opportunities.

The Mandela Washington Fellows: In 2014, nearly 50,000 young Africans between the ages of 25 and 35 applied for 500 Fellowships. For the 2015 cycle, there were close to 30,000 applications for 500 Fellowships. Of the first 500 Fellows, one hundred had professional development experiences in the U.S. and nearly 200 had professional practicums in Africa. Additionally, nearly 150 took advantage of tailored mentorship matches, and 50 have utilized speaker travel grants. In the 2014 cohort, more than 55 percent grew up outside of capital cities and a little under half did not live in capital cities at the time of application. There was a 50/50 gender split. Coming into the program, roughly 80 percent held mid-level or executive positions; approximately 40 percent owned a business and 37 percent ran a non-profit organization. Many of the cohort had little prior experience in the United States: 80 percent had never traveled to the U.S.; 95 percent had never studied in the U.S.; and more than 65 percent had no professional relationship with individuals or organizations in the U.S.

Mandela Washington Fellowship Cost: While the average cost of a Fellow for the U.S. based exchange program is \$24,000 within the Educational and Cultural Exchange budget, the program has a considerable cost share structure. For instance, at least half of the costs of the academic U.S.-based institutes were paid for by the 20 U.S. university partners, which amounted to a minimum \$2 million cost share. The State Department and IREX also identified corporate sponsors and partners to the universities, which included Coca-Cola, IBM, and AECOM, as well as in-kind support from many others. While the State Department cost of roughly \$24,000 per Mandela Washington Fellow will continue in FY 2016, in order for the Mandela Fellowship and its follow-up alumni support to continue at these levels, in-kind donations and funds from host institutions and the private sector must sustain.

Lessons Learned from 2014: ACPD traveled to South Africa and Kenya, meeting with PAOs based there and ones based in central Africa (who were in Johannesburg for a workshop), in addition to returned Mandela Washington Fellows about the first year of the program. Many of the initial concerns that embassy staff and alumni expressed seem to have been resolved due to a series of sound process evaluations that IREX and ECA conducted with both Fellows and embassy officials. As a result, 10 fundamental changes were made to the U.S.-based program. This included replacing three of the universities; providing the Fellows with more time to work on their specific projects and to network with each other and local American leaders; more field visits and less time in the classroom; a six week internship instead of an eight week one; and extra efforts to accommodate Fellows with disabilities. ECA also learned, from the field perspective, that posts needed more time to review applications; presenting future USAID activities needed to be incorporated earlier

in the U.S.-based activities and annual planning process; applications should be streamlined; Skype should be used for applicant interviews when candidates live far from capital cities; and the posts need immediate ways to cope with the scores of disappointed applicants. The conduct of these process evaluations, too, demonstrates that ECA is committed to improving the Fellowship and that the model seems to be working and stabilized. It is critical that these process evaluations continue to modify the exchange iteratively.

YALI Network: This has been a multi-bureau initiative at the State Department with the IIP Bureau leading the creation of the virtual YALI Network – accessed at yali.state.gov -- to reach more young Africans with the initiative. The YALI Network was originally designed in 2013 to stay connected to the 49,000 young Africans who initially applied for the Mandela Washington Fellowship and who showed an eagerness to connect with the U.S., but who were not accepted. The YALI Network helps to deepen this engagement, through American Spaces, other in-country events, and directing the individuals to other cultural and educational programs. Today, the network includes more than 150,000 members who can access expanded online courses, including three new online courses called the “The Mandela Washington Fellowship Institute Courses.” The network also aims to connect members with global leaders in their field and enable members to collaborate on new initiatives. While the embassies initially did not have access to the Contact Management Database that captured these individuals’ names and email addresses, IIP is working on acquiring the software that will make sure PD officials at posts can stay connected with them on the ground.

YALI Alumni: The ECA alumni division dedicates \$2 million from the YALI budget toward supporting YALI alumni with networking, mentoring other youth, and community engagement opportunities. In addition, USAID funds three YALI Regional Coordinators based in South Africa, Kenya and Ghana to manage activities in Africa. USAID supports each class of the Mandela Washington Fellows by convening three regional conferences in Africa, offering over 200 on-the-continent internships, offering funding for Fellows to attend conferences and other initiatives, and matching Fellows with mentors.

YALI Regional Leadership Centers: USAID is implementing four YALI Regional Leadership Centers that are based in Ghana, Kenya, Senegal, and South Africa to train approximately 3,500 participants annually. These centers will serve as regional hubs across the continent to encourage transformational learning and enhanced leadership skills for a broader range of young leaders between the ages of 18 and 35. Similar to the Mandela Washington Fellowship, the centers divide their participants into similar study tracks: 1) civic leadership; 2) business and

entrepreneurship; and 3) public management. The centers will train several competitively selected cohorts per year and will offer online training as well. Each Regional Leadership Center is managed as a public-private partnership, which has brought more than \$70 million of cash or in-kind contributions from companies and foundations to support the Centers. This includes a premier partnership with the MasterCard Foundation, which is providing \$15 million of cash. Besides the MasterCard Foundation, each center has a coalition of several African and international partners, including at least one U.S. university, as well as a wide range of companies like Microsoft, Intel, GE, Procter & Gamble, McKinsey & Company, and others. These connections derive benefits to U.S. companies and organizations that are engaged in Africa. The spaces provide a hub for participants to build their leadership capacity, and advance social ventures, community service projects, and new business start-ups. Several Mandela Washington Fellowship alumni serve as peer mentors, speakers, or on advisory boards for the Centers, further helping to connect and integrate the different components of YALI.

Program Additions for 2016: In summer 2014, President Obama announced a doubling of the Mandela Washington Fellowship from 500 to 1,000 Fellows for the summer of 2016 in order to meet the overwhelming demand indicated by the 50,000 applications received for the 2014 Fellowship. Up to 80 Americans will also participate in a YALI reverse exchange next year, traveling to Africa to work directly with program alumni and others in the region, which is a positive. ECA would be well served by adding at least three full time positions to support this increase; the administration of the program is currently supported by contractors – a practice that is not sustainable in the long run. ACPD is also concerned about the demands placed on the field to increase recruitment, selection and preparation of Fellows. We encourage the Under Secretary or Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs to approve the 20 additional full time staff at embassies to support this program increase and recommend that future dramatic increases of programs happen after a proper

process evaluation takes place.

Assessing Long-Term Impact of YALI Programs: ACPD has followed the Mandela Washington Fellowship closely since it was featured at our public meeting in March 2014. We found that the 2014 Fellows are building innovative businesses, connecting with American and African investors, forging new relationships with young leaders across African nations, and serving their communities with skills developed during the Fellowship. Our visits to South Africa and Kenya to meet with select alumni provided for a host of inspiring anecdotes.

For the 2014 cohort, and under its agreement with US-AID, IREX used the Social Responsible Leadership Scale (SRLS) to determine immediate impact of the academic program and found that Fellows rated themselves at least 35 percent higher than before in the following professional skills: sharing your beliefs/values, public speaking, time management, listening to other people's suggestions/concerns, expressing ideas, being self-reliant/independent, future planning, and critical thinking. ECA found that similarly, the U.S. host universities felt impacted by the Fellowship, with 75 percent either agreeing or strongly agreeing that the program increased cross-cultural literacy on their campus. In addition, 90 percent of host universities had plans to continue to collaborate with their Fellows. This all indicates a successful program in its early years. A more long-term impact study about the Fellows experience, but also how they continue to – or do not continue to – apply the experiences to their everyday lives and how the program does -- or does not -- advance U.S. foreign policy objectives in the region is critical. R/PPR is in the process of designing such a study, which ACPD strongly supports. As mentioned earlier, continued process evaluations with the Fellows, host institutions, and U.S. embassies will ensure a successful iterative approach to the Mandela Washington Fellowship. As much as possible, process and impact evaluations – in addition to digital analytical studies -- should include Fellow follow on activities, the YALI Network, and the YALI Regional Leadership Centers.

ECA-IREX Partnership for Mandela Washington Fellowship: IREX was selected through the congressionally-mandated open competition process. In a cooperative agreement award, ECA is substantially involved in program activities above and beyond routine grant monitoring. Under the terms of the agreement, IREX oversees the overall coordination among the host institutes through sub-awards to 20 universities and colleges. ECA develops the application materials and scoring system, and IREX hosts the on-line application and application database. IREX recruits and administers readers who score applications to assist posts with the interview and selection process. IREX also works closely with ECA to develop the placement process after posts have interviewed and ranked candidates. IREX issues the Fellows' DS-2019 documents and oversees their health benefits. IREX also designs and oversees the professional development experience component for 100 participants, and manages the logistics for the Presidential Summit. IREX also monitors the well-being of each participant during their time in the U.S. ECA takes the lead in the development of the Institute curriculum and the evaluation process. ECA oversees all communications with participating U.S. embassies and consulates regarding the recruitment and selection of participants and other aspects of the program. ECA makes final decisions on all aspects of the Fellowship including university selection, Fellow selection, internship host locations, summit agenda, etc. Each year of the program is administered through a renewal process, whereby ECA requests IREX make specific modifications to the fellowship based on lessons learned and feedback. In 2016, IREX will also handle the international travel logistics to alleviate the burden from U.S. Embassies. Through a separate agreement with USAID, IREX supports follow-on activities with Fellows for a full year following their return to Africa after the U.S. based portion of the Fellowship. USAID also has substantial involvement in the management of the IREX award and works with IREX to oversee the completion of Mandela Washington Fellows' Leadership Development Plans, the peer election by fellows of Regional Advisory Boards to make recommendations to USAID on Africa-based support for fellows, the development of three YALI Regional Conferences in Africa, mentorship matching sought by fellows, professional practicum placement of Fellows in companies and organizations in Africa, and speaker travel funding to help Fellows expand their networks and showcase their talent.

YOUNG SOUTHEAST ASIAN LEADERS INITIATIVE (YSEALI)

President Obama launched the Young Southeast Asian Leaders Initiative in December 2013 for emerging leaders from 10 member states of the Association for Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). It is designed to strengthen leadership skills while deepening engagement between young professionals and the U.S. on key foreign policy challenges. Southeast Asia was chosen as part of the President's commitment to rebalance U.S. foreign policy in the Asia-Pacific region.

YSEALI is different from YALI in the sense that it began with regional workshops and programming, which continue year-round. In November 2014, while in Burma, President Obama announced the creation of the YSEALI Fellows Program, which brings 500 exceptional young ASEAN leaders each year to the United States as Academic or Professional Fellows to further develop their professional and leadership skills and to exchange ideas with Americans at locations throughout the United States while developing action plans for projects they will implement when they return home. Since the Fellows come to the U.S. in small cohorts throughout the year, there is no Presidential Summit in Washington D.C., as there is for the Mandela Washington Fellows, although one group of Fellows was able to meet with President Obama in Washington at the close of their program. A Presidential Summit is planned to take place in Southeast Asia around the ASEAN annual meeting.

The driving office at the State Department for YSEALI is the East Asian and Pacific Affairs Bureau (EAP), which works closely with ECA and embassies in the 10 countries to leverage existing programs and networks to advance YSEALI's larger objectives. USAID in Washington is not directly involved in implementing specific dimensions of YSEALI like with YALI, although embassies work with USAID missions where relevant. This model allowed posts to incorporate the Fellows and other program participants into existing, mission-driven programming and alumni networks, and grow the program organically while benefiting from presidential attention.

YSEALI Fellows Cost: In FY 2015, \$5.00 million went toward funding the first cohort of 300 YSEALI Academic and Professional Fellows; both cost \$2.25 million, plus \$500,000 for alumni activities and the regional summit. This amounts to a cost of \$16,666 per Fellow. The FY 2015 request for YSEALI in the ECE budget was \$10 million for 500 Fellows, which amounted to \$20,000 per participant.

The YSEALI Fellows Program: The Fellows program in the U.S. is a five-week exchange that places 500 Fellows over the course of a year into one of two tracks, professional and academic, to deepen their knowledge on entrepreneurship and economic empowerment, environment, or civic engagement. On the professional track, Fellows receive direct work experience with U.S.-based businesses,

NGOs, or government offices in the fall and spring.

On the academic track, Fellows spend five weeks at a U.S. university in an academic and leadership institute. Academic Fellows are undergraduate students or recent graduates aged 18–25 who have demonstrated academic and leadership skills. The 2015/2016 Academic Fellowships will be hosted by: Arizona State University, the Dialogue Institute at Temple University, the Donahue Institute at the University of Massachusetts, the East-West Center, Northern Illinois University, Kennesaw State University, the University of Connecticut, the University of Montana, and the University of Nebraska-Omaha.

Professional Fellows are community leaders, aged 25–35, who have a track record of making a difference in their communities. They participate in individually tailored working placements at a U.S.-based government office, business, or nonprofit organization. The goal is to develop skills that will support good governance, a strong civil society, and increased economic opportunity in their home communities. Cooperating partners in the 2015/2016 YSEALI Professional Fellowship are: the American Councils for International Education, the American Council of Young Political Leaders, International City/County Management Association, the University of Montana, and the University of Oklahoma. These hosts will then travel to Southeast Asia to spend time in the workplaces and communities of the YSEALI Fellows. Once home, the Fellows join the alumni associations at the respective U.S. embassies to build on their experiences, address challenges, and create new opportunities in their home communities.

Year-Round YSEALI Activity in Southeast Asia: Beyond the Fellowship program, embassy PAS's offer a broad set of workshops, funding opportunities, in-country activities, and virtual engagement designed to support the goals and aspirations of young ASEAN leaders under the banner of YSEALI. These include:

- **YSEALI Generation Regional Workshops:** The original YSEALI program, the regional workshop builds regional networks for ASEAN youth to work together to solve shared challenges regarding the environment, entrepreneurship, and civic engagement. Since their beginning in 2013, roughly 515 emerging leaders have benefited from these professional workshops, which focus on training in entrepreneurship skills, workforce development, environmental studies, women's leadership, and other leadership skills. In FY 2015, they are planned in Vietnam, Malaysia, Indonesia, and Thailand, and will focus on developing young leaders' professional skills.
- **Seeds for the Future: Youth in Action:** This grant competition provides support to young leaders' who demonstrate the most promising

and innovative ideas for civic engagement, education, entrepreneurship and economic development, and environment and natural resources management. The program matches grantees with their peers in other Southeast Asian countries and encourages them to work together to solve regional challenges. The first grant program took place in 2014; 43 organizations competed and 17 winners received support to implement their projects. The next competition is currently open and features a per-team maximum award of \$20,000 each.

YSEALI Network and Virtual Engagement: Nearly 35,000 young people from ASEAN have become members of the virtual YSEALI Network, which connects leaders from across the region and offers online resources, trainings and networking opportunities. The YSEALI website, facebook, and Twitter accounts regularly update network members about upcoming events, courses, resources, and opportunities.

ASEAN-Led Youth Engagement: As part of its coordination with ASEAN, the U.S. is supporting other youth initiatives:

- **ASEAN-U.S. Science and Technology Fellows Program:** ASEAN and the U.S. have coordinated a Fellows program, which embeds young science leaders in a government office in their home country for one year to work on a variety of tasks to increase their understanding of the governance and policy process. The program trains participants to develop strong leadership skills and awareness of ASEAN goals and objectives. In 2014, its first year, six scientists participated in the program. In May 2015 14 new fellows from seven ASEAN Member States began positions in a variety of fields related to energy, biodiversity, and fisheries.
- **ASEAN Youth Volunteer Program:** In August 2013, the United States and Malaysia launched this five-week program to encourage young volunteers (18-30 years old) from all ASEAN countries to serve in the region, while enhancing cross-cultural ties and understanding among ASEAN youth. Nearly 150 youth have participated to date in programs in Malaysia; the next programs will take place in Cambodia, the Philippines, and Burma. The ASEAN Youth Volunteers Program is funded through a \$1.4 million grant from the United States, in partnership with the Government of Malaysia, the ASEAN Secretariat, and the University Kabangsaan Malaysia.
- **Thailand's Khon Kaen University:** Thailand has established Southeast Asia's first Center

for Civil Society and Non-Profit Management to support and cultivate young civil society leaders, with support from the United States. The school will offer coursework on nonprofit management and serve up to 140 university students and 40 practicing civil society leaders who represent the Lower Mekong sub-region each year. By 2018, the University will develop Bachelor's and Master's degree programs as well as executive certification (non-degree) programs to support a career path for young leaders who want to work in civil society and the nonprofit sector.

Assessing Lessons Learned and Long-Term Impact: YSEALI has evolved organically since 2013 in Southeast Asia, working to leverage existing resources and networks that local Public Affairs Sections have cultivated for years. While ACPD was not able to look into the program in much depth this year compared to YALI, we strongly encourage the regular use of process evaluations to examine how the Fellows program is progressing, in addition to ones for the regional workshops, "Seeds for the Future," and YSEALI network. It is also imperative to conduct long-term impact studies for these programs to assess how the participants are using their professional development experiences at home and advancing ties between ASEAN and the U.S.

YOUNG LEADERS OF THE AMERICAS INITIATIVE (YLAI)

The Young Leaders of the Americas Initiative was launched this year to deepen and expand ties between emerging business and social entrepreneurs in Latin America and the Caribbean with the U.S. in order to increase more inclusive economic growth. The FY 2016 ECE budget request reflects \$5.00 million for the program with 250 participants, with the cost of \$20,000 per Fellow.

The Western Hemisphere Affairs Bureau's Office of Press and Public Diplomacy (WHA/PPD) drives the pilot program, with implementation support from the Professional and Cultural Exchange division of ECA. The program will focus on leveraging new and existing youth networks in the region that Public Affairs Sections and non-governmental organization partners have cultivated

over time. It also seeks to complement the 100,000 Strong in the Americas presidential initiative, which seeks to increase the number of Latin American and Caribbean students studying in the U.S. YLAI, which is still being developed, envisages a four-week fellowship that focuses on young professionals and allows them to participate in workshops at an incubator, accelerator, non-governmental, or civil society organization; and in a summit to facilitate mentoring, networking, and investment opportunities in the U.S. Currently the interagency is also developing the contours of the non-pilot fellowship, which will prioritize using entrepreneurship to curb youth unemployment and address at-risk youth.

Research and Evaluation of Public Diplomacy and International Broadcasting Activities

*Also see “Data-Driven Public Diplomacy: Progress Toward Measuring the Effectiveness of Public Diplomacy and International Broadcasting”: <http://www.state.gov/pdcommission>

ACPD RECOMMENDATIONS:

INCREASE STATE DEPARTMENT AND BBG RESEARCH AND EVALUATION BUDGETS CLOSER TO 3 PERCENT OF OVERALL BUDGET:

This vital work remains greatly underfunded at the State Department and the BBG. While a small bump in funding for this was requested in FY 2016 at the State Department, it is still under 1 percent of the total public diplomacy budget. Public Diplomacy offices at the State Department should move toward 3 percent of its budget over the next few years, which is the percentage that USAID uses to review its programs. We recommend that the BBG move toward 3 percent as well. In the FY2016 budget request, the BBG decreased its combined funding request for the Office of Performance Review and Office of Research Assessment from \$8.533 million in FY 2015 to \$8.334 million, which is a drop to 1.1 percent of the total BBG budget.

EXPAND OFFICE OF POLICY, PLANNING AND RESOURCES (R/PPR)'S EVALUATION AND MEASUREMENT UNIT UNDER NEW DIRECTOR:

This year, R/PPR established a new Director of Research and Evaluation to provide more strategic leadership for audience research and understanding program impact. This position and the team that the Director will lead will take time to develop, but it is a positive step forward to give more organizational legitimacy and authority to research, advocate for researchers' needs, and prioritize research activities in ways that reflect strategic short-, middle-, and long-term objectives.

REVIEW PRIVACY ACT AND PAPERWORK REDUCTION ACT RESTRICTIONS:

The Privacy Act of 1974 contains restrictions that may impact certain types of digital audience research and analytics in the International Information Programs Bureau and Center for Strategic Counterterrorism Communications as they relate to the identification of influential figures online. Further, the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1980 limits the State Department's ability to conduct measurement research in a timely fashion as research officials must, with limited exceptions, submit each study involving requests for information from the public to OMB for its approval. These statutory restrictions hinder the ability to assess the impact of the department's public diplomacy initiatives impact over time. ACPD recommends that the State Department join its efforts to work with Congress to update the laws.

OVERVIEW

Evaluating progress on long-term public diplomacy and international broadcasting activities' goals takes time. As ACPD found in its September 2014 report, “Data-Driven Public Diplomacy: Progress Toward Measuring the Impact of Public Diplomacy and International Broadcasting Activities,” databases and tools are not yet sufficient to assess long-term progress, and this makes it difficult to provide Congress with analysis on the efficiency and impact of public diplomacy in a timely manner.

Throughout the BBG, there is a stronger tradition of audience research, which is directed by the BBG's Office of Research Assessment and incorporated in the operations of Voice of America (VOA), Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL), Radio Free Asia (RFA), the Middle East Broadcasting Networks (MBN) and the Office of Cuba Broadcasting (OCB).

In the past year, it has become evident that reforms are underway at the State Department, but they have been stymied by the Privacy Act of 1974; the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1980; a lack of funding; restrictions on hiring full-time experts; and the lengthy security clearance processes for new hires. In order to maintain momentum, leaders must emphasize consistently that audience research, analytics and evaluations matter to the daily conduct of public diplomacy. The State Department's QDDR also advocated for the need to enhance “the use of data, diagnostics, and technology,” which requires “smart investments in the technology, knowledge management, and diagnostics that allow us to leverage data throughout the Department.” Strategic planning based upon data will increasingly become important to the department through a hub for analytics, data science, and knowledge management and this should support the Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs' efforts to create a hub for analytics and data science to apply to PD.

In addition, the current Under Secretary regularly encourages risk taking. All leaders must emphasize that it is essential to evaluate PD and broadcasting critically to allow leadership to redirect strategy and resources accordingly. Leaders must overcome the existing culture of risk-aversion to ensure that realistic evaluations are produced.

To improve research to the scale, depth and frequency necessary for data-driven programming, the budgets at both the State Department and the BBG must be increased over time to be closer to 3 percent of the total budget, which is the accepted standard at the U.S. Agency for International Development and U.S.-based philanthropies. Public Diplomacy has seen a slight budget increase in the State Department, but it remains below 1 percent of the total PD budget. It is

essential that the FY 2017 budget request and Congressional Budget Justifications outline an increase in funding for this work and establish the vision for its implementation. In the BBG's FY 2016 budget request, it decreased its combined funding request for the Office of Performance Review and Office of Research Assessment from \$8.533 million in FY 2015 to \$8.334 million, a drop to 1.1 percent of the budget. As the total BBG budget increases, the percentage of funds dedicated for research is decreasing.

Finally, given the current lack of resources, it is essential that inter-agency mechanisms be set up to share data and collaborate. The Office of Inspector General and the Government Accountability Office both have called for clear lines of authority to access data gathered by other government units (e.g. Open Source Center), as well audience research collected by third parties. ACPD supports this recommendation.

ACPD ACTION IN FY 2016: Pending re-authorization, ACPD is keen to create a Subcommittee on Research and Evaluation to review State Department and BBG research agendas, methodologies and interpretations once a quarter. It will report on annual progress at State and BBG to Congress, and provide objective feedback to ensure the methodology is rigorous and the research goals are achievable. The subcommittee would be comprised of selected academics, market researchers, and research professionals from private organizations. ACPD also plans to consult with external legal experts on the restrictions of the Privacy Act and Paperwork Reduction Act, and provide separate recommendations based on their analysis.

OFFICE OF POLICY, PLANNING AND RESOURCES (R/PPR) EVALUATION PROGRESS

The Office of Policy, Planning, and Resources (R/PPR) is in the process of responding to recommendations from the U.S. Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy (ACPD), Government Accountability Office (GAO), the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), and a R/PPR internal management review to expand research and the evaluation of public diplomacy activities. With a budget of roughly \$1.5 million in FY 2015, R/PPR will build on the existing Evaluation and Measurement Unit (R/PPR/EMU) and expand its capacity to conduct impact evaluations of major public diplomacy initiatives, particularly those involving more than one bureau or post, and work to build a cycle of PD program design, monitoring, and evaluation. In addition to conducting its own impact evaluations, the EMU will consult and advise on R-family bureau evaluations. This oversight is designed to ensure evaluations are in accordance with departmental policies and best practices; provide information on evaluation outcomes to State offices, OMB and Congress; and provide guidance to PAOs, both at post and in Washington, on evaluation policy, tools, procedures and reporting. Additionally, R/PPR is working to expand its research capabilities in order to arm PAOs with the same type of research used by political, information, product

marketing, and other communications campaigns. This research aims to be actionable and provide concrete, tactical guidance on audience targeting (or audience segmentation), messaging, media and platforms; and will employ a variety of research techniques (e.g., surveys, focus groups, in-depth interviews, social network analyses, and ethnography). The research provided to PAOs abroad will include both original research and curated secondary research conducted by other agencies and institutions and curated by the unit. EMU professionals will work directly with PAOs, helping them integrate research into tactical, in-the-field action.

CENTER FOR STRATEGIC COUNTERTERRORISM COMMUNICATIONS (CSCC) EVALUATION PROGRESS

In 2015, CSCC hired a dedicated data scientist to ensure optimal use of data to drive and assess operations, although additional staff support is needed in this area. The scientist is also limited by various organizational constraints, including the Privacy Act of 1974. The focus of the data scientist's work is audience research, although it also aims to measure changes in opinion or public sympathies and, at best, has proxies available that can be inferred to provide some understanding of impact. One tool currently under development is an electronic "dashboard," which will function as a real-time social media monitoring device to allow analysts to track trends and developments, while providing analytics that should help CSCC remain agile to meet ever-changing technological needs. This includes using statistical analysis in order to determine the most effective content types, optimal times for posting messages, and influential narratives and hashtags that resonate with the right audiences.

CSCC continues to seek new tools to apply to the assessment of its social media and other CVE efforts. The Digital Outreach Team's (DOT) operations are difficult to assess since the amount of potential terrorists who decided to not become terrorists after being exposed to counter-messaging materials is unknown. By contesting the space where extremists deliver their messages DOT tries to instill doubt in the minds of potential extremist sympathizers. It cannot be assumed that if a potential extremist is induced by DOT to doubt the credibility of ISIS that they will be so transformed that they actively support DOT messaging.

However, to advance their research and evaluation work, CSCC must expand its team to include not just a data scientist, but also data analysts and program evaluation specialists.

EDUCATIONAL AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS BUREAU (ECA) EVALUATION PROGRESS

Existing since 1999, the purpose of the evaluation unit is to understand the performance management of various ECA programs and to assess the long-term impact of select programs through evaluations. The types of engagement measured include the short-term International Visitor Leadership Program (IVLP) and longer exchanges, such as various programs under Fulbright and the Youth Exchange and Study Programs. The unit does so mainly through short-term

studies via the ECA Performance Measurement Initiative (PMI), which has included, over the last 15 years, 60,000 to 70,000 respondents who were surveyed before and after their U.S.-sponsored programs. For example, to date, the PMI has conducted post-program surveys for more than 30 IVLP projects and 33 different Professional Fellows Programs projects. It also conducts post-program surveys, annually, for the 535 participants in the Critical Language Scholarship program and the 80 students in the Study of the U.S. Institutes: Global Environmental Issues program. ECA is currently in the process of conducting a biennial strategic planning process for the entire PMI portfolio in order to ensure it is aligning with the department's strategic priorities for foreign policy.

The ECA evaluation unit also commissions roughly three long-term evaluations per year on select programs, which the ECA leadership requests. These evaluations may look at programs that are relatively new, those that are linked to specific foreign policy goals or initiatives, and those that are priorities for the Under Secretary. The evaluations rely on surveys, interviews, focus groups, and document analysis. In the last year, it has released three new evaluations on the E-Teacher Scholarship Program, the English Language Specialist Program, and the English Teaching Assistant Program (one of the Fulbright Programs for U.S. college graduates). The evaluations found each program to be successful, but it is unclear yet how a feedback loop to determine future strategy will be established. The unit has demonstrated how the December 2013 SportsUnited evaluation affected the program office, revising a new approach to sports diplomacy by no longer just training coaches in sports management, administration, coaching techniques, and teamwork but teaching them how sports can serve as an empowerment tool, mediate tension, and educate youth.

Currently, the unit is conducting evaluations on the Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarship Program, the English Access Microscholarship Program, and the Foreign Fulbright Graduate Students in STEM Fields, and the Fulbright "Lab to Market Innovation" enrichment seminar. The results from those evaluations should be available in FY 2016. The ECA evaluation unit is also working with R/PPR on the impact study for the Young African Leaders Initiative, and helped to craft the evaluation sections in the J. Christopher Stevens Virtual Exchange Initiative solicitation for a managing partner to assess its impact. The ECA's Evaluation unit will spend roughly \$1.5 million in FY 2016, which is enough for a fourth long-term evaluation, but is still less than 1 percent of the ECE budget.

INTERNATIONAL INFORMATION PROGRAMS (IIP) BUREAU ANALYTICS PROGRESS

The IIP bureau is building an analytics team with the goal of making data analysis an integral part of all of its communications initiatives. It has nearly doubled the

Analytics Office's budget and begun to build an infrastructure for the rapidly-advancing field of digital communications analysis. This includes adding personnel to build a diverse team that consists of audience research specialists, social scientists, coders with a machine learning background, and developers, as well as new analytical tools that have access to a broad range of data sources such as foreign and domestic social media platforms and sources of online news.

As an initial step to integrating data analysis into the bureau's communications cycles, IIP Analytics has designated a liaison to each IIP communications effort and platform. Collectively they provide expertise that can assist with researching audiences for digital communications, optimizing the messaging and content of a campaign or platform, and measuring audience response to communications. This includes the bureau's newly organized campaign teams, the new digital platform ShareAmerica, and the embassy website modernization effort. The focus of this team has been to inform decision making regarding IIP products, programs, and platforms, but they will begin to expand collaboration in FY 2016 with a series of virtual analytics sessions to engage interested colleagues throughout the Department, raising awareness of what's possible with social media analytics, answering analytics related questions, and gauging the level of demand for analytics services as well as what kind of data is found to be most useful to PD practitioners across the globe.

The Analytics team has created a database to capture all State department social media communications, which allows it to answer questions about social media content and performance across the PD community in a way that previously was not possible. While this nascent effort continues to be refined, it has begun the process of giving practitioners direct access to the data underpinning their digital communications. The Analytics team is making strides with some of these new initiatives, however they continue to face tough challenges in recruiting high-demand skills through the complicated government hiring process. As a temporary solution, Analytics worked with the 18F office in the General Services Administration (GSA) to bring on short term consulting and developer expertise. As the team is able to add more full-time staff with key skill sets, new applications can be built on this initial foundational effort to provide the PD community access to the data underpinning the Department's digital communications.

As referenced earlier in the report, this team also faces limitations to its social media analytics work posed by the Privacy Act of 1974. Currently, the team cannot conduct analysis of public social media communications at the user level, which prevents them from providing PD practitioners an understanding of the most influential voices in online conversations.

PUBLIC AFFAIRS (PA) BUREAU EVALUATION PROGRESS

There is currently no central monitoring and evaluation team within the PA bureau, although several offices track traditional and social media for planning purposes. There is no lack of daily media monitoring throughout the bureau, and it also has a Rapid Response Unit that completes daily content analysis on global media trends and advises on how to respond. The only office within PA that has a designated analytics capacity is the Office of Digital Engagement (ODE). ODE uses a variety of commercial tools (e.g., Google Analytics or Brightcove) to assess how much online attention its messaging on social media receives. ODE feeds this data to PA leadership in weekly and monthly reports to assess the efficiency of messaging and improve future work. (Note: ODE focuses on the department's primary social media accounts, while the majority of the department's social media properties are maintained and tracked outside of Washington by embassy staff). ODE also evaluates different tactics for spreading information through social media.

ACPD worked with the PA Bureau in 2015 to examine how to best conduct audience research, analytics and evaluations, while incorporating it into their strategic planning. This resulted in PA's adoption of the ABCDE model (developed as part of the Foreign Service Institute's (FSI) Marketing College) which emphasizes front-end research, analysis of audience (A), their desired behavior (B), messaging content (C), message delivery (D), and evaluation (E) for the bureau. Efforts to provide consistent strategies and a common language to define realistic goals and objectives across bureaus are critical to developing impactful and measurable programming. We look forward to PA's continued progress in this area.

BROADCASTING BOARD OF GOVERNORS (BBG) EVALUATION PROGRESS

The Office of Strategy and Development and the Office of Performance Review, together with the newly established Office of Research and Assessment (ORA), seek to understand audiences and impact by measuring the efficacy of BBG programming in achieving their objectives in the target countries within which they operate. Specifically, BBG research measures effectiveness in terms of audience size, program quality and reliability, whether or not programming increases the audience's understanding of current events and American society and policies, whether audiences share the information with others, whether the information provided helps people to form opinions on important topics, among other factors. The BBG contracts with Gallup to conduct quantitative audience and market research. Gallup focuses primarily on quantitative audience research, employing a mix of surveys, focus groups, in-depth interviews and audience panels. The BBG's deep dives on audience research in countries vital for U.S. foreign policy have been particularly valuable to

the interagency community and to outside stakeholders.

In recognition that impact is about more than only audience reach, BBG established an impact model that it started to employ in 2014. The model uses a mix of quantitative and qualitative measures to examine the effectiveness of BBG's activities to inform, engage and connect audiences, and be influential in the short-, medium- and long-term with publics, local media, and local institutions. The model informs the performance goals that support BBG's strategic objectives and the agency's overall strategic plan.

Essential to the impact model's success, however, is the quality and scale of quantitative and qualitative data. In FY 2014, \$8.800 million of the BBG's \$726.5 million budget, or 1.2 percent, went toward research and evaluation. In FY 2015, the combined budget for the Office of Performance Review and Office of Research and Assessment was \$8.533 million, or 1.15 percent of the \$742.067 million total budget.

The planned amount for FY 2016 is \$8.334 million, or 1.11 percent of the \$751.500 million budget. As the total BBG budget increases, the percentage of funds dedicated for research is decreasing. The rationale given is that the agency is cutting back on more costly quantitative polling and focusing more on qualitative interviews to give real time feedback on programming. The focus group discussions, interviews and panels are important, but it must be complemented with robust quantitative polling to understand audiences on a larger scale. Relying on general information from Gallup's global database, which is not catered to BBG's specific needs, is not an adequate replacement. We strongly encourage Congress to fund the BBG research and evaluation above its request and for BBG to increase this office's allocation toward at least 3 percent in upcoming budget requests.

Strengthening Public Diplomacy Personnel at the U.S. Department of State

*Also see: "Getting the People Part Right, Part II: The Human Resources Dimension of U.S. Public Diplomacy in 2015." Done in partnership with Ambassador Lawrence Wohlers and the Meridian International Center. <http://www.state.gov/pdcommission/reports/>

ACPD RECOMMENDATIONS:*

*See below for a more detailed breakdown of 19 recommendations.

STRENGTHEN THE OFFICE OF POLICY, PLANNING AND RESOURCES FOR PUBLIC DIPLOMACY'S ROLE IN STRATEGY AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT: Public Diplomacy practice at the State Department needs a functional core. R/PPR provides much guidance already in strategic planning and budgeting, but could also do so in how the department recruits, selects and advances public diplomacy professionals in both the Foreign and Civil Service. This involves supporting the development of PD officers and identifying the skill sets they will increasingly need to merge digital fluency with traditional in-person engagement.

BE MORE INVOLVED WITH RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION PROCESSES: While the Department spends roughly \$60,000 on recruitment per successful applicant, it does not recruit for PD skills, and other skills specific to cones. Recruitment should not be an exclusive activity for the Bureau of Human Resources or Diplomats in Residence, and PD leadership should actively engage in recruitment throughout the year. R/PPR should also identify questions for the written and oral exams to ensure PD skills are evaluated, and that PD officers participate on the Board of Examiners to better assess Foreign Service candidates.

IMPROVE TRAINING AND EDUCATION OF PD PROFESSIONALS: The generalist nature of the hiring process places a considerable responsibility on the training and mentoring capacities of the State Department to prepare new entrants to function effectively. Education reform begins with establishing a meaningful standard for professional competency in public diplomacy positions, working closely with the Foreign Service Institute (FSI) to support entry-level practicums and ongoing coursework for Foreign and Civil Service Officers and developing modules on public diplomacy for non-PD courses and seminars.

EXAMINE PUBLIC DIPLOMACY ADVANCEMENT AT STATE DEPARTMENT: In the last seven years, no PD-coned officer has been promoted to Career Minister or Career Ambassador, while 22 Political-coned

officers have been promoted to that level. In addition, only 4 percent of FSOs serving as Ambassadors are PD-coned, an increase from 3 percent in 2008. Yet this may change soon as 13 percent of Deputy Chiefs of Missions are PD-coned. R/PPR should continue to examine these numbers closely to identify opportunities where advancement can occur, while also exploring potential pathways for Civil Service officers working in PD to progress in their careers and contributions.

OVERVIEW

To meet the various challenges of public diplomacy today, the professionals within the State Department are our most important assets. If properly trained, resourced and empowered, they are best positioned to coordinate and give strategic coherence to U.S. government interagency efforts in the field, to shape Washington's understanding of the foreign public environment, and to innovate effectively in a fast-changing communications era. As the QDDR explained, a major goal for the State Department is to increase agility, match the right personnel with the right tasks, and make sure that there are consistent opportunities for professional development.

The purpose of the June 2015 report, "Getting the People Part Right II: The Human Resources Dimension of Public Diplomacy in 2015," authored by Ambassador Lawrence Wohlers and done in partnership with the Meridian International Center, focused on the human resources dimensions of U.S. public diplomacy was to examine how the Department of State can improve the effectiveness of public diplomacy by rethinking how they recruit and select public diplomats, improve their training and advancement, and strengthen their influence on policymaking. The 2015 report built from the 2008 ACPD document "Getting the People Part Right," updating much of the data on recruitment, selection, training and advancement of PD Foreign Service Officers and PD professionals.

The 2015 report also emphasizes that the success or failure of our public diplomacy activities rests heavily on how we nurture and support PD professionals and create a leadership environment conducive to thoughtful and strategically based public diplomacy. This is especially important

as the State Department aims to recruit and retain new generations of public diplomacy professionals who come of age in an increasingly interconnected and wired world, and are eager to apply their knowledge and experience to connect with global youth on behalf of the United States. The report provided key findings in five areas and made 19 recommendations.

THE STRUGGLE TO DEFINE PUBLIC DIPLOMACY'S MISSION AND PRIORITIES

A sample of more than 50 PD professionals at the State Department revealed an underlying sense of frustration that, while PD is closer to policymaking than ever before, there is no collective understanding within the department of the mission and conduct of long-term PD and how it contributes to statecraft. There is more clarity on the public affairs function, since senior leadership is inevitably focused on short-term messaging and crises. A comprehensive and inclusive strategy-development process can mitigate the problems of blurred lines of authority for PD within the department and the multiplicity of objectives that can weaken PD effectiveness. Holistic resource support for PD officers, most feasibly based in within the Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs' Office of Policy, Planning and Resources (R/PPR), is also vital to strengthening PD implementation capacity.

IMPROVED PD STRATEGIES: Create a structured but dynamic process for developing and implementing public diplomacy strategies that is rigorous, comprehensive and inclusive and is overseen and facilitated by strategic planners in R/PPR.

STRONGER R/PPR: Strengthen R/PPR as the office with a holistic oversight of the entire range of supporting resources for public diplomacy.

MODERN U.S. PUBLIC DIPLOMACY STAFFING

Today there are nearly 1,500 PD Foreign Service Officers who represent 19.5 percent of the Foreign Service. Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs is currently the fourth largest cone in the State Department, slightly smaller than the Consular and Economic cones and slightly larger than the Management cone. One-third of PD-coned officers at any given moment are not serving in PD assignments. The vast majority of PD officers presently are at entry and mid-level grades.

MANAGING HR RESOURCES: Strengthen and institutionalize R/PPR's oversight role over PD HR questions.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT: Develop a comprehensive approach to developing in-cone expertise

at mid- and senior levels.

SETTING THE BAR: Define the PD function's personnel requirements.

BRING CIVIL SERVICE INTO THE FOLD: Define a career path for Civil Service.

RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION OF PD PROFESSIONALS

Seventy-five percent of the hires for the PD cone recently were over the age of 30, which indirectly indicates some level of professional experience. That said, it is not known whether this professional experience recruited the skills that are necessary for public diplomacy work. The Foreign Service is framed by the generalist ethos of the department that eschews recruitment based on specialized needs of each of the five cones. So while the department spends roughly \$60,000 on recruitment per successful applicant, it does not recruit for PD skills, or other skills specific to cones. Currently, only one mid-level officer is represented in the Board of Examiners process that selects officers.

FORECAST SKILLS: Identify public diplomacy-relevant skills for now and the future.

TAKE ON RECRUITING: Increase targeted recruitment for PD professionals.

EXAM REVIEW: Review the Foreign Service oral exam to add questions demonstrating PD-like skills.

PD FELLOWS IN RESIDENCE: Create a program to establish cultural, educational, or artistic Fellows in Residence.

BEX REPRESENTATION: Develop incentives and encouragement for PD officials to serve on the Board of Examiners (BEX) earlier in their careers.

TRAINING AND EDUCATION OF PD PROFESSIONALS

The generalist nature of the hiring process places a considerable responsibility on the training and mentoring capacities of the State Department to prepare new entrants to function effectively. The department, however, is not structured or resourced to ensure a significant level of training and professional education opportunities for public diplomacy assignments. The two to three weeks mandatory courses do not represent a full professional training program. FSI's Public Diplomacy Division readily admits that it has neither the resources nor the mandate to provide more comprehensive training. Civil Service Officers working in PD also have very little opportunity to receive training at FSI.

PD STANDARDS: Establish a meaningful standard for professional competency in public diplomacy positions.

UPDATED TRAINING CURRICULUM: Develop an ambitious set of goals for ensuring that all PD officers are fully acquainted with the latest thinking in the fields of marketing, cross-cultural communications, strategic planning and research.

ENTRY LEVEL TRAINING: Design a more robust practicum for entry-level officers.

PD FOR ALL STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICES: Develop modules on public diplomacy for non-PD courses and seminars, especially for training for consular, economic, political and management officers, in addition to Deputy Chiefs of Missions and Chiefs of Missions.

CIVIL SERVICE TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES: Set aside funding for Civil Service training.

RETURN EXPERTISE TO THE CONE: Encourage more mentoring for entry and mid-level officers.

PUBLIC DIPLOMACY FSO ADVANCEMENT INTO LEADERSHIP POSITIONS

Despite representing approximately one-fifth of the Foreign Service and 17 percent of the Senior Foreign Service, there are no PD-coned officers who hold the rank of Career Minister or Career Ambassador. In the last seven years, no PD-coned officer has been promoted to Career Minister or Career Ambassador, while 22 Political-coned officers have been promoted to that level. Only 4 percent of FSOs serving as Ambassadors are PD-coned, an increase from 3 percent in 2008. A positive sign for the future, however, is that 13 percent of recently selected Deputy Chiefs of Mission were PD-coned. PD is also the only cone that has no officers currently serving at the Assistant Secretary level. Those positions in the ECA, PA and IIP bureaus currently are held by political appointees. The Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs has never been filled by a career FSO. While many entry- and mid-level PD officers' promotions have been rapid, HR is predicting that officers of all cones will be confronted by a period in which assignments and promotions will be much more competitive and promotions slower.

INCREASE TRAINING AS PROMOTIONS SLOW: Use the advancement slow down to increase training and build the professional knowledge foundation for PD.

CIVIL SERVICE ADVANCEMENT: Support the advancement of Civil Service Officers' advancement in their careers and contributions to public diplomacy.

Keeping American Spaces Open and Accessible to Foreign Citizens

ACPD RECOMMENDATIONS:

CONDUCT A STUDY OF THE IMPACT OF AMERICAN CENTERS, IRCS, BINATIONAL CENTERS AND AMERICAN CORNERS: A study on the value and impact of these spaces—American Centers, IRCs, Binational Centers and American Corners—for U.S. foreign policy goals, especially in the IIP-determined “top tier” spaces. The appraisals should link their efforts to mission goals and develop a research-based strategic plan for each space, identifying key publics and the public diplomacy impact objectives for each key public.

CONTINUE DIALOGUE BETWEEN PUBLIC DIPLOMACY, OFFICE OF OVERSEAS BUILDING OPERATIONS AND THE BUREAU OF DIPLOMATIC SECURITY LEADERSHIP: We are encouraged by the regular dialogue between public diplomacy leadership, the Bureau of Overseas Building Operations (OBO) and the Bureau of Diplomatic Security (DS) through the new permanent working group to address several policy, planning and funding concerns with the remaining free-standing American Centers and the IRCs. We hope that these conversations will continue to be constructive and tackle the accessibility of these spaces on a case-by-case basis.

AIM TO MAKE EXISTING IRCS OPEN AND ACCESSIBLE THROUGH A NEW POLICY: A worldwide policy for open access to IRCs that applies to all posts is necessary. This would lift “by appointment only” restrictions where they exist; create a separate security screening from the main chancery; permit unescorted access; and allow use of personal electronic devices and wireless internet access.

COMMUNICATION FROM CONGRESS: A new “Sense of Congress” from Congress would communicate to Diplomatic Security and OBO that the Secretary of State should exercise his/her waiver authority under section 606(a)(2)(B) of the Secure Embassy Construction and Counterterrorism Act of 1999 (22 U.S.C. 4865(a)(2)(B)) in order to permit these spaces to remain separate from U.S. embassies abroad and to also ensure that IRCs on U.S. embassy, consulate and annex compounds remain open and accessible. This would help to simplify co-location waiver requests at the State Department and emphasize the need for a flexible, case-by-case approach that takes into consideration the centrality of public diplomacy to fulfilling U.S. policy objectives.

American Spaces are platforms for U.S. missions to create and maintain consistent and constructive communication with people who are critical to the advancement of U.S. foreign policy. Being able to interact daily with people is essential if we are to understand and influence behavior among thought leaders, peoples and government officials. If we move away from making the openness and accessibility of these spaces a priority, we will continue to isolate ourselves and make the task of progressing our national security objectives all the more difficult. As the State Department’s QDDR also emphasized this year, managing and mitigating risk is critical for our diplomats to create these relationships and networks.

ACPD is concerned about the potential relocation to New Embassy Compounds (NECs) of 21 (of 32) American Centers in the next 10 years due to the Secure Embassy Construction and Counterterrorism Act of 1999 (SECCA), which requires all U.S. agencies in country be co-located on the embassy, consular and annex compounds. The hardening of our posts through SECCA was a logical and pragmatic response to a host of devastating attacks against U.S. embassy spaces in the 1980s and 1990s. Yet we are concerned that SECCA may be automatically and asymmetrically applied to U.S.-controlled public diplomacy platforms, American Centers and Information Resource Centers (IRCs), regardless of the characteristics of individual cases.

The 21 centers at risk are located in such urban power centers as New Delhi, Shanghai, Jerusalem and Mexico City. Our lack of public outreach in these spaces weakens our ability to fully understand and shape developments impacting U.S. national security and the international system. Of the current 715 American Spaces worldwide, just 17 percent are U.S.-controlled spaces: American Centers (32) and Information Resource Centers (87). The remaining 83 percent of them are partner spaces: Binational Centers (117) and American Corners (479). The space for maximum engagement is the free-standing, U.S.-controlled American Center. Once the American Centers move to these compounds, they transform into less accessible Information Resource Centers (IRCs). IRCs are located in more remote locations, present more restrictive environments, and attract six times fewer visitors than American Centers. While partner spaces have been important alternatives to American Centers and IRCs, their success hinges on the reliability of partners and the willingness of a host institution that publicly associates themselves with U.S. foreign policy goals.

As explained more in the International Information Programs Bureau (IIP) section of this report, the American Spaces program continues to undergo several

improvements of late to ensure that the spaces are aligned with strategic priorities; are attractive, innovative, interactive, and visibly American; and that staff (Foreign Service and Locally Employed Staff) are sufficiently trained to leverage the Space to further foreign policy goals through in-person engagement. With the support of the Regional Bureaus, they have also prioritized 60 spaces worldwide where the platforms are a particularly important public diplomacy tool for advancing priority U.S. interests. A new dashboard tracks these “tier one” spaces and supports resource allocation decisions and program evaluation. The spaces have also recently undergone two in-depth evaluations: a 2014 study on the user experience of American Centers and a 2015 study on the value of “by appointment only” IRCs. ACPD recommends a third study on the value and impact of these spaces— American Centers, IRCs, Binational Centers and American Corners— for U.S. foreign policy goals, especially in the IIP-determined “tier one” spaces. The appraisals should link their efforts to mission goals and develop a research-based strategic plan for each space, identifying key publics and the public diplomacy impact objectives for each key public.

Another advancement this year has been the establishment of a permanent working group between IIP, the Office of the Undersecretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs, the Bureau of Diplomatic Security, and the State Department’s Office of Overseas Buildings Operations to coordinate long-range planning for American Spaces. This includes examining the appropriate balance between security and public diplomacy effectiveness when considering relocation of public engagement facilities into a New Embassy Compound (NEC), New Consular Compound (NCC) or New Annex Compound (NOX).

This working group will also be critical in establishing a policy for making existing IRCs open and accessible through the availability of WiFi, allowing the use of personal mobile devices, access to the space without an appointment, a dedicated visitor screening process (separate from Consular process), and unescorted visitor

access. These Open Access Principles will ensure that all American Spaces are able to perform public diplomacy in the digital age while developing in-person relationships.

In sum, ACPD believes it is imperative that we reconsider how the relocation of free-standing American Centers to U.S. embassy, consulate and annex compounds can complicate the essential goals of public diplomacy to understand, inform and engage foreign audiences to advance U.S. foreign policy. In the past 10 years, eight American Centers have shuttered. We are concerned that the closing of American Centers is now accelerating and we emphasize the need for the selective and flexible application, on a case-by-case basis, of security standards. Of course, in extreme cases where an evaluation by the State Department and the embassy determines that the threat landscape cannot support a public diplomacy space, closing them must be considered.

A signal from Congress that these spaces are essential in the right contexts would considerably bolster the reform efforts within the State Department. In 2009, a “Sense of Congress” passed the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, but it did not pass on the floor. We recommend that HFAC and SFRC include an adapted Sense of Congress in future authorizations that would clearly indicate that the Secretary of State should give favorable consideration to requests for American Centers to remain in urban locations. The waiver should communicate to Diplomatic Security and OBO that the Secretary of State should exercise his/her waiver authority under section 606(a)(2)(B) of the Secure Embassy Construction and Counterterrorism Act of 1999 (22 U.S.C. 4865(a)(2)(B)) in order to permit these spaces to remain separate from U.S. embassies abroad and to also ensure that IRCs on U.S. embassy, consulate and annex compounds remain open and accessible. This would help to simplify co-location waiver requests at the State Department and emphasize the need for a flexible, case-by-case approach that takes into consideration the centrality of public diplomacy to fulfilling U.S. missions.

Voice of America in Africa

ACPD RECOMMENDATION:

INCREASE VOA ORIGINAL, LOCAL NEWS REPORTAGE IN CRITICAL AREAS: Voice of America is the only U.S. broadcasting agency that reports across Africa (with the exception of Darfur, parts of eastern Chad and Sudan, which MBN reaches) and it has filled a critical void in the last year especially with its local reporting on the Ebola crisis, elections and political crises, and Boko Haram and al Qa'ida in the Islamic Maghreb. ACPD is encouraged by new delivery methods, affiliates and programs to expand VOA's impact in a region where just 3 percent of the population lives in countries with fully free media, according to Freedom House. This is actively advancing broad U.S. foreign policy goals in the region, while also educating African audiences about the United States. We support increases in the budget for VOA to expand its FM transmitters and to increase broadcasting in local languages, such as the Lingala language for the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

U.S. public diplomacy attention has increased on the sub-Saharan Africa region over the last five years as U.S. foreign policy toward the region has changed. Opportunity seems to be abounding in Africa. It has the top 10 fastest growing economies in the world and by 2040, the combined workforce will surpass China and India and the region will have a market of 300-500 million consumers. Sixty percent of the continent's population is under the age of 35 and Africans are more educated than ever. While in 1980, 28 percent of the population lived in cities, now 40 percent do -- and half of the population will likely live in cities by 2030. Africa also has 10 percent of the world's oil, 40 percent of the gold, 50 percent of the diamonds, 80 to 90 percent of the chromium and platinum, and 70 percent of the world's tantium. Yet just three percent of the population of sub-Saharan Africa lives in countries with fully free media, according to Freedom House.

Freedom of expression throughout Africa is severely restricted. The Middle East Broadcasting Network's (MBN) broadcasting Radio Sawa reaches pockets of sub-Saharan Africa and MBN's Afia Darfur programming can be heard throughout Darfur, other areas of Sudan, and eastern Chad. Voice of America (VOA), though, is the only international broadcasting agency that consistently covers the region, more so than the BBC and Deutsche Welle. It has an extensive reach in the continent of Africa, with 10 services in 17 languages: VOA broadcasting to Africa includes the English to Africa Service (est. 1942); French to Africa Service (French, Sango, Songhai,

and, soon, Tamachek languages est. 1960); Swahili Service (est. 1962); Portuguese to Africa Service (est. 1976); Hausa Service (est. in 1979); Horn of Africa Service (Amharic, Afan Oromoo, and Tigrigna languages est. 1982); Central Africa Service (Kirundi and Kinyarwanda languages est. 1996); Zimbabwe Service (English, Shona, and Ndebele languages est. 2003); Somali Service (est. 2007); and Bambara Service (est. 2013).

In Africa, VOA provides domestic, regional, and international news, including U.S. news and perspectives, in restrictive or underdeveloped media environments. News programs include local and international stories; features focus on health, youth, and women. Most of the services incorporate public call-in shows to engage listeners and question local political leaders, supporting the habits of democratic societies.

Fifty percent of Voice of America's combined audience worldwide is in sub-Saharan Africa. In FY14, VOA spent \$21.478 million on the region, including program delivery costs. Radio is still the primary medium on the continent, but each service's content is also available to read and, in some places, stream, via the Internet and social media, and television is becoming more pervasive, particularly in urban areas. Voice of America is increasingly seeking to improve its program delivery through FM transmitters, television, and mobile devices, and to reach more audiences through local language reporting, in such languages as Kinyarwanda, Hausa and potentially Wolof.

VOA's positive brand reputation in Africa is boosted by its partnership with 400 affiliates across the continent: 191 in English, 74 in French, 47 in Somali, 44 in Swahili, 24 in Hausa, 12 in Bambara, 5 in Kinyarwanda, and 3 in Portuguese. While VOA works mainly with traditional broadcasters, it is increasingly looking at partnering with mobile providers. Through these affiliates, VOA has become central to a network that values the international and local reporting that it can uniquely offer.

In March 2015, ACPD traveled to South Africa and Kenya, and in conversations with PAOs in central Africa, we discovered that this local reporting is fundamental to VOA's brand in the continent and is filling an otherwise dangerous void and supporting U.S. foreign policy goals to build a prosperous and democratic region that is at peace. Here are some examples of that local reporting this last year with the Ebola crisis, in addition to new and ongoing political crisis situations.

THE EBOLA CRISIS

The Ebola crisis in western Africa led VOA to create a public service partnership with the BBC in October 2014 to share television, radio, and digital content from Guinea, Sierra Leone and Liberia. Given the difficulty in reporting on the Ebola outbreak on-the-ground, this partnership helped them amplify each other's content and allow for its widest possible distribution in an effort to stop Ebola's spread through a mix of reporting and public service announcements.

BBG and VOA developed a Memorandum of Understanding and then opened lines of communication to share Ebola coverage plans and identify possible areas of collaboration. Editors in Washington and London shared coverage planning and contacts for broadcasts in English, French and Hausa. The services created joint public service announcements with the most popular anchors and hosts to show that they were united in stopping the virus.

They also conducted joint town hall events in Accra for Anglophone audiences and in Dakar for Francophone audiences, and combined their efforts to train local journalists to cover this issue, and to expand the coverage in indigenous languages. The public awareness campaign featured local artists, singers, poets and civil society leaders, in addition to President Obama, Sierra Leone First Lady Sia Nyama Koroma, and Dr. Anthony Fauci, Director of the U.S. National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, who all discussed how to protect oneself from the virus, and how to care for the sick and the dead. The campaign was delivered on radio, television, the Internet and via mobile platforms. The VOA homepage featured a section just on Ebola news coverage and public service announcements. It is estimated that this combined coverage reached an audience of 1.5 million people.

COUNTERING VIOLENT EXTREMISM & SUPPORTING DEMOCRATIC TRANSITIONS

Private radio is restricted in many parts of Africa, which makes Voice of America the last reliable sources of news and information in some areas. VOA's presence on the airwaves has been particularly crucial in times of political crisis the last two years, and in countering extremist narratives by challenging the ideology of extremist groups such as Boko Haram and al-Qa'ida in the Islamic Maghreb with narratives that strengthen democratic institutions and encourage civil society and public dialogue.

The BBG's Office of Strategy and Development (OSD) has worked to expanded radio and television broadcasts throughout the Sahel through the addition of FM transmitters and working through the hundreds of VOA affiliates in the continent. Since 2011, this has included adding BBG owned-and-operated FM stations in Bangui, Central African Republic (French and Sango); Bamako and Gao, Mali (French, Bambara, and Songhai); Juba, South Sudan (English); N'Djamena, Chad (French and Arabic); Nouakchott, Mauritania (Arabic); Dakar, Senegal (French); and Bujumbura, Burundi (Kirundi/Kinyarwanda, Swahili, and French). Currently in progress, and due to be completed using FY 2015 funds, are additional stations in Timbuktu, Mali (French, Bambara, and Songhai); Niamey, Niger (Hausa and French); Goma, Kisangani; and Lubumbashi, Democratic Republic of the Congo (French and Swahili).

Burundi: In April 2015, President Pierre Nkurunziza announced his decision to run for a third time, which violated a regional peace deal that ended the civil war in 2005 that killed 300,000 people. Protests soon broke out and the government shut down all private broadcast media in the country. To respond to this crisis, VOA added shortwave and FM broadcasts in Kirundi, Kinyarwanda,

Swahili, French, and English with an expanded call-in show, reporting from the ground, new drive-time newscasts, and additional staff in Washington D.C., where Central Africa Services originate. The newly installed FM transmitter proved to be crucial, as all of VOA's affiliate stations were taken off the air during the crisis and VOA became one of the only remaining sources of reliable news and information.

Below are some examples of VOA reporting in key countries:

South Sudan: VOA is the most influential international broadcaster in the country, especially after the shuttering of Radio Miraya. The South Sudan Project produces the 30-minute weekday program, South Sudan in Focus (SSIF), which covers news about South Sudan, the Horn of Africa and the continent in English, while also providing the U.S. perspective on international events. Editorial control of the program rests at VOA headquarters in Washington, DC. A Juba-based editor maintains a network of stringers to cover local news; has developed affiliations with local broadcast partners for the news to reach rural audiences; organizes regular journalism training workshops for SSIF staff, affiliate radio station partners, and other South Sudanese journalists; and organizes town halls open to the general public to debate issues.

Rwanda: Radio is the primary source of news and information in Rwanda and VOA is the country's only outlet for independent international news, as BBC's Kinyarwanda radio service was suspended by the Rwandan government in October 2014 and Deutsche Welle recently went off the air after losing a 50-year lease for a transmission station.

DW has announced they will be closing permanently. VOA's Kinyarwanda service broadcasts for 24 hours on one FM frequency in Kigali, and a local affiliate, City Radio FM, airs some content twice a day; VOA broadcasts in English, French and Swahili are simulcast on another Kigali-based FM frequency. Especially as the 2017 elections approach, VOA's local reportage is providing a critical service to Rwandans in providing news and information, and supporting their ongoing recovery from genocide, which was fueled by hate radio.

Nigeria: VOA is second in audience reach only to the BBC, reaching nearly one third of Nigerians who listen to VOA to learn about other parts of the world (72.4 percent) and Nigeria (71.5 percent). Local election coverage is crucial, as Gallup found that 78 percent of VOA's weekly audience say that the broadcasts help form their opinions on important issues. During coverage of the April 2015 elections, VOA Hausa and VOA English to Africa exposed voter fraud over buying and selling newly issued voter cards. Journalists from both services also traveled through the heart of the Boko Haram insurgency and provided coverage of the abduction of more than 200

schoolgirls in 2014, in addition to the ongoing impact of Boko Haram on the economy, infrastructure and people of northeastern Nigeria.

Central African Republic: The crisis in CAR, which has affected nearly 3 million people, began in early 2013 when the Séléka armed opposition alliance advanced across the country to protest then-President François Bozizé. In reaction, VOA launched two 10-minute daily broadcasts in Sango, the country's lingua franca, on its FM station in the capital, Bangui. VOA French to Africa also broadcasts on the stream, which brought local news content during morning drive hours. In addition, VOA French added stringers in the country to report on the deteriorating security situation. As in Burundi, the Bangui FM station was critical in responding to the crisis, which caused most local media to shut down temporarily. Because the Bangui FM is installed on U.S. embassy grounds, it remained secure and had a reliable power source during the height of the crisis.