ASIA MEDIA SUMMIT 2006

Mediating Dialogue between Continents and Cultures

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Asia Media Summit 2006

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Welcome Address

Javad Mottaghi

The World that we media professionals cover, has some 6,000 communities and as many distinct languages. Such difference naturally leads to diversity of vision, values, beliefs, practice and expression, which all deserve equal respect and dignity. In such a diverse situation, Dialogue is necessary-for many good reasons and at the top, for global security to isolate the logic of violence, which has posed a threat to the world community. I was searching for a good example of unity in diversity and came across the following two observations:

1. The greatest instance of diversity in unity is, of course, the entire Cosmos. All the elements of the universe - a confusing complex of vastly different entities - are held together as one coherent regulated whole, proving that diversity is not in contradiction to unity and Unity is found precisely in diversity and vice-versa.

2. I also came across a poem from a Persian poet, Sa'adi (from his book, some 750 years ago). The following translation of Sadi's humanistic poem adorns the entrance of the UN HQ in Geneva:

Of one Essence is the human race,
thus has Creation put the Base;
One Limb impacted is sufficient,
For all Others to feel the Mace*

Human beings are parts of a body,
Created from the same essence.
When one part is hurt and in pain,
The other parts remain restless.

Translation of the last verse adorns one the interior walls of the UN building in NY.

If thou are not affected by suffering of others,
thou shall not deserve the name of a human being.

According to Mahatma Gandhi, the seven social sins of human kind are: - Politics without principles, Wealth without work, Enjoyment without conscience, Knowledge without character, Business without morality, Science without humanity, Religion without sacrifice that can be overcome by global ethics.

Today you bear witness to the importance of Media Dialogue. At national and international level, inter-faith Dialogue seems to be essential more than ever. Dialogue is essential , but is only the first step for the "enhancement of civilization". In order to meet the challenges of the future, humanity needs not only science, but wisdom; not only technology, but spiritual energy; not only economy, but humanity. Humankind has to remain humane, has to become even more humane. And for a humane survival of humanity, human beings need ethics!

Ethical values such as non-violence and respect for life, justice and solidarity, truthfulness and tolerance, partnership and mutual respect and love.

And all depends on the crucial role we media professionals can play.

I thank you all for your contributions. I thank our sponsors and supporters for making the third Asia Media Summit all possible. I thank my colleagues at AIBD for their endeavors. And, I thank Kuala Lumpur for its peace and harmony.

Dr. Javad Mottaghi is Director, Asia-Pacific Institute for Broadcasting Development (AIBD) Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

Opening Remarks

Dr Beate Bartoldus

It is with great pleasure that I welcome you on behalf of the principal sponsor Friedrich-Ebert-Foundation to the Asia Media Summit 2006.

The Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung was established in 1925 and is the oldest of Germany's political foundations. It is a private and non-profit organization which is committed to the ideas of social democracy. Its name derives from the first democratically elected German President, Friedrich Ebert, and the foundation continues his ideals of shaping politics in the spirit of freedom, solidarity and social justice. This is the mandate the foundation has adopted in its programmes for political education, international cooperation as well as scholarship programmes and research.

Within this framework, the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung has actively supported the development of the media in Asia and the Pacific for the last 35 years. Thanks to our partners, we have been able to engage ourselves in the training of media managers, journalists and radio and television production personnel. We assisted in the establishment of a number of national training institutes, broadening the basis for human resource development in the region and we successfully fostered the creation and establishment of regional news exchanges and media research institutions like the AIBD, ABU and AMIC in Singapore.

With great satisfaction we observe the exceptional development, the media in Asia and the Pacific have experienced in the last three decades, and the active role they played in a positive political and socio-economic development.

In view of rapid changes of economic and political conditions and in the context of new technologies and globalization we are faced with even more questions as to what role media has to play.

In political terms we witness a trend towards more democracy and pluralism in many developing and newly industrialized countries. What is the impact on broadcasting? Or what impact has broadcasting on democratization?

In economic terms globalization allows for better access to information, culture and entertainment around the world, but there is also the danger that some day all the media of this world belong to the Murdochs of this world.

Broadcasting was clearly born under monopoly conditions, in a Soviet Russia, a Nazi Germany and in a democratic Great Britain. But while Soviets and Nazis used broadcasting as a propaganda tool losing all credibility at the end, Britain developed

the BBC to become one of the most admired systems in the World. So, the first question is: what do you want to do with broadcasting?

Do you want to provide comprehensive local, national and international information, do you want to offer a mirror of your countries culture and social reality or do you want to entertain your audiences with programs they are familiar with - then broadcasting needs to be organized accordingly. The answer is Public Service Broadcasting. To avoid the danger of one-sided propaganda, politicians should be kept at arm's length by governing or supervisory bodies that guarantee the presence of all strata of the population in setting the framework for programming. In addition the editorial independence of the broadcasters must be well established.

Democratic and modern societies need well informed citizens. Broadcasting can play a key role in the development of a nation if it is providing a broad variety of information to the people. The preservation and restructuring of the public service function of broadcasting therefore seems to be of substantial importance.

The new changes and challenges cannot be met on a national level alone. Based on the experience of the successful media work in the past, the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung is convinced that it is essential to develop adequate responses by regional dialogue and cooperation of political leaders and opinion leaders in close collaboration with the broadcasters in the region.

It is in this spirit that the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung supports wholeheartedly this Aisa Media Summit 2006.

Dr Beate Bartoldus is Head, Department Asia-Pacific, Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES), Germany and as Principal Sponsor on behalf of co-sponsors

Message

H.E. Kofi A. Annan
Secretary-General, United Nations
Delivered by Mr Kim Hak-su, Executive Secretary,
UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP)

It gives me great pleasure to send my greetings to the participants in the Asia Media Summit.

Media and information are all around us. With the proliferation of new media, new technologies and new ways of distributing content, information has become far more accessible. It is also becoming more diverse. Mainstream media reporting, for example, is being supplemented by "participatory media" such as blogs.

But as media and journalism evolve, certain bedrock principles remain paramount. Foremost among them is the right to "seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers", as set out in Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. I declare my firm support for this right, and urge all governments to reaffirm their commitment to it as well.

At the same time, I appeal to everyone to exercise that right responsibly and, where possible, proactively. Media have a powerful influence on human behaviour. As such, and as the General Assembly affirmed in its recent resolution establishing the new United Nations Human Rights Council, they have "an important role to play in promoting tolerance, respect for and freedom of religion and belief". Media should not be vehicles for incitement or degradation, or for spreading hatred. It must be possible to exercise discretion without encroaching on fundamental freedoms.

Members of the press continue to be killed, maimed, detained or targeted in other ways for exercising their rights. According to the Committee to Protect Journalists, 47 were killed in 2005, and [11] have lost their lives so far this year. This is tragic and unacceptable. Old and new media alike must be able to continue their work, unencumbered by threats, fear or harassment. I urge all relevant actors to do their part to enable the press to do its vital work. After all, national and global media not only report on change, they are themselves agents of it. In that spirit, please accept my best wishes for a successful summit.

Keynote Address
The Honourable Dato' Seri Abdullah Haji Ahmad Badawi, Prime Minister of Malaysia

It is truly a pleasure for me to see so many distinguished media professionals and thinkers assembled in Kuala Lumpur. I am pleased that you are meeting to discuss ways and means of creating better understanding among media leaders that could eventually lead to better understanding among nations at large. It is indeed a noble objective, but, as you will acknowledge, an objective which requires commitment, sincerity and resolve to achieve.

To those of you who have come from afar, I bid you a very warm welcome. I do hope that your stay in Malaysia will be both pleasant and rewarding. You come to Malaysia at an interesting time, as we commence the second half of our journey to become a developed nation by the year 2020.

Toward this end, we released the 9th Malaysia Plan last month, which defined policies and programmes to enhance the country's capacity to compete globally, enhance national integration and effect a broader based and more equitable distribution of wealth. The Malaysia Plan has five key thrusts or strategies:

- The first thrust is to move the economy up the value chain.
- The second thrust is to raise the country's capacity for knowledge, creativity and innovation and nurture 'first class mentality'.
- The third thrust is to address persistent socio-economic inequalities constructively and productively.
- The fourth thrust is to improve the standard and sustainability of our quality of life.
- The fifth and final thrust is to strengthen the institutional and implementation capacity of the country.

Our overriding objective is national unity. This is the foundation that ensures prosperity and harmony for the people of Malaysia, a society confident and competent to participate in the pursuit for global peace. Malaysia feels that it is well placed to begin the journey of renewal because it is a multi-racial and multi-religious country in which we treat our diversity as an asset to be nurtured. Yes, we do have our faults and foibles; but our model stands unchallenged as the most successful multi-ethnic, multi-religious society. We are proud of our achievements. For those who have came from abroad, I invite you to take an opportunity to look around and witness for yourself the Malaysia that we have built.

The participation of more than 60 countries at this Asia Media Summit reflects a diversity of peoples and cultures that aspire for global peace. Your interest to also discuss, debate and initiate dialogue on international, regional and national realities will have a great impact on the mass media today. The upcoming Inter-Continental Media Dialogue in KL and Asia-Pacific and Europe Media Dialogue in Paris are proof of this aspiration.

Ladies and Gentlemen

What are some of the challenges that may need the media's attention? Before I proceed to lay down my thoughts, allow me to say that I do not intend my observations to be a criticism or attack on the media. Far from it. I do believe that the media is an institution that has its own purpose and requires the space to operate freely.

Certainly, the media wields tremendous influence over the society in which it operates. It acts as a conduit of information and as a voice of popular opinion. It shapes opinions and influences thoughts. It seeks to keep other institutions of society honest. Yet, if we are completely frank, we must also accept that the media is not wholly driven by noble ideals alone. Profits matter, and circulation numbers and viewership ratings matter. And in pursuing these other goals, biases, agendas, satisfying the gallery all become part of the daily editorial preoccupation.

I do not want to go into the merits and demerits of the pursuit of these other goals. But what I would like to say is that when noble ideals are mixed with other motivations, then those ideals can become skewed. And skewed ideals may result in injustices. Unfortunately, as I have observed, any adverse scrutiny of the media is quick to be jumped upon as an abrogation of the media's right to be free. What I ask of you today is that while you have the freedom to make your observations and judgments of me, I, too, hand on heart and in all sincerity, seek that same liberty to be honest with my views.

As we all know, the media is a pervasive and persuasive medium. It has the power to change people's minds and attitudes. In my view, that power entails a huge responsibility to inform and educate people. To do so, it must present different sides to a story, dismiss half truths and unfounded allegations and foster critical thinking so that people become more informed on issues that affect their daily lives. However, the temptations offered by vested interests - be they commercial, political or religious - can and do lead to misinformation, miscommunication, confusion and even violence. Too often, the inclination to sensationalise or cause alarm is too great to resist. Too often, localized unrest is passed off as a national uproar. Decades of progress and development can go up in smoke if the media is not responsible or accountable.

Sensitivity to cultural, religious and societal nuances is neither a prerogative nor responsibility of people in power alone. Journalists and media professionals in general need to reflect on the possible after effects of their actions on society, both at home and internationally. One simple report or a photograph or a cartoon can turn a peaceful society into a violent one. What goes out of a printing press or is beamed out from a broadcast station cannot be taken back. Regrets or corrections can never entirely undo the harm that is done.

Some people argue that the media should only be concerned with the truth and not the consequences of reporting it. But then consider the use of exit polls before the elections. Time and again, country after country, we see that quite often the predictions and the actual results of elections vary considerably. Yet the practice is continued. Unlike the weather forecasts, any prediction on a social outcome is an input into the society that would alter the course of action by the members of that society. Media people are not passive observers. They are active members of society and they could also be motivated by the good of the people they serve.

The diversity of people that media serves - ethnic, religious, political, cultural - have to be kept in mind by media professionals, lest the good intentions result in undesirable ends. There is already a preponderance of violence in the world and merely reporting it is not enough. As responsible world citizens, media people need to look at the root causes of conflict, and its many dimensions, and perhaps offer solutions.

Conflict should be solved by civilized dialogue and not by violence. Violence only breeds more violence. In the dialogue of civilizations, the media plays a crucial role by giving voice to the voiceless. It performs an invaluable service by analyzing incidents in addition to reporting them. And in order to do this, the opportunity should be given to all communities - the developed world and the developing world, the north and the south - to present their views.

Sadly, it seems to me that in many cases, the media is selective in its reporting of the world. Of course, it is unrealistic to expect complete and comprehensive coverage all the time. Media is a business and content will accordingly be dictated by what sells. Editors will choose stories that fit into their worldview, or stories that appeal to their particular market segment. In the most extreme cases, editorial policy will be guided by sensationalism and prurient interest, given they think that it is what the public wants. Even in cases where the media attempts to be inclusive, they are constrained by time and space. Those who are media literate may understand the bigger picture, but for the common man, what they see and read is reality. Stories that are carried by media become the sole and unequivocal truth for them, particularly in the age of around-the-clock, wall-to-wall coverage.

The world can be a bewildering and frightening place. We grapple with issues such as global warming, rising oil prices, the spread of disease and regional conflict. These realities scare many of us and push us to question what future awaits our future generations. We come to a conclusion that there is so much uncertainty and ambiguity in the world we live in. Often, this leads us to be intolerant of divergent views, cultures and religions, precipitating conflicts between nations and causing misery to peoples. I believe it is high time we accept the uncertainty and ambiguity surrounding us and exploit approaches and solutions to the global problems with concepts such as flexibility, openness and objectivity.

Continuing dialogue between two great civilizations - the Islamic World and the Christian West is not only important in determining the relationship between Islam and the West but is also vital in shaping the future of humankind. It is the responsibility of media of goodwill to work hard to change the negative perceptions on both sides of the divide. Undoubtedly, the task is not going to be easy, for these perceptions have deep roots.

Quite clearly, we will not be able to change the situation by mere dialogue. We must be brave enough, and we must be honest enough, to admit that as long as there is hegemony, as long as one side attempts to control and dominate the other, the animosity and antagonism between the two civilizations will continue. This is why hegemony must end. Mutual respect for one another should replace hegemony. Reciprocity should become the ethical principle that conditions relations between the West and Islam.

Certain voices, both in the West and in the Muslim world, are not given the prominence they deserve, especially those who preach moderation and understanding. The mainstream media could give much more attention to them. It is only too apparent that these two groups - one in the West and the other in the Muslim world - share a common perspective on some of the critical challenges facing both civilizations and the world at large. Both are opposed to hegemony. Both reject violence and terror. Both desire for a just and peaceful world. Both are united by a common bond. It is this common bond that makes them bridge-builders. The media itself should also play the role of bridge builders.

If I had a wish, it would be for the voices of moderation to be given more prominent coverage. Too often, headlines are hogged by the language of hatred and aggression - the language of threat and confrontation.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let us start now by curbing the extremists in our midst. We must put a stop to the mockery of any particular religion or school of thought. We must stop the sacrilege of any symbol held sacred by the faithful.

On that note, let me conclude by congratulating AIBD and its partners for organizing this very important Asia Media Summit and for bringing together to Malaysia a prominent group of people who are serious about changing their media to people's network, people's meeting place and an instrument for dialogue between civilizations. I am glad that this Conference is being held as an annual event because your objectives, while necessary are ambitious. They cannot be achieved with one single forum. I sincerely hope, for the long-term benefit of us all, that you have the inspiration and the perseverance to succeed.

Ladies and gentlemen, I wish you very fruitful discussions in the coming days.

1 Media Independence and Accountability

Media Independence and Accountability

Abdul Waheed Khan

The rapid proliferation of broadcasting, both commercial and other forms, is posing a new and dynamic challenge to publicly funded broadcasters and broadcasting markets in general. Technological developments have completely altered the nature of broadcasting with households in many countries now having access to tens, if not hundreds of channels. Digital technology allows limited frequency ranges to accommodate far more signals, opening up the airwaves to an ever-increasing number of broadcasters. The constant development of satellite and cable networks has also had a significant impact on access to broadcasting all over the world. These developments are complemented by the rapidly decreasing cost of starting up a broadcasting enterprise. The Internet promises even more exciting and profound changes, and virtually everyone who has access to even the most basic equipment will effectively be in a position to operate as a broadcaster in the near future.

These developments pose a particular threat to broadcasters, especially public service broadcasters. Many citizens prefer to tune in to commercial broadcasters, where they are available, rather than to a national broadcaster. This can lead to a significant reduction of support for public service broadcasting, to the long-term detriment of the interests of the public. With declining viewer statistics suggesting that public control no longer delivers the desired results, even government support for publicly funded broadcasters is likely to wane.

In this new environment, moves to downsize government and privatise or commercialise publicly run industries have proved to be very popular. These changes have affected even activities once deemed core public functions, such as responsibility for roads and monopoly utilities. At the same time, demands on certain public functions -- for example, in relation to medical services and education -- are increasing, putting further pressure on sparse resources.

The issue of media independence and accountability in the context of public service broadcasters raises the following questions:

- Why focus on independent media?
- Should there be limits to freedom of expression and freedom of information?
- How can broadcasters be accountable to an independent regulator, the shareholders and the public?
- How can broadcasters secure adequate funding and yet maintain independence from political and economic pressure, especially in a situation of fierce competition?
- Does regulation really hinder media independence and sustainability?

I. Why focus on independent media?

Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights specifies the right to freedom of expression and information; this fundamental human right underlies the realisation of many other human rights and, in fact, forms the foundation for rights-based ideas about governments and the social order. To fully realise the rights embodied in Article 19, it is not sufficient that individuals are entitled to speak without fear of reprisal. Freedom of expression can only be fully realised when both individuals and institutions enjoy and practice that right.

Independent media provide the institutional building blocks that assure transparent, non-corrupt, and responsive governance, that help mediate conflict before it becomes intransigent and potentially violent. Additionally, independent media ensure that human development strategies are focused and sustainable. Nobel Prize winning economist Amartya Sen has famously demonstrated how independent media allow accurate information to flow quickly between governing institutions and the governed, vastly decreasing the possibility that catastrophic social disasters like famines will occur. With the new development focus on the Poverty Strategy Reduction Papers produced by aid-receiving countries in order to bring necessary aid to the most-needy sectors, the vital work of independent media is once again apparent; a free press can best guarantee that those processes remain transparent and that the information exchanged is accurate.

In short, a free press is not a luxury that can wait for better times; rather, it is part of the process which can bring about better times. Freedom of the press should not be viewed solely as the freedom of journalists to report and comment. It is strongly correlated with the public's right to access knowledge and information. Communication often acts as a catalyst for the development of civil society and the full exercise of free expression enables all parts of society to exchange views and find solutions to social, economic and political problems. Free media play a crucial role in building consensus and sharing information, essential to both democratic decision-making and to social development.

In 2001, the international commitment to reduce poverty resulted in the adoption of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) as the road map for the implementation of the UN Millennium Declaration. The MDGs represent a consensus among disparate development agencies that people affected by poverty, crisis and conflict must be considered principal actors in their own development and strategic partners in assistance efforts. Freedom of expression and the right to freely state one's opinion are prerequisites for individuals and groups to have the opportunity to participate in decision-making and conflict resolution. Furthermore, as noted earlier, transparency and accountability lead to good governance, as well as confidence in civil processes and democratic solutions to conflicts. Good governance is required to bring about institutional change and essential to sustainable human development. This, in turn, helps create public opinion that supports adherence to law, at the national and international levels.

Finally, there is the critical role to be played by independent media in focusing attention on democratic rights. This aspect of the issue is central because it underlines the primary reason why media must be independent. A press that is not independent can still serve a valid purpose: for instance, a state-sponsored press can increase literacy and spread information. However, only an independent press can act as a watchdog of the government, empowering the people it serves through the provision of information and the assurance that their participation matters. Only an independent press can strengthen civil society by ensuring that a plurality of opinions enters the public marketplace of ideas for further consideration amongst that market. Only an independent press can best represent local positions, offering an opportunity for passive recipients to turn into central participants. In the ultimate analysis, the openness and empowerment within civil society brought about by free and independent media fulfils the promise of Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights: freedom of expression and information.

II. Should there be limits to freedom of expression and freedom of information?

There is no state on earth where freedom of expression and information is not limited in some way. Therefore, the question is not whether there should be limits -- because there are, and it is impossible that there would not be -- but rather, how those limits should be constructed and who should arbitrate decisions regarding limitations on the press.

Media independence is best defined as the autonomous control over editorial content by publishers, broadcasters, editors and journalists. This control implies that the work of collecting, editing and publishing information is conducted within the framework of editorial aims that are articulated and adopted by the professions involved and without interference from third parties (state authorities or private-interest groups). Control over editorial content has to be protected against a variety of pressures that are external to the media, including direct and indirect political pressures, the use of financial resources, the control of production and distribution to pressurize the media into serving specific commercial interests, or efforts to use the media to promote sectional socio-cultural interests. Control over editorial content also has to be protected against pressures from inside the media, such as efforts by owners, publishers, and managers to make that content subordinate to interests other than the agreed editorial aims.

Thus there are two chief concerns that must be met in considering the regulation of media: independence and professionalism. Regulatory bodies must contain both. Independence concerns independence from the governing body: any regulatory body must exist outside the immediate arm of government, even though such bodies are often inscribed in law, and may in fact contain a government-selected individual as part of their ruling board. Government participation is not necessarily contrary to independent media; ideally, governments have the same goals for the work of the

media as the media themselves! However, it is essential that any regulatory body be fundamentally and thus institutionally separate from governmental interests and control. This means that while government representatives can sit on the board, they should not constitute the majority of the board, or be entitled to a decisive veto which would amount to the same thing. Professionalism refers to the make-up of the regulatory body; ideally, it should contain professionals from the field that is being regulated.

III. How can broadcasters be accountable to an independent regulator , the shareholders, and the public?

Accountability is a critical subject, and the most direct way to address it is through transparency and public review. Therefore, the board of directors should publish and distribute widely an Annual Report, along with externally audited accounts. Each Annual Report should include the following information: a summary of the externally audited accounts, along with an overview of income and expenditure for the previous year; information on any company or enterprise that is wholly or partly owned, whether directly or indirectly, by the broadcast media outlet; the budget for the following year; information relating to finance and administration; the objectives of the broadcaster for the previous year, the extent to which they have been met and its objectives for the upcoming year; the editorial policy of the broadcaster; a description of the activities undertaken by the broadcaster during the previous year; the Programme Schedule and any planned changes to it; a list of programmes broadcast by the broadcaster that were prepared by independent producers, including the names of the producers or production companies responsible for each independent production; recommendations concerning public broadcasting; and information on complaints by viewers. The Board should formally place the Annual Report and externally audited accounts before the government for its consideration.

Furthermore, the broadcaster should develop a complaints procedure, in consultation with interested stakeholders, which should govern its broadcasting practices and programme content. This procedure should, among other things, address the following issues:

- Accuracy, balance and fairness
- Privacy, harassment and subterfuge
- Protection of children and scheduling
- Portrayal of sexual conduct and violence, and the use of strong language
- Treatment of victims and those in grief
- Portrayal of criminal or anti-social behaviour
- Advertising
- Financial issues such as payment for information and conflicts of interest
- Discrimination
- Leaked material and the protection of sources

Permitting individuals to lodge a complaint against the broadcaster for breach of the code is essential, with complaints dealt with by the broadcaster in a far, balanced, and transparent manner.

IV. How can broadcasters secure adequate funding and yet maintain independence from political and economic pressure?

Funding can be secured from a variety of sources and, with care and transparency, need not represent a threat to independence. For public service broadcasters there is the possibility of seeking to fund broadcasting from a Public Broadcasting Fee: a fee imposed upon households as part of their electricity bill. Other sources of funding for public service broadcasters can come from direct public subsidies (moneys derived from public funds), from advertisements (in most cases, very strict regulations to this type of fund-raising apply), from sponsorship (which must be clearly articulated at the beginning and end of every programme, and which may not cover the news, for fear of effecting independence) and other commercial activities, and from donations. Other broadcasting outlets typically utilise advertisements, sponsorship, or other commercial activities and, generally, have far fewer restrictions placed upon them.

Given all the recent developments in the economic and media arenas, it is only to be expected that the question of the extent and nature of direct public support for national broadcasters is increasingly and frequently raised. Some countries are exploring new ways of satisfying the need for an alternative to commercially-driven programming. One approach is to impose public service obligations on private broadcasters. Many countries already impose some such obligations on all licensed broadcasters. However, with the overall trend moving towards relaxation of media regulation, it is becoming increasingly difficult for national governments to effectively impose regulatory conditions.

Another approach is to look for alternative ways to provide public funding for programming which serves various public needs and interests. In some countries, independent programme producers, who are not linked to a specific broadcaster, may receive public funding for individual programmes. Alternatively, private broadcasters may apply for funding for programmes which fulfil a public service role. Community broadcasters are also playing an increasingly important role in satisfying needs which other forms of broadcasting do not. It is increasingly common for publicly funded broadcasters to be required to include within their overall broadcasting a certain proportion of programmes from independent producers.

V. Does regulation really hinder media independence and sustainability?

Oppressive regulation naturally runs the risk of hindering media independence and sustainability. Regulations that seek to govern media content or are designed to

craft the media sector around certain forces valued by governments (through the use of non-transparent or overly expensive licensing procedures, for example), are anathema to a healthy, well-functioning, independent media sector. Well drafted media laws, however, can provide incentives for media development, as they create assurances regarding the structure and methods of licensing and financing media projects.

Abdul Waheed Khan is Assistant Director-General for Communication and Information, UNESCO, Paris

Media Independence and Accountability

Jean Réveillon

I am obviously better acquainted with the broadcast landscape in Europe, which is developing at an astronomical speed, even as it is in Asia. Yet there, too, there are many areas where the future is still shrouded in mystery. For example, the new possibilities offered by digital technology are so numerous, so diverse, that none of us has as yet fully explored the wealth of its implications, nor the surprises that await us.

And yet this does not in any way change the fundamental questions which confront us – of independence, freedom of expression and, consequently, our responsibility, to mention only the most basic of them.

Independence is, of course, an aim pursued by all actors within the media, working within a democratic environment. Nonetheless, it is evidently not attained by all in quite the same way. It is, in fact, an ongoing quest, a hand outstretched towards the Holy Grail, so to speak.

Thus, the European Broadcasting Union, as well as the Asia-Pacific Broadcasting Union, have as members not only modern public service television organisations and state television, but also commercial television channels or even pay TV. This implies that, within the framework of their structures, our Unions have to find a balance between different perceptions of the same values.

For example, in the matter of independence and autonomy vis-à-vis political and economic power, the requirements of the BBC differ from those of the Natsionalna Telekompanija Ukraïny (NTU), the national television service of the Ukraine. Yet, the latter was launched as recently as the Orange Revolution which, in late 2004, bore Mr. Viktor Youtchenko to power. NTU is thus in pursuit of audiovisual democracy. But there is still a long way to go. As a matter of fact, we at the EBU have been encouraged by the Director to share our experiences in these domains with the operators of this channel. But it will take time...

I often cite the example of France, my own country, where journalists working in the public service networks can be viewed as having achieved real independence. Two years ago the director of the then Prime Minister's cabinet committed the mistake

of calling an editor-in-chief of one of the TV news programmes to protest against the filming and broadcasting of images that he considered sententious. Well, not only were the images re-broadcast in the following bulletin, but when the press came to know about this intervention, a wave of protests was unleashed throughout the country. The director of the cabinet held his peace for the rest of his term.

If I recall correctly from my days as a young journalist some 40 years ago, while public broadcasting was still in its infancy, in those days the minister for information laid down the law for network owners and news broadcasts reflected the thoughts of the government in power. In the mean time, resistance had to be organised in the midst of difficult intellectual tussles in which the print media, then very critical of television, played a significant role.

In the course of time, colleagues have paid a heavy price, finding themselves far from their mission. And when I say colleagues I include both journalists and network managers. The abundance of examples even in countries that are considered advanced in terms of independence signifies that neither vigilance nor courage should be relaxed!

I have drawn examples from public service although I could have used some from commercial television, where pressure is exercised on those in charge of editorial content for economic reasons. For example, can a news team or a team of documentary filmmakers do an investigative report against the functioning of a corporation which is also a shareholder of the network? Clearly not, as we are all well aware.

But I return to public service, which is my essential preoccupation, to tell you about a project recently carried out by the EBU's Legal Branch to advise those of our members who actually do have problems with independence.

The first question is: Is independence really possible? In fact, many would say that real and total independence is, quite simply, impossible. A more positive attitude is to say that every effort should be made to come as close as possible to the ideal of real independence (in the law relating to radio and television, for example) and that this should be followed by a permanent struggle to protect such independence from all kinds of direct and, even more common, indirect attacks. Let us, therefore, say instead that the quest for independence is a necessity.

Take the Amsterdam Protocol regarding the public broadcasting system drawn up by member states from Europe in 1997. The document is worded thus: "The system of broadcasting is directly related to the democratic, social and cultural needs of each society and to the need to preserve media pluralism." The democratic needs of each society can be summarised into one phrase: well informed citizens who perform their duty when they exercise their fundamental right to vote on the basis of relevant and reliable information.

Such information must be on all that needs to be taken into consideration by the public, beginning with an attentive observation and a critical analysis of the daily acts of those who are nominated or elected for public functions. Also, such information should shed light on projects and future challenges, especially in areas where the government in power does not tolerate scrutiny or publicity.

But there is another element in the Amsterdam Protocol, which says, "The system of public broadcasting is directly related to the need to preserve media pluralism." All media, however biased or questionable -- even a purely state-owned broadcast channel -- contributes to this pluralism. Why then does one specifically think of public service in connection with the need to preserve media pluralism?

This is because, based on the evidence, public service broadcasting is necessary to ensure objective and complete information. That is what makes it an oasis of credibility in the national audiovisual landscape...

Werner Rumphorst, Director of the Legal Department of the EBU, also notes that the German Constitutional Court went so far as to affirm that commercial broadcasting owes its legitimacy to the existence of independent public broadcasting. In other words, one accepts commercial broadcasting because independent information is ensured by public channels.

But how can this independence be guaranteed and what are the risks and dangers that could result in the crumbling of the edifice of independence? Of course, each country has its own legal culture, based on tradition. Consequently, it is possible that in certain countries the laws are simply not strictly respected by the government or the head of the country.

It is, perhaps, even impossible to impose respect of the law or its correct application by recourse to tribunals -- either because the very process of engaging in a judicial process can have heavy consequences for the national broadcaster, or because the national judicial system itself sometimes does not have the independence necessary to render decisions against the government or head of state. In addition, laws themselves can take on different meanings from one country to another even when they seem to be identical. As a result, it is very difficult to transpose, *de facto,* a model of law into a foreign country -- for example, in the area of nominating members of regulatory (or surveillance) boards and the Director Generals.

In fact, instead of hiding behind the excuse that such and such a model also exists in country X or Y, legislators have to be watchful from the very outset, so that no one can sidestep the law or apply it in a manner that would be contrary to the desired aim. This is not simple, but it is necessary if one wants to advance towards democracy...

Once these legislative safeguards have been established, the behaviour of those elected would, once again, be a matter of political culture. Will the elected members

stick to the sole considerations of a professional order and will they go so far as to step back in order to affirm their independence? Or will they, on the contrary, feel obliged to be grateful to those who placed them in such posts and conform to what they know, or believe they know, about what is really expected of them? The EBU is currently making a series of proposals on the manner in which such nominations and, subsequently, the necessary, routine replacement of persons within organisations can be conducted, drawing from a collation of best practices from various places.

The next big question, which is really important for independence, is that of financing. When broadcasting depends on the good will of the government to obtain its annual share of the state budget, it is evident that its right to criticize the government will be limited and there can be no total editorial independence. In the same way, when the parliamentary majority is called upon to vote for or against raising the licensing fees, the risk of political pressure remains.

It is, therefore, not at all easy to find an answer to the problem of ensuring editorial independence and financial viability. Under a system of licensing fees (the best solution according to the EBU) the amount of the licensing fee must be fixed for the longest possible period. When the financing takes the form of an annual grant drawn from the budget of the State, it is again, ideally, the Parliament which should fix the amount with a projection over several years.

One can clearly see that, in the final analysis, even in such situations financial independence is something of a utopia. Nevertheless, the more the solution approaches the ideal, the more assured the independence of public service broadcasting will be. It is certainly a difficult struggle for public broadcasters but one that is necessary if they are to retain their capacity to be reliable and responsible vis-à-vis their public.

Meanwhile the public has to be aware that the independence of public service broadcasting plays a major role in a democracy. The principle of independence can be defended with success only if the public supports it, especially since public opinion is a decisive factor for most politicians.

In order to convince the public, broadcasters have to use all that is at their disposal -- annual reports, programmes, interviews in the press, feature articles, as well as comparisons with other countries -- to communicate and amplify this message.

The final conclusion of the EBU is that it is necessary to take the offensive to guarantee the independence of public service broadcasting and, once acquired, it has to be systematically defended against any overt or covert attempts at control. As mentioned earlier, taking the offensive, defending oneself, is a permanent quest for the Grail and it is one that needs to be undertaken. For the future of our societies, for the respect of values, for the protection of citizens, for cultural diversity, this is surely a noble and worthwhile struggle.

Thus reinforced in their reliability, public broadcasting services can so much the better ally themselves with other challenges in the world that have to be met in this global village. In this context, the treaty on cultural diversity of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), the initiatives of the United Nations to combat the digital divide, the birth of the Internet Forum following the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) in Tunis or even the initiatives for the protection of correspondents in war zones at the level of the UN Security Council or the work for the protection of world archives initiated by the World Broadcasting Unions (WBU) in association with the International Federation of Television Archives (IFTA), are examples to be followed.

In Europe, the revision of the TV without Frontiers directive and its adaptation to new platforms, which ensure the free and ethical distribution of tele-signals or even the quest for common copyright standards, are also moving in this direction. Would all this reinforce the fortuitous evolution of an information society where media accountability remains the permanent preoccupation of all -- public as well as private!

Jean Réveillon is Secretary General, European Broadcasting Union

Media Independence and Accountability: Some Observations

Javed Jabbar

I begin with a tribute to media and to all those, in their different capacities, who help produce truthful, engaging content for media.

The very nature of media is changing rapidly, as are the ways in which media are being accessed. The old media brought selected intelligence to mass audiences. The new media enable each individual user to produce and disseminate content instantly, and to participate in collaborative intelligence in order to create content for media.

No media can ever report the totality of reality (not even reality TV!), let alone report the totality of truth. And sometimes -- not always -- media imprison their audiences, indoctrinate them and help brainwash whole parts of even those societies that enjoy high levels of freedom of expression. Sometimes one wishes that media, in "advanced" countries as much as in "advancing" countries, were more independent than they choose to be. Some supposedly independent media collude covertly with states, governments and the corporate sector. Thus media independence can sometimes become media insularity, media self-protectionism and even media arrogance.

Media have come to achieve a very special status in society. If states are the official custodians of citizens, parliaments are the political custodians of citizens, governments are the executive custodians of citizens and judiciaries are the legal custodians of citizens. At another level, civil society institutions and organisations are the social custodians of citizens. Media are the monitors and thereby the custodians of all of the above. The importance of media as institutional pillars of society and state is unmatched by any other pillar. Consequently, the independence of media needs to be made so secure and authentic that independent media become as sustainable as an independent judiciary.

New ways to grant media a specific status in the constitutions of states need to be explored. Of course, the idea is rife with difficulties because of the basic differences between the kind of pillars and sectors represented by parliaments, governments, judiciaries and states, on the one hand, and the contrasting, open-ended entrance-and-exit dimensions of media and civil society, on the other. Nevertheless this is a possibility that requires consideration.

There are different forms of independence, none of them representing "complete" independence. Independence can be defined in a charter, as in the case of the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC). It can be made possible through funding from a credible, autonomous trust or foundation. There can be independence in professional conduct with regard to the creation of media content. The reality is that co-dependence is a more accurate term than independence, which suggests a self-sufficiency that is neither practical nor possible.

There are six levels of accountability for media: accountability to the law, proprietors, society, audiences, their own staff, and peer media. Each level calls for specific methods and forms of enforcing accountability.

The phenomenon of convergence and cross-media ownership can have negative and repressive consequences for media independence. For example, is it feasible to expect to read in a supposedly independent newspaper a truly detached, balanced, critical review of content produced by a radio or TV channel owned by the same group that owns the newspaper? Going by the experience in Pakistan, it is now difficult to find this kind of commentary in the independent press which, ironically, frequently featured such pieces when the state enjoyed a monopoly on electronic media.

The independence of mass media is a visible, relatively "easy" issue. The independence of community media is a more complex and "invisible" one.

The significance of independent media transcends the boundaries of societies and states. Thus, there is a new, global dimension to the issue of ensuring the independence of media: international bodies that represent print media so that media do not remain entirely dependent on state funds, license fees or the ever-growing, aggressive, intrusive element of advertising.

One way forward could be to give independent media enterprises a new status as **Social Value Enterprises (SVEs):** entities that are listed on stock exchanges. Their shares should be traded in a manner separate from the trading of normal shares which are too vulnerable to minute-to-minute, day-to-day fluctuations. Perhaps shares of media SVEs could be evaluated/graded/benefited/traded on the basis of how citizens judge the quality and degree of independence of the media. Media certified by internationally recognised standards of content and quality could be amongst the first such entities.

The case of the "OHMY" on-line service in South Korea could be a trendsetter because users voluntarily pay a monetary tribute to media content that they appreciate. According to *The Economist* (22 April 2006), in a recent instance a single article fetched US$30,000!

In the final analysis, media independence and accountability constitute a relationship destined to be always marked by dynamic tension.

Javed Jabbar is Chairman, South Asian Media Association and Former Minister of Information & Broadcasting, Pakistan.

Media Independence and Accountability

Susan Farkas

The United Nations Radio and Television Service supplies content about the work of the organisation to the world's media. Although we produce TV feeds and video features, as well as radio programmes, we are not broadcasters. We partner with broadcasters that air our material and, like them, we grapple with the issues of independence and accountability.

Since we work very closely with broadcasters, we are aware that they do not want propaganda. So we keep our stories factual and balanced. We cover the day-to-day work of the Secretary General, the General Assembly and the Security Council, as well as the activities of the UN around the globe. We supply this material free to broadcasters because we strongly believe that the organisation must be accountable to the hundreds of millions of people represented by its member states.

We also believe that independent media have a tremendously important role to play in addressing the problems that are high on the UN's agenda -- problems like poverty, disease, environmental degradation and human rights. Independent media, free to report on the needs of their people, become a voice for change. In fact, there is a direct correlation between freedom of the press and the eradication of poverty.

Of course, the concept of 'independent media' is not a simple one. Some public broadcasters have to be very careful what they say about the government that funds them. Indeed, in our case we have to consider the sensitivities of 191 governments, our member states. At the same time, private broadcasters are subject to commercial pressures as well as some editorial ones. A network that is owned by a large corporation is unlikely to investigate the practices of its parent organisation.

The pressure of ratings is particularly insidious because, in many ways, ratings seem like the ultimate accountability metre: viewers let you know what they like by watching -- so you should programme more of it, right? In the US, this approach has resulted in lots of stories about celebrities and crime. Needless to say, a celebrity charged with committing a crime is rating gold. OJ Simpson? Michael Jackson? There is no shortage of stories about them.

The consequences of this kind of approach are profound. On American television, many really important stories are rarely touched: stories about hunger, global warming, AIDS and malaria. The kinds of stories the UN puts at the top of its agenda get almost no coverage. For instance, last year, one American network newscaster spent less than five minutes on the situation in Darfur which the UN's Humanitarian Relief Coordinator considers the most pressing humanitarian crisis in the world.

If you are giving the public what it supposedly wants, public opinion polls take on exaggerated importance. So, after 9/11, Americans told pollsters that they wanted to rally around their president. I suspect that is why there was almost no media investigation of the rationale for the war -- that Iraq had weapons of mass destruction -- despite the fact that the UN weapons inspectors had found none. I would argue that journalists need to resist when ratings and opinion polls replace news judgment. Public or private, it is our responsibility to report not just what we think people want to hear, but also the facts they need to know to understand the world they live in and, perhaps, effect change.

This is where the UN Radio and Television Service can help. As a global organisation, we can offer content from places where broadcast outlets can no longer afford to go in these days of tightening news budgets. At our headquarters in New York, we gather stories from throughout the UN system and disseminate them to broadcasters via the Global Video Wire of the Associated Press Television Network (APTN) and the European Broadcasting Union (EBU).

Our ten-minute daily feed is called UNifeed. Since its inception more than a year ago, we have produced over 1,100 stories, covering a wide range of subjects, from avian flu to various humanitarian crises, from the tsunami warning system to developments in Nepal, Timor-Leste and Pakistan. We offer the facts, the video and the sound bites to help broadcasters do their own stories on these critical issues. Within a few months this material will be available for broadcast-quality download. We also produce other radio and TV content, such as a weekly radio show called UN Calling Asia, as well as weekly shows in Urdu, Bangla, Hindi and Bahasa Indonesia.

While we are an inter-governmental organisation and accountable to our bosses, the member states, we do give voice to critics -- often to NGOs that may criticise their governments. We balance those views with interviews with government officials. For instance, in our coverage of the often controversial issue of aborginal rights in Australia, we report the views of indigenous people as well as the Australian government. Our intention and attempt is to produce accurate, professional, balanced reporting so that our content wins the trust of broadcasters, which it must if they are to disseminate it. In fact, we count on broadcasters to hold us accountable if we mess up.

Susan Farkas is Chief, Radio and Television Service, United Nations

The Independence of the ABC

Joan McKain

The Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC) is a statutory Corporation which has guaranteed funding from the Australian Parliament on a triennial funding basis. Yet the organisation remains independent from government intervention, carries no advertising and has no licence fee collection. Direct funding does not have to mean political pressure and intervention. It certainly does not influence our journalism.

The editorial independence and integrity of the ABC underpins the Corporation's role as a public service broadcaster. The ABC operates under its own legislation, has special functions and duties set out in the Charter of the Corporation, and is subject to explicit programming and production obligations in relation to its public service broadcasting remit. The Charter contributes to and reflects Australia's national identity, fosters creativity and the arts, and encourages cultural diversity.

The specific requirements laid down by the Charter are:

- Innovation
- Comprehensiveness
- High standards
- National identity and cultural diversity
- Information and entertainment
- Encouragement and promotion of the arts
- Broadcasting of programmes of an educational nature
- Independence

It is the ABC's aim to ensure that diverse and high quality programming is supplied throughout our networks, both in Australia and from our overseas bureaux, and via services that ABC Radio Australia and ABC Asia Pacific provide. This is done within the boundaries of meeting basic standards laid down in the Editorial Policies of the ABC. This booklet sets out minimum standards to be achieved for all content types. It is mandatory for all staff involved in the production of content to meet these standards.

So what does the ABC and our fellow publicly funded broadcaster, the multilingual Special Broadcasting Service (SBS), do that the private sector does not do? How do we, as a Public Service Broadcaster, live up to the concept of public service broadcasting, which is to 'inform, educate and entertain?' How do we encompass

the two main strands of public broadcasting: to be able to give people the programmes they want to watch but also satisfy wider social purposes such as education and the promotion of 'citizenship?' In this digital era of new possibilities, how do we face the fresh challenges?

Over the past 73 years, the ABC has managed to touch the lives of a large number of Australians. It has shared in the country's history and development even as it has grown as an organisation. The key has been to be comprehensive and innovative while keeping up with our public service broadcasting mandate.

Since 1932, the ABC has built upon its core competencies to reach the position it is in now, with the following services making up the whole:

- Four national radio networks – Radio National, ABC News Radio, ABC Classic FM and Triple J
- Sixty local radio stations around Australia
- Three digital Internet music based services – dig, digJAZZ and digCOUNTRY
- One international radio network - Radio Australia
- ABC Television and, most recently, ABC2 -- our new digital television service
- ABC Online across 15 subject gateways
- Our international television service – ABC Asia Pacific – which broadcasts to 41 countries
- 40 ABC shops and 79 ABC Centres, as well as ABC Shop Online

All these services are overlapped by an independent news and current affairs service driven by a strong ethos of independence: independence from government, independence from big business, and independence from any association or lobby group.

As a public broadcaster our real reference point is our audience, which consists of citizens. Our accountability is to the public. Our responsibility is to be accurate and impartial at all times. We are judged on the basis of our performance and over the last 73 years it has become clear that the public values the ABC.

Having a strong and independent public broadcaster is fundamental to our society, fundamental to our freedom of speech and fundamental to the enrichment of citizens. In a world of intolerance and instability, public service broadcasters can play a significant role in enabling informed global debate and supporting it with impartial and trusted news and information.

The ABC has no permanent allies, only permanent interests: and these just happen to be the interests of the public. It is, in fact, the taxpayers who really provide the funds made available to a public broadcaster. A public broadcaster that simply reflects the views of a government would represent a scandalous waste of taxpayers' money. The ABC has had a complex and, at times, adversarial relationship with Government: it must report daily on those upon whom it is financially dependent, yet from whom it must remain editorially independent.

The role of the public service broadcaster has been the subject of debate in many parts of the world -- the UK, Hong Kong and Indonesia, to name just a few countries. In London, the BBC has released their manifesto, "Building Public Value," their bid for Charter renewal and, more recently, their "Creative Future" blueprint. In Hong Kong, the Committee on Review of Public Service Broadcasting has been charged with reviewing the overall environment of public service broadcasting and making recommendations for improvement in the short, medium and long terms. In Jakarta, the government has decided to change the status of TVRI from a state-owned television station into a public broadcast institute.

There is a purpose to a public service broadcaster's existence. A public broadcaster is so much more than a media network: it can tell the stories of a country through drama, comedy and documentary across a number of platforms, it can record a nation's history, and it can respond to what an audience wants -- it actually widens the choice that audiences, individually and collectively, face. In reality, a public broadcaster is central to the health of all broadcasting.

The immediate task ahead is to ensure that we do remain relevant to our audiences in the new digital environment and take full advantage of the opportunities which emerging technologies present to us. The challenges of the relative decline of audiences for traditional radio and television networks, greater market fragmentation and more personalised media platforms are compounded by the limited budgets made available to public broadcasters.

For the ABC, the creative challenge is to maintain an effective balance between our quest for audience reach and share as a mainstream player, and our distinctiveness as a public service broadcaster supporting national identity. Public broadcasters with strong national identity must make good all opportunities to attract and maintain audience through content that is relevant and innovative in what is now a rapidly changing and increasingly competitive environment.

Joan McKain is Manager, Governance Support and International Relations, Australian Broadcasting Corporation

2 Radio in the Digital Age

Radio in the Digital Age

Shri Brijeshwar Singh

Digital technology has permeated all areas of broadcasting thanks to the inherent advantages of the technology and its capacity to simultaneously provide multiple services and choices. The possibilities of digital technology include not only transmission but generation of programming, creation of a network for gathering, production, contribution and distribution of programmes, as well as news automation.

Of course, listeners may not be aware of or concerned about whether in-house processing involves analogue or digital technology. For them what would matter most are the quality and variety of services offered. The real challenge of digital broadcasting is, therefore, the last mile in the chain -- digital transmission and reception. It is here that the consumer has to be persuaded to buy a digital receiver and to switch over with time.

Some of the strengths of digital radio are:

- Capacity to deliver greater number of channels, thereby offering more choice to consumers
- Data broadcasting, which provides useful data-based information to listeners and, at the same time, offers a potential source of revenue
- Multi-media broadcasting, which offers opportunities for a variety of multi-media services
- Interactive broadcasting to promote active listener participation through the use of the telecom network as the return channel.

The weaknesses of digital radio include:

- Multiplicity of digital radio standards
- Non-availability of cheap digital radio receivers
- High cost of Digital Audio Broadcasting (DAB) automobile receivers and virtual non-availability of Digital Radio Mondiale (DRM) automobile receivers

The threats to digital radio include:

- Development of alternative radio formats -- mainly non-linear broadcasting and pod-casting.
- Convergence of MP3 players and mobiles
- Availability of 3 G mobile phone technology, which would tend to take away the cream of the advertising market

However, notwithstanding the weaknesses and the threats, digital radio offers tremendous opportunities. Among these are:

- Scope for augmentation of the reach and impact of radio, including coverage of uncovered areas
- Targeting the mobile population, which is quite sizeable
- Narrow-casting to cater to the specific requirements of niche audience and groups
- Satellite-based digital radio delivery to automobiles, as in the Sirius, XM and Satellite Digital Multimedia Broadcasting (S-DMB) systems
- Broadcasting and on-demand content delivery to hand-held devices and mobiles
- Cost-effective mode for transmission to far-flung, hilly/mountainous regions through digital short wave

AIR's Plans

All India Radio (AIR) has formulated a strategy for phased migration from analogue to digital technology. Apart from the in-house change-over to digital in different areas, including programme gathering, studio recordings and the production contribution and distribution network, as well as automation, AIR has planned for the switch-over to digital transmissions as well.

AIR plans to move to DRM through a two-pronged strategy:

- Establishing countrywide national channel coverage through multi-channel short-wave DRM as a cost-effective solution to the problem of providing multi-channel coverage across the vast multi-lingual country.
- Using Near Vertical Incidence Skywave (NVIS) to cover isolated regions in order to achieve total coverage across the country.

Keeping the present cost of receivers in mind, AIR plans to adopt transmission in simulcast mode.

Another strategy which has proved to be a success story for AIR has been the implementation of KU band Direct to Home (DTH) radio, which has helped AIR to provide multi-channel radio broadcasting throughout the country in one go and in a very cost-effective way. In fact, the emergence of the stand-alone DTH set-top box has helped very much in this regard.

DTH Radio Set-top-Box

Multi-channel DTH radio transmission, coupled with very low power (100 Watt) FM relay transmitters to serve many small pockets of population, has helped AIR to extend FM coverage to many far-flung and uncovered areas where no other means of communication and entertainment are available.

These strategies have helped AIR to provide effective radio coverage in local languages to large sections of the poor and illiterate population spread out in remote areas of the country, thus bringing the advantages of digital technology to the masses.

Shri Brijeshwar Singh is Director General, All India Radio, India

Radio in the Digital Age: A Conversion Challenge for Small Public Broadcasters

Sitiveni Halofaki

Radio today is going through a period of fundamental change. The change involves not only the shift from analogue to digital but also a shift in consumer behaviour. In this context I hope to share the real experiences and challenges of a small island broadcaster like ours.

Earlier last year, a brilliant young man visited me in my office. He was very emotional and said, "I visited our National Museum and Archives and found an old diary belonging to my great grandfather. He had noted in his diary that all his diary notes were also recorded by a Fiji Broadcasting Commission producer in 1962. Please, I beg of you, can I listen to my grandfather's diary?"

We managed to locate this old magnetic tape which had been properly labeled with its recording date: 18 August 1962. When the old tape was handed over to the young man, his face suddenly brightened up and he gripped it hard, as if he was holding a piece of gold. It was a very moving experience. However, I then had to convey the sad news that he would not be able to listen to the tape. The recording was done using an old tape recorder with a three and a quarter speed. The company had not been able to source such a machine so that the tape could be converted to a digital or CD format. The young man, overcome with disappointment, pledged that he would give up anything for that piece of archival recording because it is not only for him – it is also for his children and grandchildren to be.

For island countries with strong cultural values conversion of old analogue material to the digital format is truly a challenge. In 2002, the Asia-Pacific Institute for Broadcasting Development (AIBD) had highlighted the issue in its publication about Public Service Broadcasting in Thailand: "In nearly all the Asia-Pacific countries digitisation of radio production and archives has either started or will start soon." At the same time, a recent publication of the International Federation of Television Archives (IFTA/FIAT) on audiovisual archives stated, "The current state of radio and television archives around the world is extremely worrying, particularly in developing countries. An estimated 200 million hours of recording are under threat. This cultural heritage is currently preserved on fragile magnetic tape and 80 per cent of the recordings will disappear if they are not transferred onto new media within the next 10 to 20 years."

For small broadcasters who have yet to digitise their archives, the wonders of the digital world are still the stuff of dreams yet to be fully realized. The process of digitisation can begin only with the full support of member broadcasters who have completed the full cycle of conversion from analogue to digital.

I speak with confidence because our organisation would not have achieved what we now enjoy in terms of funding and consultation without the support of UNESCO, AIBD, ABU and member broadcasters like the Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC). We fully appreciate and believe that the digital platform for broadcasters is the best way forward but conversion is a major obstacle before us. The conversion dilemma is truly an issue with small and medium scale public broadcasters.

As UNESCO has rightly pointed out, it is our duty to strengthen public service broadcasters as a gateway to information and knowledge for all. We should foster the indigenous content quality and technological upgrading of public service broadcasting (PSB). It is our role to encourage innovative and creative improvements in programming to captivate larger audiences. The fulfilment of our duty to strengthen PSB as a gateway to information and knowledge depends very much on the level of technical upgrades available to individual stations.

In 2001, after spending almost ten years in government and the private sector, I decided to rejoin the Fiji Broadcasting Corporation Limited (FBCL) as a Programme Director. A thought-provoking question was posed to me then: "How do you look at the Fijian Language Service of Radio Fiji in the next decade?" My response was: "In the next decade FBCL should be a leading freeway for indigenous news and programmes." Coming from a young and strong advocate of public broadcasting, my response was a summary of a vision that we will be lucky enough to take forward if we can capitalise on the power of digital radio.

FBCL partly realised this dream during the successful general elections in Fiji in May 2006 by streaming election results -- both audio and data -- instantly to all our citizens around the globe on radiofiji.com.fj. That was another milestone in our movement towards being able to think digitally, gather locally and stream instantly. It also demonstrated the benefits of convergence, where new media like the Internet complements the objectives of our news service using old media like the radio.

While the achievements made possible by technologies today need to be acknowledged, the contributions of our predecessors who have filled up volumes and volumes of analogue recordings in our various sound libraries should not be forgotten or neglected. How often do we stop and think about small broadcasters who are still struggling to secure proper funding to upgrade internal broadcast and production systems? Can you visualise those old round spools lying idle in their back office, the old vinyl recordings silently suffering a slow death on their old racks? This is a challenge for broadcasters in developing countries who have yet to see the dawn of the digital age -- not because of lack of will but because of lack of resources.

Generous funding is required to enable such broadcasters to meet this challenge. The FBCL just commenced the digitisation of our old archives and the process is likely to take at least another two years to complete. We applaud UNESCO's Apia office in Samoa since, without their support, we would not have been able to experience the joy of working with digital radio machines. For countries with strong oral traditions like ours it is vital that archival materials be restored digitally: that is the only guarantee for future compatibility.

As the booming ratings of the past decade have shown, there is a lot of life left in public service radio. So, too, is there imagination and hope bottled up in old programmes yet to be converted. With hundreds of websites now dedicated to old time radio, the success of radio at the local level, and the increasing ready availability of satellite radio technology, it is probably only a matter of time until demand meets supply.

The history of radio's past is still a part of radio's present, and the two may be securing a part of the medium's future as well. I would like to conclude with a remark made by the Director-General of UNESCO during his installation in Paris in 1999. This is what he said: "Yes, we must do all that we can – for the world expects no less – to help bring about the self-fulfilment of everyone, while showing respect for all."

If I may be allowed to rephrase his words in the context of radio in the digital age, "We must do all we can – for public service broadcasts expects no less – to enhance performance using digital radio platform, while showing respect for our old cultural analogues." Therein lies the true cornerstone of radio – what we call the "Voice of the People."

Sitiveni Halofaki is Manager Programmes, Fiji Broadcasting Corporation Limited, Fiji

Radio in the Digital Age

Jan Hoek

On 1 June 2006 the corporate name of the public service broadcaster in the Netherlands changed to Radio Netherlands Worldwide in English and Radio Nederland Wereldomroep in all other languages. The acronym RNW has replaced the old RN on the logo, letterheads, websites, and so on. This is part of a re-branding exercise seeking to emphasise that it is essentially an international broadcaster with a Dutch focus.

RNW is a medium-size broadcaster in terms of its budget, and the current situation with programme distribution is proving to be quite a challenge. Ten years ago, most international broadcasting was on shortwave. Now, in the digital age, there are many more platforms. Since RNW cannot afford to be on all the available digital platforms, we have to make strategic choices.

Unlike some international broadcasters, we have not yet given up on shortwave. We have reduced our analogue shortwave transmission hours, but we hope that when portable Digital Radio Mondiale (DRM) receivers come on the market -- hopefully before the end of 2006 – we will be able to include DRM in our mix of platforms. Meanwhile, we offer all our services online, both through live streaming and on demand, and we recently added podcasting. We set up a new department called Strategy and Business Development on 1 January 2006 in order to facilitate continuous evaluation of all the options.

I am particularly proud of our efforts to build up a network of local partner stations to help us reach more listeners. For example, we still broadcast to Indonesia on shortwave for four hours every day – two in the morning and two in the evening – because shortwave reaches various parts of the country where we do not yet have partner stations. However, in a growing number of towns and cities across the country, RNW can also be accessed via FM. We recently opened an office in Jakarta to improve contacts with individual stations and seek new partners. And so far, that initiative appears to be working. A three-day meeting in Jakarta in May 2006, which was attended by nearly all our Indonesian partner stations, showed us that working with partners as correspondents and co-producers has considerable potential. Since there is a problem with skills, we are designing a training programme that will be held in various cities in Indonesia, with the cooperation of the Dutch government.

Another positive result of the Jakarta meeting was that our Indonesian partners decided to set up their own association. The aim of the new organisation is to exchange information and support each other's development. The association has already created its own email group, and it will help us by identifying the training needs of its members. So, as a result of a meeting organised by RNW, some of the individual domestic broadcasters in Indonesia are getting to know each other better and beginning to work together for mutual benefit.

As Henry Sandee, head of our Indonesian service, pointed out after the Jakarta meeting, RNW is now facing a fascinating opportunity to re-assess its approach. It has the option of embarking on a new strategy that goes beyond merely relaying material produced in Hilversum and actively involves partners in the design and production of news items and features.

Our Spanish service is pursuing a similar strategy. It produces a number of weekly programmes that are widely heard across Latin America. Among these is a programme called Diálogo Mundial (World Dialogue), produced in partnership with other broadcasters, international organisations and NGOs. We have a regional office in Costa Rica that maintains contacts with our Spanish-language partner stations and provides training in Latin America.

Our West African bureau in Benin has till now mainly been dealing with Francophone countries in Africa, but we are expanding that to include countries where English is more widely spoken. We also have a representative in the USA, where we work closely with National Public Radio (NPR), including on co-productions on issues that affect the Netherlands. For example, last year NPR broadcast a one-hour programme on US opposition to the International Criminal Court in The Hague, and much of this was produced by RNW. We also expect to open an office in India in the near future to begin increasing our services for the Asian region. Another way we interact with other broadcasters -- both partners and non-partners -- is through the courses offered by the Radio Netherlands Training Centre. The emphasis is on training broadcasters in basic journalistic skills, which they then use and adapt to their own environment and audience.

International broadcasting in the past has all too often been about shouting at people. RNW is independent of government, and we do not have an axe to grind. We believe our approach, through partnerships, dialogue and practical support, is the way forward. Feedback from thousands of partner stations suggests they agree with us.

Here I have dealt with only one of the non-technical issues regarding this subject -- others have to do with marketing and profiling, more cooperation with international partners, and so on. But the point is clear: distribution or reaching your target groups is not only about technology.

Jan Hoek is Director-General, Radio Netherlands Worldwide, Netherlands

Radio in the Digital Age

Ramesh Jaura

Last night I spent some five hours googling, searching for items relating to "radio in the digital age." The search engine poured out 42.3 million pages.

Almost at the top of the list was an article titled: "Of human touch: The spiritual life enters brave new digital world," by Stephanie Simon of the Los Angeles Times dated 27 May 2006. She wrote:

"A recent national poll found just 17 per cent of adults view the local church as essential for developing faith. Small wonder. Sitting in a pew on Sunday morning seems almost embarrassingly old-fashioned in an era when you can watch a video re-creation of the Last Supper on your Palm or get Scripture text-messaged to your cell phone. Bored with your pastor's ramblings? Select a peppier sermon from among hundreds of 'godcasts' online. Just pick a topic: Christian dating? Old Testament prophets? Then download it to your MP3 player. Finding the old leather-bound Bible a bit cumbersome? A quick download from Olive Tree Bible Software and you'll be able to search Scripture on your BlackBerry."

"At first blush it may seem a little peculiar to connect with God on your cell phone," said Christopher Chisholm, a TV-executive-turned-digital-evangelist, who recently helped launch FaithMobile, a service that will send a daily Bible verse to your cell phone for $5.99 a month. How else, he asks, are you going to "get in touch with the Word" in this harried age?

I then moved on to the second top result, headlined, "Defence Forces to invest in secure digital radio" (26 May 2006). According to John Kennedy, reporting from Dublin on silicon republic.com, Ireland's technology news service, the Irish Army had put out a tender to acquire a tactical mobile digital radio system that would be capable of resisting electronic counter measures by terrorists and other potential enemies. The Defence Forces tender mentioned that the tactical digital wideband radio system must not only be highly secure, but also capable of 'self-healing.' It must also have the capacity to interface with a wide range of military equipment as well as laptop computers, wireless routers, switches and vehicle intercom equipment.

I moved on to the third item from the top. The Fifth Estate website had posted a story headlined: "Politics, radio enter a digital age," by Nick Sheridan (4 May 2006). According to the report, "Vague murmurs about digital radio in Australia could be

heard over a decade ago. But in the past year, those crackly messages have become a clear signal, and the message is: digital radio is on its way. On the fourth of April this year, hot on the heels of her plan for the future of the media industry in Australia, the federal Communications Minister, Senator Helen Coonan, made perhaps the most significant announcement to date in the drawn out process of bringing digital radio transmission to Australia."

As I moved further down, ElectronicsWeekly.com reported on 3 May that the FIFA World Cup in Germany was adding to booming digital radio sales. The item quoted figures published by the Digital Radio Development Bureau (DRDB) suggesting that sales of Digital Audio Broadcasting (DAB) radio sets in the UK had topped three million. "It took five years for DAB set sales to reach the first million; it took just nine months to reach the second million, and five months to top three million," said DRDB chief executive, Ian Dickens. According to DRDB forecasts, two million DAB digital radios could be sold in the months up to December 2006, putting cumulative sales at 4.7 million by the end of the year.

I surfed through some 100 out of the 43.2 million pages that google had served up. I was looking for news articles related to digital radio and the developing world where more than three billion people are struggling to survive on less than two dollars a day. I did not find any articles that fit into our theme. So I started a more focused search with the following key words: "digital radio third world." That resulted in 39.8 million pages. But, to my surprise and disappointment, there were again no news reports or articles relevant to our theme.

I turned to the United Nations Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The eighth MDG seeks to establish a global development for partnership to help the developing world achieve the seven other goals by 2015. It suggests that this would be done in cooperation with the private sector, which would make available the benefits of new technologies -- especially information and communications technologies -- to developing countries.

I remembered that the International Telecommunications Union (ITU) has been organising the two-part World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) and related events. I thought it would be interesting to find out what the ITU has to say on digital radio. I came across a brand new press release dated 22 May which said, "The ITU Regional Radiocommunication Conference (RRC-06), in session since last week, has been making quiet but steady progress towards an 'all-digital' terrestrial broadcasting service for radio and television. This represents a significant step in the future development of information and communication technologies, as well as the revolutionary direction it will provide in improving communications worldwide."

The press release went on to say, "Mr Yoshio Utsumi, addressing the inaugural session of the Conference on 15 May, noted that digital terrestrial broadcasting is now a reality in many countries."

Pointing out that "Many Member States have already established a cut-off date for migration from analogue to digital terrestrial broadcasting," he added, "Recognising the advantages of the digital dividend, these countries are demanding immediate and unrestricted access to digital bandwidths. Meanwhile, other countries remain protective of the analogue system."

I told myself: "God is now on the BlackBerry and all will be right with the world -- hopefully also for those three billion surviving on less than two dollars a day."

Ramesh Jaura is European Director, Inter Press Service (IPS) Europe

3 Local Content for Global Audiences: An Uphill Battle?

Advocacy of the Millennium Development Goals: Role of Broadcasters

Advocacy of the Millennium Development Goals: Role of Broadcasters

Kim Hak-Su

The story of the Indian Ocean tsunami went out in an instant to every corner of the world. The tragedy, captured on camera, helped mobilise over 13 billion US dollars for relief and rebuilding. This generosity towards the affected people poured in from countries rich and poor, from governments and from individuals.

There is another kind of tsunami that occurs every day: the daily "tsunami" of poverty, hunger, disease and environmental degradation that unfolds silently, affecting millions more adults and children than the worst natural disaster.

The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), with their time-bound targets, are key elements of a major global effort to counter the daily waves of these silent and unseen tragedies. The goals are designed to inject a sense of urgency into the process and to hold leaders at all levels accountable. The MDGs constitute the international blueprint for human development. The goals are the practical means through which noble intentions articulated by the Millennium Declaration -- adopted by 189 governments at the dawn of this century – can be realised. Each of the eight MDGs has corresponding targets that are to be achieved in the period up to the year 2015.

The goals represent the collective vision of a better world -- with less poverty, where every child is educated, where gender equality is the norm and where mothers and children are healthy, a world that is no longer threatened by the HIV/AIDS pandemic and dwindling environmental resources. The MDGs can only be achieved through global partnerships, including partnerships with the media.

What would broadcasters gain from reporting on MDG-related news and stories? In a recent BBC on-line survey, three out of four respondents showed interest in learning more about poverty in developing countries. This is indicative of a global market for development stories. It also means that your stories on the human drama inherent in the issues included in the MDGs, wherever they unfold, could attract not only domestic attention but also global interest. More importantly, by producing such stories, broadcasters could become change agents, catalysing support that can alter the lives of millions of people across the world. This is why we urge you to stay with the story.

Six years into the new millennium, the Asia-Pacific region -- the fastest growing region in the world -- leads the world in reducing income poverty. As many as 300 million people have been set free from the poverty trap since 1990. The region has also nearly reached the goal of universal primary education, with most countries achieving gender parity in education.

But these remarkable gains, underpinned by spectacular economic growth, are dented by grim statistics on other fronts:

- *The fight to prevent women from dying of pregnancy and delivery complications has stagnated.* In 22 countries, there is no change in the maternal mortality rates and, in some, the number has even risen.
- *Every day, 14,000 children die before they reach their fifth birthday.* And nearly half of all young children in South Asia are malnourished.
- *Over 9 million adults and children in Asia-Pacific are living with HIV.* The virus is still spreading. As a result, some countries that enjoyed low HIV prevalence rates till recently are now on the brink of a generalised epidemic.
- *Our forests are vanishing faster than ever before in the region's history.* And carbon dioxide emission levels are shooting up rapidly.

The role of the media is all-important for putting a human face to the MDGs. The media can shape public policy, as well as the human development agenda. The media have the potential to alter the course of history.

Reports on a range of human development and environmental issues do appear on global and regional TV from time to time. The capacity of national and local media to capture hearts and minds is also demonstrated every now and then.

Broadcasters serve the public interest by reporting on issues that affect ordinary people and marginalised groups. People want to know how well their country is doing, and what their elected representatives have achieved. Media stories could remind policy makers of their commitment to fighting the daily onslaught of silent tragedies.

The key to spreading the word about the MDGs is to use local languages and pictures to tell the story. A film, "A Future within Reach," jointly produced by UNESCAP and TVE Asia Pacific, provides a quick overview of how Asia-Pacific is faring in its pursuit of the MDGs. The film is available in seven languages, including Bahasa Indonesia, Bengali, Chinese, English, Hindi, Urdu and Russian.

The media can also involve politicians and celebrities in high-profile events to generate popular support for action on the MDGs. The media can generate public debate through them, accompany them to poor areas to witness and showcase action, or position them as MDG spokespersons. Last but not least, the media can help track MDG progress by conducting on-line surveys to engage the public in this and to raise public awareness and knowledge about the MDGs.

It is our shared responsibility to turn around conditions for the millions who are deprived of basic needs and services, as well as equal opportunities, so that they may live healthy, productive lives. It is our joint obligation to continuously advocate the need for cheaper life-saving medicines to treat malaria, tuberculosis, and AIDS. It is our duty to remind all stakeholders that environmental protection is today's necessary insurance for the future.

Broadcasters are invited to use their creativity in the media world to convey these messages in ways that not only inform but also engender social change. The partnership between the public sector, the development community and the media has come a long way. But in order to make a greater difference an even closer alliance must be forged now.

Kim Hak-Su is United Nations Under-Secretary-General and Executive Secretary, Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

Local Content for Global Audiences

Mano Wickramanaya

We live today in a world of ever-increasing access and connectivity but the traffic seems to move largely in two directions: North to South and West to East. To lots of people in all parts of the world, globalisation today seems to mean just larger markets for developing countries, the spread and adoption of western culture and mores, and the culinary awakening of the west to a plethora of exotic flavours and spices from the east.

Broadcasters have a significant role to play in publicising the Millennium Development Goals which, incidentally, except for the last two, largely deal with urgent realities in the lesser developed world. The obvious role of the media is to disseminate information in their home markets which have a direct beneficial impact on the people most affected by the problems addressed by the goals. However, the media can also play a crucial role in raising global awareness of the problems, reporting incremental gains, and keeping alive enthusiasm for the achievement of the MDGs.

Too often the global conscience is assuaged by the donation of large sums of money, a great proportion of which, sadly, ends up lining the pockets of a corrupt elite in both the east and the west. To me employing your retired uncle to write a report on poverty alleviation at the UN's charge-out rate for consultants is in the same category as a local politician building two tsunami houses out of funds allocated for ten and using the balance money to renovate his residence. The broadcasters' role as a watch dog cannot be minimised. We must do our bit to galvanise civil society, and not just in our home countries.

Often the causes of the problems addressed by the MDGs differ from country to country. It is vital to understand the context that gives rise to the problems if they are to be effectively addressed. Broadcasters can contribute towards such understanding by analysing and explaining the causes and effects in their coverage.

So the roles the media can play to promote the fulfilment of the MDGs is clear. But there is still a question about how to ensure that local content is acceptable at the global level or, at least, to a target market in the west? Clearly language is an issue but effective dubbing can solve that problem. Formats are important – perhaps even more important than content: a familiar format makes viewers comfortable. Another important consideration is perspective. Producers have to keep their markets

in mind: who is the target viewer? Consciously addressing such matters can help make the product globally marketable. It is widely recognised that commercially viable content attracts the largest audiences. The real information or message can be embedded or even subliminal within that.

So, whether we like it or not, the fact is that the world is moving towards a more homogeneous global culture. Perhaps the best way to protect and preserve our individual cultures, and also get our message and information across, is to go in under the cover of the accepted formulae of our target market.

In order to do this effectively broadcasters in the east need to develop relationships with colleagues in the west. We need to work together to share information, methods and products across the cultural and relative prosperity divide. This is, of course, easier said than done. It is certainly an uphill task, but one that can fetch great rewards -- not just financial. Such a process can contribute towards unifying support at the level of ordinary people towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals and making the world a better place for everybody, not just a privileged few.

Mano Wickramanaya is Group Director, MTV Channel & MBC Networks, Sri Lanka

Local Contents in Global Context: The Case of Korea

Min Eun-Kyung

Korean television programmes have been achieving great success in the global market over last couple of years. Since the success has been somewhat unexpected, it has raised several interesting issues to be considered and discussed within the Korean broadcast industry, including the globalisation of local content.

Since its inception the Korean television industry has been an importer of TV programmes produced overseas. Yet, in recent years, it has turned into a programme exporter. This is because of many ground-shaking changes that have taken place in the industry. The Korean example could be one of the model cases for local producers and distributors in Asia to look at while thinking about the globalisation of locally-produced TV content.

After Winter Sonata

The phenomenon of Winter Sonata – a drama produced by the Korean Broadcasting System (KBS) – is quite well known. Winter Sonata, first aired in the country in 2002, is the most successful Korean drama ever introduced to global audiences. Since its first telecast outside the country -- in Taiwan -- the drama has been aired in over 20 countries and regions. What quickly became a global sensation is still creating ripple effects in related industries.

For Korean TV producers the sudden, great success of the drama was an eye-opening experience. Virtually nobody in the broadcast industry had ever expected that a TV drama produced in Korea would have such appeal to global audiences. The tremendous success of Winter Sonata has been attributed to three major reasons. First, the well-written script based on a story with universal appeal beyond cultural boundaries -- the drama was full of emotional expression, love, kindness and self-sacrifice. Another draw could be the charms of the main actor and actress. The third attraction could be the picturesque beauty of the visual images – for example, the breathtaking scenes of snow in the Korean winter.

The drama is far from a realistic depiction of love, but the fairytale-like story line mixed with three factors mentioned above obviously caught the imagination of global audiences. The success of Winter Sonata provided a chance for KBS and other

Korean broadcasters to start thinking seriously about the phenomenon in order to learn lessons from this useful prototype for continued success in future marketing.

Paradigm Shift

Following the overseas success of TV dramas, Korean broadcasters began to recognise the importance of global audiences. Till recently air-time sales constituted the most important revenue source for the Korean TV industry. In other words, the most important factor to be considered in a TV station was the rating in the domestic market. For TV producers, the domestic audience was and is still the most important variable when planning new programmes.

However, with Korean TV programmes now enjoying growing popularity among global audiences, a meaningful paradigm shift is being perceptible in the industry. In the case of KBS, the portion of revenue from overseas sales has been increasing in recent years, although the total amount is small compared to income from advertisements and license fees. The success of Korean dramas abroad has inspired local broadcasters to find new horizons and discover overseas audiences. Many Korean dramas are now being aimed at overseas audiences as well as the domestic audience.

Another meaningful change is evident in the domestic industry. While terrestrial broadcasters have long been the sole investors in TV dramas in Korea, today a significant amount of investment is coming in from overseas investors. The number of pre-sales of TV dramas has increased accordingly. In a nutshell, it can be said that the globalisation of Korean TV drama has catapulted the domestic industry onto the global stage.

The Case of Spring Waltz

The KBS mini-series drama, Spring Waltz, provides more evidence of the paradigm shift. This drama was telecast on KBS TV1 channel in April and May 2006. It had secured considerable investment from overseas broadcasters through the sale of telecast rights even before shooting started. As a result, the producer of the drama had access to stable funds at the pre-production stage and could hedge the risk of failure in the domestic market.

The fact that the director of Spring Waltz was the person who had made Winter Sonata was one of the main reasons for the successful pre-sales record of the drama. In addition, the production implemented pre-sales marketing activities in the international market place, and very successfully at that. This example demonstrates that Korean drama has managed to obtain a "brand name" and that this new development has propelled Korean broadcasters into a new horizon.

Planning for global audiences and pre-sales marketing are common practices among international broadcasters. But for players in relatively closed media markets with a

strong cultural identity, such activities were not the norm. It is the changes initiated by overseas audiences for Korean TV programmes that have led to chain reactions that have pushed Korean broadcasters in that direction.

Rising interest in other genres

The new interest in Korean dramas has generated enthusiasm about marketing other programme genres -- such as documentary, infotainment and animation -- to global audiences. For instance, the animated fairy tale series, Happy Life, produced by KBS has found great resonance in other Asian countries. Popular Korean infotainment programme formats are also being introduced in stations elsewhere. For example, the format of the KBS TV programme, Quiz Show: Golden Bell, was bought by some overseas broadcasters. Producers in other genres are also gradually becoming aware of global audiences, even though the interest in drama continues to be greater for the moment. Co-production in the other genres may have great potential, especially within the Asia Pacific area.

Changes in Domestic Industry

The shifts in the Korean TV industry can be summarised into four major developments: globalisation of the industry; diversified revenue stream, budget expansion, and growth of overall industry. Of course, these four factors are inter-connected. The success of dramas has driven Korean broadcasters into globalisation and, in turn, by securing funds from overseas investors, they have been able to diversify the revenue stream. For some dramas, the total production budget is well over the expected income from the domestic market. The risk of failure in the domestic market is being offset by possibilities in the overseas market.

The main positive effect of these changes lies in the increased possibility of improvement in the quality of programmes. With increased budgets, producers can devote more time and resources for production and this, in turn, can contribute to better quality. In the long run the changes are likely to result in the overall growth of the Korean TV industry.

Hazardous Areas

However, these changes in the Korean media industry constitute a double-edged sword. If the sword is wielded in another direction, it could have catastrophic effects on some Korean productions. One of the common worries is that, in general, high budget means high risk. Simply speaking, many Korean productions cannot afford failure, especially if a product fails with both domestic and overseas audiences. Although producers are rapidly growing, individual players are still too small to realise the benefits of the economy of scale.

In addition, now that many high budget dramas are planned and produced aiming for both domestic and overseas audiences, some critics point out that Korean dramas show a growing tendency to be a cocktail of proven elements that guarantee success, such the use of Korean pop-culture stars, reiteration of popular narratives, and so forth. While such a predictable cocktail may work in the short term, it may also create boredom among viewers in the long run.

Also, as the TV industry is getting more and more globalised and commercialised, the room for experimentation may well shrink. I believe that the success of Korean TV programmes is in part due to the freshness and creativity that marked them. These qualities were cultivated in the somewhat diverse, non-commercial, experimental eco-system of Korean drama. Without experimentation, the well of creativity is bound to dry out.

There are also problems with the way budgets are constructed. For instance, stars are among the key factors contributing to the popularity of overseas audiences. Still, the large proportion of the budget dedicated to stars sometimes skews the total production budget. As a result, even if the total size of the budget grows, the way it is allocated does not always allow significant improvement in the overall quality of production.

New Perspectives

As local broadcasters find global audiences, meaningful changes are to be found within Korea. In 2005 KBS, in cooperation with VTV Vietnam, successfully co-produced the documentary, Ho Chi Minh Trail, which was well received by audiences. By contributing each broadcaster's expertise to a joint project, two organisations were able to achieve meaningful progress.

Investment in experimental drama continues in the KBS. Currently KBS produces and broadcasts one hour-long drama every week in high definition format. This means that around 50 one-hour TV dramas are produced per year. Directed by young KBS directors who are exploring and experimenting with new styles and subjects, they are relatively free from the pressure of commercial considerations. We expect that the next generation of young talents, growing up in such a creative environment, will continue to explore and experiment.

Since KBS programmes are well received, especially among Asians, Korean producers are getting more and more interested in their audiences, asking themselves, "Why are they watching our programmes and what should be our next step?" This curiosity has evolved into new initiatives in KBS. For example, in 2006 KBS announced its new project, Windows of Asia, aiming at cooperation and co-production in various genres with other broadcasters in Asia. By creating TV content catering to Asian tastes and jointly producing TV programmes, KBS expects to expand its relationships with other Asian broadcasters.

International Satellite Channel

The successful landing of Korean television content in global markets has led KBS into more adventurous areas. For example, it decided to launch a special channel to communicate with its overseas audiences: the international satellite channel, KBS World. The best of KBS programmes in genres such as drama, documentary, current affairs and news are being telecast with English subtitles on this channel. Viewers in Asia, Europe, Oceania and North America can access the channel. In Japan and the United States, the channel is included in the basic package of local satellite platforms.

Growth Path

To sum up, a simple way of looking at the growth path of providers of local content is as follows:

- Pop culture, led by drama and music, has made global audiences discover and become familiar with Korean cultural products.
- The success of Korean TV dramas has pulled other genres such as documentary, infotainment into the spotlight.
- The globalisation of its programmes has forced the Korean TV industry to transform itself. Thanks to the resulting paradigm shift, Korean broadcasters are now considering global audiences as well as domestic audiences. Co-production initiatives and the launch of an international satellite channel are good examples of the paradigm shift that has taken place in Korean broadcasting.

The transformation took place very rapidly, within a period of approximately 5 years. The question now is: "What lies ahead?"

The Future

A traditional Korean dinner involves many dishes on the table, both small and large. All these dishes are essential for savouring traditional Korean cuisine. Each dish contributes to the proper composition of a big dining table. TV programmes can be compared to the various dishes, the dining table can be taken to be the global market, and global audiences are akin to diners who have the freedom of choice and can select dishes or programmes according to their own will. In this scenario, Korean TV content can be likened to a newly introduced dish on the table. If the diners find a novel, fresh dish on the table, they will try it and find that they enjoy the flavour of the new dish.

This is an apt metaphor for the present situation of Korean TV content in the worldwide broadcast market. Global audiences have just begun to enjoy the new locally produced content and they seem to think the new programmes are worth enjoying for now. They are helping themselves to the new dish a bit more frequently than the conventional dishes. As a chef creating the new dish, KBS hopes that the

dish, the locally produced Korean content, will remain for as long as possible on the table and eventually secure the status of one of the conventional dishes on it. Many dishes will disappear as diners' tastes change. By contributing to the harmony of the table, we wish to cater to the palate of diners, our global audiences.

By becoming a regular player on the global scene, by supplying diverse TV programming, Korean content will be able to help maintain the nutritional balance of the Asia Pacific media market -- the dining table – which is already over-laden with a lot of western style programming. It is our wish that many Asian broadcasters will develop dishes or programmes in their own style, thereby enriching the experiences of local as well as global audiences and keeping alive the diversity in the region. As a viewer in Korea I myself want to watch more locally produced Asian TV content when I am back at home.

Min Eun-Kyung is Head & Executive Director, International Relations, Korean Broadcasting System, Korea

Local Content for Global Audiences

Alessandra Paradisi

The Permanent Conference of Mediterranean Audiovisual Operators (COPEAM) is a network of networks that brings together people from different countries and different fields (audiovisual, culture, universities, institutional bodies, etc.) in order to experiment with new ways of cooperating and developing common initiatives. The results achieved in the ten years since it was established are a source of pride and encourage us to go further.

In spite of the complexity of the Mediterranean scenario, the very difficult economic conjuncture and the shortage of financial resources, we have developed many activities in the areas of training, exchange of news, dialogue and increasingly, step by step, in co-production of documentaries and reportages. What is the secret of our small, but significant, success? Our trust and our conviction, of course, but also what I call the "COPEAM method," which is a unicum in the current audiovisual panorama.

We have realised that the difficulty of streaming programmes from one part of the world to another can be overcome by understanding, in a practical way, the added value of diversity, particularly in the audiovisual sector. As public broadcasters, we are testing new and strong challenges at every level, with viewers who are ever more exigent. How do we deal with these challenges? By following what Darwin suggested centuries ago: that is, by adapting ourselves to the new environment. We valorise the growing multiculturalism of our societies and strive for a judicious mix of different heritages, cultures and sensibilities in order to figure out a formula for a "global product."

Of course, the success of the American audiovisual industry, which first experimented with this strategy, is based on a number of factors: the size of the market (which makes it feasible for companies to invest generously), the spread of the English language, fiscal incentives, control over international distribution networks, important know-how in marketing and promotion, and, last but not least, a very self-confident approach. We are convinced that we have all the necessary elements to achieve similar success in the long term. We have only to discover our potential, believe in ourselves and work together.

One concrete example to illustrate this point concerns a weekly magazine programme called *"Mediterraneo",* co-produced by a "transnational newsroom" of journalists

from FRANCE3, RAI and RTVE/Spain, in cooperation with ten other public broadcasters of the region, and broadcast in four languages: Italian, French, Spanish and Arabic. Born as an experimental programme, *Mediterraneo* has been growing during the last ten years in terms of audience and diffusion all over the Euro-Mediterranean region. The success of this co-production persuaded us to further develop the model, training more people and enabling them to work together. COPEAM has assumed this task and has a strong focus on training using a multilateral approach.

One of our most successful activities is the University of COPEAM, which we organise in Algeria, in cooperation with the Algerian public radio and television, ENTV. This initiative, which is currently in its third edition, gathers together professionals (journalists, technicians, cameramen, etc.) from 25 countries of the region. A specific topic is selected every year. Teams are formed from the international pool and they jointly produce reportages for radio and TV. Our experience has demonstrated that it is possible to put media professionals from Morocco, Croatia, Romania and other disparate countries together and get them to produce a competent and coherent story for broadcast.

Can this small, simple initiative be taken to scale? We certainly think it has considerable potential to be replicated on a wider scale in the future. Although we are aware of the hurdles in our path, our target is very ambitious and convinced that the process, once started, will evolve faster than we can imagine. We believe that we have to go ahead with a new vision of the world which is capable of benefiting from new theories and technologies. We cannot live as we did 50 years ago. We have to take into account what scientists tell us: that the fluttering of the wings of a butterfly in Brazil can and does create a hurricane in Texas. COPEAM seeks to communicate our vision across the world by fluttering our little wings.

Alessandra Paradisi is Secretary General of the Permanent Conference of Mediterranean Audiovisual Operators

4 Media and Elections

Media and Elections

Eugenio Lopez III

People power was coined in 1986 -- 20 years ago -- when hundreds of thousands of people faced down a dictator with nothing more than prayers and songs. It happened in my country, the Philippines, and sparked democratic dreams globally. That marked the end of the 21-year rule of Ferdinand Marcos.

Soon after he declared martial law, Marcos shut down my family's television network, ABS-CBN, and our newspaper, The Chronicle, and jailed my father. The price of dissent was clear to all media. Soon after 1986, both ABS-CBN and The Chronicle were returned to my family, and we rebuilt ABS-CBN into what would become the country's number one television network for more than 16 years. Today, ABS-CBN is the largest Filipino television network with 18 regional stations, 5 global bureaus, a 24-hour English cable news channel, and other entertainment channels.

Last February, on the 20th anniversary of People Power, I faced a situation similar to the one faced by my father. The government threatened to shut down ABS-CBN if it aired rebellious or "seditious" statements from alleged coup plotters.

In fairness to the government, today's coups -- Philippines-style -- are a far cry from Marcos' fait-accompli: 20 per cent real, 40 per cent bluster and 40 per cent aimed at those sitting on fences. They are akin to bombs waiting for a spark. The government is fighting for survival. The media, by doing their job, may provide that spark.

President Gloria Arroyo had just declared a state of national emergency. Protests were banned. Civic leaders were arrested. So I made the call to pre-empt regular programming and continue our breaking news coverage. All this unfolded on nationwide television.

The key question for media in the midst of these fast-unfolding events is: what is news and what amounts to fostering rebellion? One man's freedom fighter is another man's terrorist. How does news walk the middle ground – according to the Western concept of being objective, being professional? The safe answer we all know. The risky answer is a function of the values that drive your organisation. If you are right then you can continue to operate. If one is wrong, then one follows my father's path to jail.

Well, we were not shut down. Instead, our credibility ratings shot up. Taking risks like this forms a major part of the media's role in democracy in the Philippines.

In an emerging market, the institutions that support a vibrant democracy are weak and infinitely susceptible. A strong, two-party system and a burgeoning middle class are some of the elements that are missing in democracy Philippines style. In fact, our middle classes are all abroad: eight million strong.

Focus group discussions show that the media have become the last bastion of hope for many Filipinos living in a society saddled with weak institutions. Since government institutions were perceived to be slow and unresponsive to people's needs, Filipinos turned to the media. After 1986, programmes which called the government's attention to people's problems became incredibly popular and gave a voice back to the people. One program, Hoy Gising – which means Hey! Wake Up!, became a template for the kind of public service, reality programming Filipinos wanted and needed. Today, its latest reincarnation is doing very well.

Yet, media's credibility has also eroded since 1986. There was a lack of ethics and accountability on the part of the watchdog. Journalists were being charged with corruption and with pushing vested interests. We began addressing these concerns last year. Meanwhile, what we in ABS-CBN did on the 20th anniversary of People Power restored some faith in the media.

It is clear that American-style democracy has largely failed in the Philippines. Comprising more form than substance, it has given back little to the people who flocked to the streets in 1986.

The upper class votes according to its interests; the lower class with its stomach. Only the middle class, together with the media, can focus on issues, and demand transparency and accountability regardless of what political system we choose. It is an unusual role for the media but a critical one in an emerging market, especially during key opportune events. Doing what is right and being professional may not always coincide. When they collide it is usually a momentous event.

Today, we are right back where we started in 1986 – questioning the results of elections and the mandate of the president. The distribution of wiretapped telephone conversations, allegedly between President Arroyo and an election official, triggered her latest and most serious political crisis. Allegations of vote-buying led to failed impeachment processes and triggered a coup attempt on the 20th anniversary of people power.

So that brings us to elections and media. Philippine elections are colourful. In 1986, journalists talked about guns, goons and gold affecting election results through intimidation, outright violence and corruption. This is still true – particularly in local elections. The joke is that no Filipino politician ever admits they lost. They just say they were cheated. It is not a far-fetched claim, and cheating is relatively easy because the voting – and the counting – is done by hand.

As investigative reports have shown, the 2004 elections were shot through with anomalies. And one of the key priorities for the Commission on Elections today is to automate/ computerise vote casting and ballot counting in an attempt to cut down on cheating. But that is in the future.

What role have the media played in elections? A critical one. We have to be there through every step of the process.

First, in terms of information: who are the candidates? What do they stand for? When are the elections? How and where do I vote? The media need to outline the issues, the process, the choices.

Second, in the voting: for example, through 'violence watch' at the polls. Is anyone trying to intimidate voters? Is anyone trying to buy their votes?

Third, in the counting process: this is where ABS-CBN has played a pioneering role since 1967, when our network mounted its first marathon election watch which aired for 36 straight hours. This initiative allows Filipinos to watch each vote tallied by hand until the trend is established and a winner is named.

After martial law, election coverage was a key component of elections and the rivalry between print and television networks served as checks and balances for the tallies the public saw. We at ABS-CBN used our wide reach and our resources to try to bring in the latest technology to help in this crucial democratic exercise. We pioneered the use of exit polls – and it took a Supreme Court ruling for us to be able to do that in 1998. The idea of being completely transparent is still not the norm in our culture.

While the government still has to adopt new digital technology, private media have long used computers, high tech telecommunications and expensive exit polls to try to ensure the elections reflect the will of the people – the actual vote.

Let me end with a bright note for television news in our country. In the Western world, news viewership has gone down. But in the Philippines, the number of viewers who want to watch the news has gone up! In fact, we expanded our prime-time news from 30 minutes to 1 hour in recent years. The ABS-CBN News Channel (ANC), an all-news 24-hour English cable network, is to be launched in July 2006.

Why is the Philippines bucking the trend? Three main factors contribute to this phenomenon.

First, the volatility and uncertainty of our political life, compounded by economic factors such as the rising price of oil and other contributing social factors all increase the public's greater need for information.

Second, weak institutions, including those which affect law and order, push Filipinos to turn to the media as a watchdog that often takes up the cudgels for victims.

And third, our overseas Filipino workers – 8 million working outside the country -- push up the demand for foreign news because their relatives want to know how their loved ones are doing.

Media in developing democracies like the Philippines play a critical role – not just during elections, but during the difficult and often tedious process in between: the real, hard work of nation-building.

The role of the media in nation-building cannot be passive. They cannot just be neutral observers. That is a role better suited for media in the Western world where the institutions of governance are stronger. The media must stand for certain values that are fundamental in any functioning democracy: integrity, transparency, and accountability -- these are values that the media must help foster in the political arena.

Eugenio Lopez III is CEO and COO, ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corporation, Philippines

Media and Elections

David Wood

It is widely acknowledged that free and fair elections help build democracy, and that the media plays an important role in the electoral process, especially in informing voters about election issues. Through the media, voters are influenced to participate in public discussion and decision-making processes.

However, the media can only play its role effectively while covering elections if its practitioners are professional and ethical. In principle, fair competition requires fair access and fair treatment of all parties and candidates by the media. Moreover, all actors in election politics should respect election laws, and that includes journalists. To cover elections journalists should be well informed, objective and non-partisan. In many countries this is easier said than done.

In the past two years the BBC World Service Trust has conducted long-running, nationwide elections training programmes in Afghanistan and Tanzania (several organisations here have been partners in that training). Although the two countries are seemingly very different, the issues which arose as we developed and ran those training programmes are remarkably similar. Here are just a few:

- the lack of coverage of election issues
- the lack or weakness of editorial policies on election coverage
- the issue of media house owners' partisanship
- the focus on political personalities, not their policies
- the lack of media resources for coverage of elections
- the lack of financial resources for media in general
- the problems of corruption and buying of coverage
- the problem of smear campaigns
- the lack of voter education, particularly in rural areas *(but then that's the media's job!).*

It is interesting to note the similarities and differences between this list that emerged from two poor, developing countries and what one might find in much wealthier, supposedly more democratic countries:

- *too much* coverage of election issues
- the issue of media house owners' partisanship -- *e.g., Italy?*
- the problem of smear campaigns
- huge spending on coverage by some parties -- *buying airtime*
- the lack of voter interest *(but that's the media's job!)*

Our findings in these and other countries suggest that a number of media capacity-building issues need to be considered by any organisation involved in elections training for media personnel.

1. The starting point is to ensure that journalists themselves understand a country's election process and its election law. In Afghanistan, for example, our trainers quickly realised that they couldn't train journalists to cover the elections if the trainees didn't understand the whole process themselves. So the lesson there is that training needs to be tailor-made in every case because the content is or should be completely dependent on the situation of the journalists. Over time support needs to include a blend of different approaches: workshops on specific issues, practical training and on-the-job coaching are just some of the options.

2. Another basic point is that training needs to provide journalists with the skills to make the elections matter to their audiences. At the BBC we have a lovely slogan which I wholeheartedly agree with: audiences are at the heart of everything we do. Making elections matter includes explaining clearly to the audience the aim and importance of the elections, especially since some countries have little or no experience of so-called 'free and fair elections.' And, of course, many journalists work for state media, or private media owned by politicians -- so their understanding of their role during an election period is sometimes, shall we say... interesting, to say the least. Clearly, they know not to bite the hand that feeds them. And that is something anyone involved in training journalists on elections also needs to bear in mind.

3. A third important issue is that coverage of traditionally under-represented groups is often very weak. Most reporters and editors are urban males — so female candidates, women's issues, the poor and minorities are often ignored. Similarly, people in remote areas are less likely to benefit from voter education programmes delivered through media than their counterparts in urban areas. So there is a need for media training to deliberately assist, encourage, support and educate reporters and editors on how to fill these gaps.

4. The fourth and final point I'd like to make is that the media constitute just one part of the picture. All players in elections need to understand what their role is and what they can deliver. Media can help in educating and creating transparency, but political leaders and civil society have to engage with the media and provide them with something useful to work with. To address this issue in Afghanistan, we developed our Media Encounters workshops, bringing together large numbers of journalists and editors along with members of civil society, the bureaucracy and politicians. Much of the time, these groups do not interact normally in the way that we might imagine from our own experiences in other countries.

I would like to end with an short interaction between a politician and a journalist from a BBC news programme a few years ago. This brief extract from what was a fairly long, live TV interview shows a very robust approach to political journalism. The important thing in this extract is not really what the politician is saying, which is not much anyway, but the very strong way in which the journalist approaches him -- and tries to get the answer that the audience wants to hear.

Both politician and journalist are very confident -- or at least the politician was confident before the interview.

2-minute clip from Paxman-Howard interview on Newsnight.

And that politician, Michael Howard, spent the next five years waiting to make a comeback.

David Wood is Head of Project, BBC World Service Trust

Broadcasting Elections: The South African Case

Phil Molefe

South Africa has held only three truly democratic national and provincial government elections (in 1994, 1999, 2004) and three municipal government elections (in 1995, 2000, 2006) since our landmark election in 1994. So we have much to absorb from the collective experience present at this Summit.

I would like to begin by giving you a brief idea of some of the preparations that went into the local government elections held in South Africa in March 2006 and the manner in which the election programme was broadcast by the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC).

Prior to the broadcast of the election programme, and for the first time in the history of elections in South Africa, the SABC decided to meet with key stakeholders. Following feedback from our News Division in previous elections, it was decided that News, in conjunction with our Public Affairs Division, convene a meeting between key stakeholders -- i.e. political parties contesting the elections, organised labour, civil society, the media, the South African Local Government Association, our Independent Electoral Commission and the Independent Communications Authority of South Africa -- with a view to extending the understanding of decision-makers at the public service broadcaster during the period of an election.

The meetings were a resounding success, enabling all parties to discuss their expectations and the SABC to discuss and manage these expectations in the light of the regulatory concerns which govern us over such periods.

In thus setting the tone, the SABC embarked on a massive logistical enterprise to ensure unbiased and equitable coverage. Indeed, the success of the exercise meant that formal complaints of bias were reduced to a minimum.

Such preparations enabled us to launch an operation on 27 February this year, which climaxed on 1 March and concluded on 4 March, when the final official result was announced.

To achieve what it did, the SABC deployed a total of about 1,300 editorial and support staff at election centres in all the provinces and towns, cities and rural areas. Our radio services reported from over a 100 different geographical areas as part of their

work. Further adding to the task of the South African public broadcaster is the fact that we have 11 official languages.

On radio, election programming was carried on 14 PBS stations in 13 languages. The additional languages were Khu and Khwe which, although not amongst the 11 official languages, were recognised because of the critical role a public broadcaster plays during elections in ensuring that even the most marginalised of our communities are educated in and informed of the processes and conventions of elections.

A key focus of our operations was the national election centre in the country's executive capital, Pretoria, the operational hub of our Independent Electoral Commission and the point at which all results were verified before official release. During that week, over 50 hours of television broadcast time was devoted to the election and this was accompanied by an average of 384 hours of radio airtime. These figures exclude the advertising airtime bought by the various political parties that contested the election and the time devoted to the election in news bulletins.

Apart from radio and television, results were also delivered to the public through the SABC Internet and mobile telephone platforms.

Behind the numbers and platforms referred to above was a small (25) but capable research team, working in ten locations across the country, gathering information on issues raised by political parties, citizens, media and the process of the unfolding election itself. As part of the empowerment of SABC staff, both as citizens and voters, a handbook was published and updated daily on the SABC intranet.

On election day and during the days of the ballot counts, another research team based at the National Election Centre delivered the statistics, tracking against the previous municipal elections -- amongst other things -- gender gains for women, gains and losses of various political parties, and trends as they emerged in voter patterns.

The theme of this plenary is of particular relevance to South Africa and, in fact, the African continent, for embedded in the idea of media and elections are a number of related issues which are of utmost significance. The most significant of these is that the fair and credible broadcasting of elections -- particularly if those elections themselves are free and fair -- can serve the dual role of strengthening and unifying a nation, as well as serving as an example to others.

Equally encouraging to note is the role of the SABC in elections on the African continent. There is little time to go into the details here, but we have been part of the electoral processes in Namibia, Zimbabwe, Lesotho, Botswana, Malawi and Kenya as the SABC. Starting from simple coverage of elections in these countries, both in the region and continentally, the SABC has also had opportunities to partner with the public service broadcasters of Botswana and Zimbabwe in delivering electoral coverage to the electorates in those countries.

Perhaps the most significant highlight in terms of elections on the continent is that both the South African Independent Electoral Commission and the SABC have been invited to the upcoming elections in the Democratic Republic of Congo, scheduled for 30 July 2006. This will be the DRC's first democratic elections since independence in 1960, affording a whole generation of African citizens the opportunity to exercise their right to vote. The SABC considers this election to be one of the most significant on the continent, ushering in as it does both peace and democracy, and will be according it the due attention it deserves.

Symbolically and, perhaps even historically, these developments are significant in that they represent a positive shift away from the tides of tyranny and coups that have battered the African continent through the 1960s, 70s and 80s. They announce, in their own quiet way, a new age of democratically elected leadership. Indeed, this is one of the emerging positives that characterise the African continent and the developing world which is consistently under-recognised.

The best way to deliver credible coverage of elections is informed and guided by our editorial code, which behoves us to report accurately, fairly and in a contextualised manner. This is not only the basic tenet of journalism, but it is the right thing to do.

The number of non-legal guidelines and regulatory and legal instruments to ensure fair broadcasting of an election is so vast that to list them would be odious. However, it is necessary to mention that the SABC is signatory to many of them at the national, regional, continental and international levels. Many here represent broadcast organisations that are similarly signatories to such agreements.

The broad characteristics of such statutory and non-statutory requirements for public broadcasters are well known and include (among others):

1. Equitable (not equal) coverage for competing parties;
2. Impartiality of coverage;
3. Ensuring that citizens are presented with a full spectrum of information pertaining to parties and procedures;
4. Ensuring voter education through broadcast platforms, and,
5. Selling without favour, where permitted, airtime to political parties for advertising purposes.

In South Africa, monitoring the implementation and compliance of the above principles is the task of an independent statutory body specifically set up for this purpose over an election period. Needless to say, even in the absence of an independent body to monitor such compliance, the heat generated by competing political parties contesting the elections ensures that the public broadcaster is under intense scrutiny with regard to compliance. Indeed, the number of allegations of bias against the public broadcaster (correctly called or misplaced) increases dramatically during an election.

As mentioned earlier, following our interactions with key stakeholders, the monitoring role of the public led to there being only eight formal complaints against the SABC regarding the recent elections. Two were lodged with our independent regulator and six were lodged directly with the SABC. The two lodged with the regulator were dismissed after Independent Communications Authority of South Africa (ICASA) accepted the SABC explanations for what was alleged to be biased coverage. Of the other six, the SABC was forced to apologise in only one instance while the others were satisfactorily explained without the SABC being held responsible for bias or failure to cover a party event.

In conclusion, although South Africa has a fairly young democracy and has held relatively few elections compared to many other countries, we are proud of the strides we have made in covering them. As indicated earlier in this presentation, we have much to learn from our broadcast colleagues on the Asian continent and, equally, we are open and willing to share our experiences with those who think that we can bring value to their own experiences.

Phil Molefe is General Manager, International Affairs, South African Broadcasting Corporation, South Africa

Media and the Elections

Sanjaasuren Oyun

We generally rely on our media to give us a balanced inspection of all claims, careful fact-checking and reasoned analysis. However, during elections the situation is completely different.

What do you want to see most covered during the elections? This was the question put to voters in a poll undertaken by the Press Institute of Mongolia before the 2004 Parliamentary elections.

- 63 per cent wanted to see debates between candidates
- 42 per cent wanted to see programmes comparing the platforms of various political parties
- 18 per cent wanted to see voter education programmes
- 9 per cent wanted to see other information

Instead, during the 2004 elections, this is what they did see, in order of maximum coverage:

- Advertising – colourful and impressive short ads for parties and candidates
- Programmes showing the profiles of candidates and praising them
- Programmes explaining the election promises of parties and individual candidates

The most important function that the media serves is to provide the information necessary for the public to make sound decisions in the voting booth. If the voters do not know what they are voting for, then democracy is in serious trouble.

The last Presidential elections in the United States show that the voters (especially supporters of George W. Bush) were grossly misinformed about their candidate's position on a broad range of issues. At least, that was what was revealed by the results of a recent poll undertaken by the University of Maryland.

- 72 per cent still believed that there were Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMDs) in Iraq
- 75 per cent believed that Iraq was providing substantial support for the Al Queda
- 66 per cent believe that Bush supports participation in the International Criminal Court
- 72 per cent believe that he supports the treaty banning land mines

Actually none of these assumptions is correct. How do we have meaningful elections when people do not know what they are voting for?"[1]

The Mongolian media monitoring project was undertaken by the Globe International, The Open Society Forum and the Voter Education Centre during the main Parliamentary elections held in 2004. Here are some of the results and findings of the monitoring:[2]

- The total budget spent by parties on media during the election campaign was estimated at 4.5 million US dollars.[3]
- 83 per cent of the coverage on the state-owned national TV and radio[4] was for the ruling MPR party and its candidates
- 95 per cent of all the election coverage in newspapers was outright paid advertising
- 66 per cent of all the TV election coverage was outright paid advertising, and
- 35 per cent of all radio election coverage was outright paid advertising

After the 2004 elections, the Mongolian Parliament implemented election campaign finance reform. The new election law introduces the following:

- Overall limits on spending during the elections by parties and candidates
- Limits on paid political advertising on TV and radio (no more than 10 per cent of the air time), printed brochures and distributed material
- Declaration to the Central Election Committee (CEC) and to the public regarding donations to political parties and candidates
- Declaration by candidates to CEC and voters regarding their income and assets
- Media watchdog

Media companies sometimes have a conflict of interest: many are owned by politicians and, therefore, stand to benefit from the re-election of their owners. Unfortunately, the media in Mongolia, and in many other countries in the world, are often not an independent sector serving citizens but, rather, a massive industry dedicated to serving the needs of their owners.

What actions are needed?

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[1] Robert McChesney, On media and the elections, www.commondreams.org/views04

[2] The main media covered by the monitoring: 5 TV stations, 2 radio stations, 10 newspapers

[3] Population of Mongolia is 2.5 million, the voter population is 1.2 million. Annual per capita GDP is cca. USD 500 in 2004.

[4] After the 2004 elections, the state-owned National TV and Radio is being transformed into the Public Broadcast TV and Radio, where the executives are appointed by the independent board of directors, rather than the Prime Minister – which was the case until 2005.

- Legislation and reforms concerning access to information
- Legislation that restrict media companies from growing bigger or becoming monopolies
- Restriction and regulation of paid and unpaid political advertising during elections

People deserve to be informed about basic facts about the economy, health, the environment and other aspects of public life, as well as policies concerning them. Before elections take place voters should understand what each political party and its candidates stand for.

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and other UN bodies helped to establish Media Centres during elections in Afghanistan and Indonesia. These Centres served as clearing houses for accurate information regarding the elections. In Cambodia, UNDP launched an Equity News Campaign, which helped provide balanced reporting of the campaign.

For the media to be effective journalists need to have access to information and adhere to high professional standards. Particularly during elections, journalists need to adhere to the following core principles:

- Balance and fairness
- Equal distribution of time and space
- Adequate coverage of diverse, opposing views and standpoints
- Independence
- Journalistic ethics

The UNDP, in partnership with the Asia-Pacific Institute for Broadcasting Development (AIBD) and the BBC World Service Trust, organised a training course for journalists from across Asia on media as a tool for public accountability in the run-up to the Asia Media Summit 2006 in order to help promote balanced journalism.

During this Summit it is particularly vital to recognise the responsibility of the international community to highlight the importance of improving access to information and strengthening local media, especially during elections.

Sanjaasuren Oyun is a Member of Parliament and Leader of the Civil Will Party of Mongolia

5 Media Impact on Ethnic and Religious Integration

Media Impact on Ethnic and Religious Integration

Datuk Zainuddin Bin Maidin

In Malaysia we have relatively free media, comprising both government and private media, operating in a highly competitive environment. We have dozens of newspapers in various languages -- Bahasa Malaysia, English, Mandarin, Tamil and even Kadazan-Dusun, which is spoken in the state of Sabah. We have radio and television stations -- both government and privately owned -- broadcasting throughout the day and night to the nation.

The Malaysian people belong to a number of different communities: Malay, Chinese, Indian, Iban, Kadazan-Dusun, and many others, and are spread from Perlis in the north to]ohor in the south of the peninsula, and across the South China Sea to Sabah and Sarawak on the Island of Borneo. Not only are Malaysians from different ethnic groups but they also profess different religions, ranging from Islam to Christianity, Buddhism to Sikhism and numerous other faiths.

The various communities in the country are free to use their own languages in addition to Malay or Bahasa Malaysia, which is the national and official language of Malaysia. The country does not advocate racial or ethnic integration; instead we promote harmonious, peaceful co-existence among the different communities that make up the country. The right of each community to practice its own religion and speak their own tongue is enshrined in the Constitution. Freedom of religion is a major cornerstone of our rights.

Malaysia underwent a painful period in its history in May 1969, when parts of the country experienced sectarian strife. For a long time after that there was tension between communities. We learned from this painful experience, and the nation's leaders set about repairing the damage that had been done to the country.

One of the first measures was to rein in the media, which had played up various issues in the run-up to the disturbances, which stirred up certain communities and created animosity between them. The Government set parameters for the media. They had freedom to report what they saw fit, but this freedom was accompanied by responsibilities. Newspapers, radio and television stations could report, but their coverage should avoid, where possible, the religious, racial and cultural sensitivities of communities.

In the wake of such developments, the media in the country set boundaries for themselves, imposing some sort of self-censorship, because they realised all too well the fragility of race relations in the country. The media are aware that everyone in the country had a stake in its well-being and, while some would play to the gallery to increase circulation, practitioners have, by and large, adhered to boundaries beyond which it would be undesirable or inadvisable to push.

The media in Malaysia are regulated by laws such as the Printing Presses and Publications Act, the Sedition Act and the Official Secrets Act. Newspapers are required to renew their publishing permit on a yearly basis and any newspaper that contravenes the provisions of the Act or conditions in their permit is likely to have this license suspended or revoked. In addition, action could be taken against the publisher and editors.

There is a wide variety of newspapers in the country in multiple languages, but the main ones are in Malay, English, Chinese, and Tamil. There are four major Malay dailies and an equal number in English, while there are some 15 Chinese dailies, and five in Tamil. There are also a number of tabloids, which are mainly in Malay. There are some 15 provincial papers, especially in Sabah and Sarawak, which publish in English, Malay and also the local languages, such as Kadazun-Dusun.

At present, the newspapers, radio and television stations come under the purview of the Home Affairs Ministry, which issues the publishing licenses and monitors the content of the publications. However, plans are afoot to establish a Malaysian Media Council, along the lines of the Press Council of Britain and those of India and Australia. With such a council in place, the media can regulate themselves. Complaints against a newspaper, for example, can be directed to the Council, which would determine whether the publication had committed any violation in its reports.

That, in brief, is the situation prevailing in Malaysia with regard to the media vis-a-vis their reporting of religious and ethnic issues in the country. The country's media have, by agreement, decided to stay away from contentious issues that would affect racial and religious sensitivities in order not to create unnecessary tension and even hatred among citizens.

The government, as well as community leaders, are mindful of the situation in some neighbouring countries, where a "runaway press" has caused numerous problems. The tendency to highlight certain issues and, in the process, blow them out of proportion has brought dire consequences to those countries.

The multi-racial, multi-cultural, and multi-religious people of Malaysia have reached a compromise of sorts: issues that appear to impinge upon one or other community are discussed by leaders without being played up in the media. The media, in fact, play an important role in playing down issues that could incite certain sections of the community.

In the final analysis, the Malaysian people have decided that it is better to have peace with compromise rather than freedom without peace. Sensitive issues can best be resolved between the parties involved, far from the glare of the media and the unnecessary and, oftentimes, provocative intervention of unrelated third parties.

The people of Malaysia, including political leaders, have chosen the path of give-and-take, accepting the fact that everyone will benefit if each were to compromise a little for the greater good of the whole country. As the great Indian statesman, Mahatma Gandhi, said: The world has enough for everyone's need but not for everyone's greed. The media spearheads this on-going movement towards progress and development.

Some people may say that Malaysia does not have freedom of the media. It is true that we do not have absolute freedom of the press -- the kind of free press that has no qualms about publishing articles -- no matter how offensive they are to people -- in the name of freedom of expression. We know what's best for us and we make no apologies for it.

Datuk Zainuddin Maidin is Minister of Information, Malaysia

Media Impact on Ethnic and Religious Integration

Bill Roberts

I speak today on behalf of VisionTV, a multi-faith and multicultural broadcaster serving one of the world's most diverse populations. Founded in 1988, VisionTV is a national television network charged with delivering programmes for Canadians of every belief and background.

Approximately half of our schedule consists of content produced and presented by various faith groups – including Protestants, Catholics, Hindus, Sikhs and Muslims. The balance consists of documentaries, dramas, current affairs series, feature films and other programmes that deal with questions of faith, or with the related issues of values and ethics.

It is our mission, ultimately, to promote exchange and understanding among Canadians from different spiritual traditions and cultures.

Faith and spirituality are intrinsic to the human experience. They shape societies and define cultures. Spiritual belief lies close to the heart of every great social and political issue of our age – from stem cell research to the "war on terror." Each of us, whether a believer or not, needs to understand something of faith to make sense of this world.

Most of us today look to television, daily newspapers and other mass media to illuminate the role of religious faith in our world. And it troubles me to report that, on this count, the North American media often disappoint.

Clash and conflict, difference and division: these are the engines that drive our daily news coverage – whether the topic is politics or policing, sports or spirituality. We are adept at telling stories of Christians versus Muslims, Sikhs versus Hindus, Anglicans versus Anglicans. Yet it seems we find it hard to tell spiritual stories without the tang of fire and brimstone – to simply enter into the lives of ordinary people and find drama in their struggle to live each day as men and women of faith.

As urgently as we need to understand how and why religious belief fuels global conflict, we need to understand the role it plays in the everyday lives of individuals and communities.

How do people from different faith traditions experience belief? How does belief shape their perceptions of the world? The more diverse a country's population, the more important these questions. The ability to empathise – to see through the eyes of others – is essential to the well being of pluralistic societies. And I believe media can and should be helping to foster this ability.

Let me offer one small example from VisionTV's experience. Pope John Paul passed away a little over a year ago. The world's attention was fixed on St. Peter's Square, on the prospects for dramatic change in the Roman Catholic Church, and on the tension between liberal and conservative movements within the institution. VisionTV's current affairs team, meanwhile, was in a small northern city in the province of Ontario, covering the closure of a single Catholic church and the impact on its congregation. More than the closed-door deliberations of powerful cardinals in Rome, this was a story that helped viewers – of every faith – to understand what it is to be a Canadian Catholic in a time of change.

To sum up, I believe that the media bear the responsibility to help people understand the many different systems of belief at play in our globalised society. And I believe that, to do this, the media need to tell more of those stories that shed light on the experiences of the individual believer.

This is in no way to suggest that media should ignore conflicts within or between religious institutions and movements. Nor do I mean to imply that media ought to proceed with unusual caution when approaching the subject of faith and spirituality.

On the contrary: it is incumbent on those in the media to be sensitive about matters of individual belief. But we ought not to become so fearful of offending people's sensibilities that we compromise our ability to address faith issues openly and honestly.

In Canada, as in all civilised countries, many citizens recoiled in alarm at the outrage unleashed by the Danish cartoons. Among members of the media, this controversy occasioned intense debate about the acceptability of reprinting those images. For some, this whole tragic affair may simply have underlined the need to tread delicately when dealing with matters of faith. But I don't believe we should allow ourselves to be paralysed by fear and uncertainty.

To the extent that belief has consequences in the wider world, it warrants discussion, debate, challenge – and even, on occasion, outright satire. In North America and Europe, people of faith show considerable forbearance when faced with mockery. Jesus Christ himself endures the dubious honour of appearing regularly on the foul-mouthed American cartoon series, ***South Park.***

Western societies recognise that every faith community deserves to have its voice heard in the public square. But we ask in return that faith communities practice

openness to the voices of others. The rightful claim to respect for one's beliefs does not override the fundamental value of freedom of expression.

We certainly do not need our media to be any more cautious in dealing with issues of faith and spirituality. If anything, we need them to show a little less caution. We need them to encourage a more open and honest public conversation about the proper balance of religious, cultural and civic values in pluralistic societies.

Since 9/11, many North American commentators have been predicting a "clash of civilizations" – a global conflict between Islam and the West, with catastrophic results for the loser. Perhaps this is naive, but I prefer to envision a less apocalyptic scenario: one in which – over time, and with considerable difficulty – we arrive at a détente between civilizations holding very different worldviews.

I believe an ongoing public conversation about faith and society is an indispensable component of this process. I believe it is essential for people in countries as diverse as Canada to understand more about each other's spiritual and cultural backgrounds. And I believe we should be able to look to the media to help us: to balance respect for the individual believer with critical insight into the way belief shapes our world, for better or for worse.

Bill Roberts is President and CEO, S-VOX, Canada

Bringing Diverse P eoples Together: The Case of the Philippines

Cerge M. Remonde

The Philippines is known to be the only Catholic country in Asia but reality dictates that this belief can ignite disunity among the diverse ethnic peoples in the country with different forms of worship. The church in the Philippines plays a very important role in bringing together the various indigenous peoples, with the support of the strong media magnifying this role.

The Great Communicator, John Paul II, once said that the media constitute the new "aeropagus", the new forum where media freedom must serve the truth. He sought unity and ecumenism among the peoples of the world -- in fact, in his lifetime, he gathered the leaders of all religions in Assisi. And in his death the same leaders, including those from nations in conflict with each other, converged once more to solemnly pray for peace.

Through the Government Mass Media Group, the Philippines government considers religious concerns a priority in the programming of state radio. It provides free airtime to special religious rites and celebrations, regardless of denomination.

The 32 radio stations of the Philippine Broadcasting Service, strategically located nationwide, open their programming slots to religious discussions. Foremost among these are the eight stations in Mindanao, in Southern Philippines, where our Muslim brothers are concentrated.

Some time each week, these stations become the new "aeropagus" where religious issues and concerns are deliberated upon by religious leaders, with government broadcast journalists at the centre of the discussions.

To reinforce the government's mission to unify the different ethnic and religious sectors in the Southern Philippines, 15 Gender and Peace or Genpeace community radio stations are included by the government network as affiliates. These community radio stations are operated by the multi-sectoral media council, which is composed of the common people in the local community.

These stations are set up in areas where conflicts used to be a part of the people's daily menu. Community broadcasters trained by the Philippine Broadcasting Service

media experts are volunteer community residents coming from the different walks of life.

Indigenous Peoples (IPs) of the areas share their culture through their programmes. Religious beliefs and practices of the Tiduray, the Subanen, the Tobolis, to name a few, are now part of media contents.

Participatory broadcasting is being strengthened with the assistance of the government radio network. Information is beginning to be accessed by people at the grassroots even in far-flung areas.

Conflicts among tribal peoples are now addressed publicly by providing a venue for understanding each others' needs and concerns through the electronic forum provided by community radio.

Efforts towards the expansion of these community radios are now being made with the assistance of the government media. State of the art technology is rapidly seeping through the rural areas and the first recipients are the community media.

In this way ethnic and religious concerns will be all the more recognised and understood. In conclusion let me say that the media is "public" and public necessarily means equal opportunity, equal share, equal benefits -- not only of earthly goods but of heavenly blessings as well.

Cerge M. Remonde is Secretary, Government Mass Media Group, Philippines

6 Convergence: New Challenges and Opportunities for Broadcasters

Digital Technologies Set the Direction for Broadcasters

Wayne Heads

Radio and television broadcasting is undergoing a major transformation due to the technologies arising out of digitalisation. Broadcasters in the Asia-Pacific region are part of this revolution and, in fact, have led much of this change internationally. Such leadership has allowed the industry to build valuable experience with the new systems and operational practices that have emerged through digitalisation. But in most countries we are only at the beginning of the transformation that will occur in the way multimedia services are conceived, created, delivered and 'managed' by the viewer or the listener.

Within our region many countries with diverse and often contrasting cultural, social, and economic structures are finding it particularly difficult to realise the opportunities created by these developments. In fact, they simply struggle to provide basic radio services to their entire population, and many have fairly basic television services, largely concentrated in the densely populated urban areas.

This paper looks at the 'structural' and technological changes taking place in radio and television that will eventually change the world of broadcasting as we have known it until now.

Convergence

One of the major changes taking place across the broader communications industry is the impact of convergence within the broadcast and telecommunications industries. Gone is the hype surrounding the word 'convergence' and its varying interpretations. The days are finally over when each industry sector stayed within their traditional boundaries of voice and data communications or broadcasting over the air, terrestrially or by satellite. Such change has accelerated with the arrival of digitisation and its numerous applications in both sectors.

Convergence is not driven just by digitalisation, but also by the international trend to deregulate and privatise both industry sectors. Privatisation has impacted telecommunications operators more than broadcasters. Although they are not necessarily released from the strict universal service obligations imposed by governments, they are able to venture into new avenues of multimedia

communication via their mobile or high capacity network infrastructure. This is now resulting in a plethora of new delivery platforms capable of carrying multimedia and broadcast style services.

New Platforms

In addition to well-established terrestrial and satellite broadcast platforms, today's broadcasters have access to new platforms such as those for mobile TV (terrestrially and satellite), the Internet, broadband Internet Protocol (IP) networks, and cellular 3G mobile platforms operated by telecommunications operators.

While broadcasters may be keen to exploit every form of delivery platform that gets their products into the market, they are not necessarily willing to forego their traditional broadcast route to their markets: free-to-air or subscription broadcasting over platforms that have largely been their exclusive domain.

Providing content for new platforms constitutes a major opportunity for the broadcast industry. New styles of content (or 'repurposed' content) can be created to exploit the mobile or broadband based lifestyle market.

Radio

Radio is approaching its centenary year as a means of communication. Accompanying technology changed only a little throughout much of the 1900s. It was only some 20 years ago that digitalisation began to bring benefits to radio.

Of course, the development of the transistor in the 1950s was the true beginning of mobility for radio listeners. The first impact for the broadcaster was the arrival of solid state AM radio transmitters which offered considerable cost savings in power costs alone. The lower cost structures in radio allowed this industry to be pioneers in exploiting the benefits of digital systems and computers to completely transform studio and on-air operations.

Radio broadcasters are now witnessing a revival in listenership throughout the world, recovering from a decades-long situation where audiences seemed to have abandoned radio in favour of watching television. The power of radio as an important source of information, particularly during emergencies, continues to be demonstrated again and again.

Yet, despite radio's early lead in digitalisation, there is still some way to go in order to deliver the complete listening experience offered by such new technologies. The Digital Audio Broadcasting (DAB) -- Eureka 147 – standard, which was developed around 15 years ago, has yet to be implemented by most broadcasters, not just in the Asia-Pacific but throughout the world. This is despite the fact that in a world

where radio spectrum is very scarce, DAB has spectrum specifically allocated for introducing this new 'near CD quality' listening experience. Lack of receivers has also been a problem until recently. Perhaps DAB has been slow to arrive because the majority of broadcasters appears to be quite happy to continue with FM radio services since FM technology provides good quality stereo sound and the FM receiver market is very mature.

Coupled with DAB and the DAB-style standard known as HD Radio in the USA, which operates in the FM and MF bands, is the second major digital radio standard developed in Europe: Digital Radio Mondiale (DRM), which operates in radio under 30MHz (i.e., the shortwave, medium wave and long wave bands). DRM delivers a substantially improved quality of sound and this development has triggered renewed interest in these services at a time when the role of radio in the bands under 30MHz was facing an uncertain future.

While there have been DRM trials in the Asia Pacific region using the MF band, and a number of international shortwave broadcasters have also commenced DRM, there is still a major problem with availability of appropriate receivers.

Broadcasters who have allowed medium wave services to decline and even cease are now showing renewed interest in MF as a means of providing large area coverage with much improved quality of sound. Once affordable DRM receivers appear in the market, broadcasters can look towards implementing DRM and DAB with increased confidence to deliver high quality, feature rich radio services to the market.

Plans by the DRM Consortium to develop the DRM+ standard to reach across the FM band means further quality and feature enhancements for radio broadcasters and their listeners. In the not too distant future the complete digital transformation of radio will be available to the radio industry, as well as its listeners and viewers.

Television

The impact that digitalisation has had on television is simply spectacular. We have witnessed the arrival of new content production tools with very flexible special effects capabilities and animation techniques (the likes of which were never thought possible), virtual studio environments, sophisticated automation systems and digitally based 'non linear' editing systems. At another level we now have server based storage for content passing through the broadcast chain, high definition television, powerful audio sound capability, asset management of produced content as well as archived content incorporating file transfer format and metadata (data about data), fully pre-programmed and automated transmission play out facilities, digitally based transmission systems reaching into the home and on the move, and flat screen display devices ranging in screen size from a few inches to over 100 inches.

Digitisation affects every part of the broadcast process and broadcasters are transforming themselves either through total digital makeovers (particularly when building new facilities) or progressively upgrading sectors of their chain, such as newsrooms, non-linear editing, play out facilities etc. The learning experience and workflow changes associated with introducing digitally based operations contribute to the long process of conversion. Not only does the equipment change but modes of operation and maintenance also change, often challenging the existing skills base of the current work force in television.

As broadcasters study issues concerning development and implementation in digital TV -- such as cost structures, availability of equipment, content related matters, archiving, training, consumer needs, analogue switch-off, experiences of other broadcasters, etc. -- the only thing they can be certain about is that the rate of change swirling around them in the digital broadcasting revolution continues unabated. It is no longer just a simple decision about embracing digital television. One now needs to determine the impact that High Definition Television (HDTV), mobile TV and Internet Protocol Television (IPTV) on their plans. We can also be sure that new, innovative schemes for digital broadcasting applications are just around the corner!

The essential first step to launch digitalisation into the market involves deciding which digital TV standard to use. This is still a challenge for many broadcasters and regulatory authorities. The dream of a truly international 'single' standard has again been lost with the move to digital TV. Three standards currently prevail: Integrated Services Digital Broadcasting (ISDB) -- developed in Japan, Digital Video Broadcasting (DVB) -- developed in Europe, and ATSC -- developed in the USA by the Advanced Televisions Systems Committee. In the Asia Pacific region we currently have each standard in operation, including HDTV operations.

While, on the surface, this situation is disappointing and undesirable, it is not catastrophic because today's technology provides for multi-standard operations in the consumer product area with a small cost penalty. Despite the fact that the standards are mature, even in 2006 many countries in the Asia-Pacific region have still not made the standards decision. To move down the road to digital television broadcasters need to have this essential first step taken.

HDTV versus SDTV and the Consumer

The current upsurge of interest in the implementation of HDTV services leads many broadcasters to wonder if they 'must' launch their digital TV services in the HDTV transmission mode. With the rapid rollout of digital TV services in HDTV in the USA and Europe's renewed interest, broadcasters in the Asia-Pacific must now consider whether or not to commence their services in HDTV from day one. This requires a rethink of equipment purchase plans within the full broadcast chain, together with production studio developments, the skills set of staff who need to understand the

more demanding requirements of producing HDTV content in its wide screen (16x9) aspect ratio, etc. The thought of HDTV generally draws a no-go response from broadcasters. Yet the cost-gap between HDTV and Standard Definition Television (SDTV) equipment is rapidly closing and SD/HD compatible equipment is, in fact, becoming the norm.

What about the viewers, the consumers of multimedia services? The year 2006 will be the turning point in the transformation of the home viewing device. The rather bulky Cathode Ray Tube (CRT) displays of TV sets that have adorned our homes for decades are rapidly being replaced by the Plasma Display Panel (PDP) and Liquid Crystal Display (LCD) flat screen displays that range in size from 20 inches to 103 inches. Visit the local electronics stores now to see how many flat screen displays are already on sale compared with the conventional TV sets of the past. To be sure, CRT sets will continue to be sold until the cost of flat screens drops further and the advantages of flat screen technology become more apparent, making it the preferred choice for viewing video in the home. Similarly, the preference for flat screen computer displays will eventually overtake CRT displays.

Many of the new displays today are appearing with labels stating 'HD Ready.' This important development will remove the current uncertainty in the market about whether or not the new displays are truly capable of displaying the superior quality of high definition video services. The consequence of such higher resolution capable displays will place pressure on the broadcaster to deliver HDTV or 'HD like' services to the consumer who will very soon be able to purchase HD-DVDs and, in some countries, receive HD pictures via cable, satellite or IPTV.

Can broadcasters not avoid the 'big' step to HDTV when they decide to launch their digital TV services?

Broadcasters Develop Mobile TV Platforms

Until recently broadcasters appeared to be lagging behind telecommunications operators in offering competitive multimedia services to 3G -- for its audiences on the move. However, the advent of Digital Video Broadcasting-Home (DVB-H) and Digital Multimedia Broadcasting (DMB) mobile platforms has removed this impediment and, in fact, allows broadcasters to offer TV services that are superior to those of competitors. The extension of the DVB standards family to incorporate a hand-held or mobile (DVB-H) display unit, plus the exploitation of the capacity of the digital radio Eureka-147 standard to carry multimedia services (DMB) enables the industry to offer these services over terrestrial transmission platforms at reasonable costs to themselves (in terms of upgradation) and the viewer. The addition of mobile voice and SMS messaging communications into the receiver device allows the broadcaster to gain access to return path communications (in partnership with mobile phone operators) to implement interactive services, instead of being faced with building expensive and somewhat cumbersome return path systems themselves.

But broadcasters cannot expect to be the sole providers of mobile TV services for long. There is every likelihood that the mobile telecommunications operators will also see the DVB and DMB technologies as excellent means to move into multimedia broadcasting themselves.

The apparently inevitable problem of multiple standards seems to have been replicated with mobile TV, with three standards currently announced (DVB-H, DMB and MediaFLO). This will most likely create much frustration for travellers who move from country to country expecting to tune into the local mobile TV service only to find that this may not be possible!

The question of how DVB-H/DMB may be launched as a broadcast service in many countries will be one that government policy and its application by regulators will have to determine. Broadcasters may not necessarily be permitted to launch mobile TV as an extension to their traditional terrestrial broadcast services.

Compression

Perhaps the most profound impact that digitalisation has had on the broadcast industry is that of bandwidth compression for the carriage of audio and video. These developments have provided broadcasters with the ability to distribute content more efficiently along transmission circuits.

The latest compression development -- currently represented through the MPEG-4 (agreed upon by the Media Picture Expert Group), Advance Video Coding (AVC), VC1 Video Code (Microsoft Windows Media Video 9) and DVB-S2 standards -- now provides for the transmission of much higher quality content over the same channel capacities. Such developments have resulted in the successful launch of satellite based mobile TV services and significantly enhanced the capability for European broadcasters to launch terrestrial HDTV services in an environment where spectrum is at a premium. And we can be certain that research will continue to improve compression techniques even further. For example, the 4000 line Super Hi-Vision of the Japanese Broadcasting Corporation, NHK, which is currently in development requires a more efficient compression system to allow it to be distributed and transmitted in a cost effective way.

IPTV

There is enthusiasm within sectors of the communications industry on the future impact that IPTV will have in attracting viewers to this medium. This service, the transmission of TV and other multimedia services over the Internet Protocol (IP) platform, is also attracting the attention of free to air broadcasters who see additional opportunities to broaden the base for their services, particularly the sale of content.

However, the impression that IPTV is an unstoppable force and will be the (only) future is somewhat reminiscent of the situation 20 years ago, when the telecommunications industry thought that having wired access to every home plus cable TV meant the end of 'over the air' broadcasting.

The IPTV 'hype' must be kept in perspective. Apart from the one known example of IPTV launched over a broadcast spectrum (MiTV in Malaysia) IPTV will primarily be the domain of broadband network operators. In the Asia Pacific region there are currently only some four or five countries with sufficient broadband penetration to the home to have the capacity to deliver a mix of real time video services over IP. The most commonly cited success story is the NOW television network in Hong Kong, but it would take quite some time for other countries to emulate this success. Assuming that questions of content protection and regulatory factors are satisfactorily resolved, variations of IPTV style services over DSL lines, wireless, etc., will continue to flourish and, while the broadcaster must monitor the opportunities, it will be some time before IPTV becomes a major competitor to traditional broadcasters throughout the Asia-Pacific, if at all.

Satellite

Broadcast satellite services within the region are primarily those provided by subscription TV operators such as Astro (in Malaysia), Star (in Hong Kong), Mediacitra (in Indonesia), UBC (in Thailand), Foxtel (in Australia), etc.

While many of these subscriber based operators often carry free to air terrestrial broadcast channels, a number of free to air based broadcasters are now entering the satellite market independently, by delivering their programmes over satellite (e.g., Doordarshan (DD) 1 in India, TVNZ in New Zealand). This may be both to provide 'competition' to subscriber operators and to extend coverage reach into remote areas, which is often too expensive to develop terrestrially. Such free to air platforms are offered despite the fact that their programmes may already be available within the subscription TV programme bouquets.

Content

A brief comment about content: the broadcast sector has demonstrated beyond reasonable doubt its expertise in creating content. It has done this for a century, beginning with radio. Broadcasters can claim to understand their market needs by conducting audience research and employing audience advisory panels to elicit feedback, and utilising sophisticated measuring tools to keep in touch with their market across all demographics.

Broadcasters have easily survived a number of earlier telecommunications operator attempts to enter their markets in what many would consider an all out attempt to

put them out of the business of delivering content. Providing delivery platforms is not enough and many new entrants at the time did not recognise that it is actually the control of high audience ratings and quality content that was (and still is) the key to success. Such aspirations by new entrants remain a major threat to those broadcasters who lose sight of their competitive advantage in content development.

Content protection

It is important to look at the issue of rights protection for content in the context of the increasing number of delivery platforms and the different receiving devices associated with them. The need to protect content copyright during the transition to a wholly digital world should not be underestimated. The copyright protection issue is transparent to the platform employed for carriage, whether it is an IP broadband network carrying multimedia services or a satellite service utilising the latest compression techniques. However, the picture quality that emerges from platforms will, in the digital environment, be considerably higher (HDTV in particular) to that available in the analogue domain. The regulators and broadcast industry, notably in North America and Japan, have already taken action to address the question of how content must be lawfully used by the viewer. A key objective is to ensure that high definition quality content is not 'illegally' distributed over the Internet in blatant breach of copyright.

There is a school of thought within the industry that efforts to stop the piracy of content and its release into the Internet will be almost impossible to police. According to those who endorse this view, the content creation industry will have to look at ways to extract higher returns from their content at the time of production and early release, using such techniques as product placement, enhanced viewing information via DVD versions, etc.

Nevertheless it is extremely important that all sectors of the broadcasting and telecommunications industries work together with the consumer electronics manufacturing industry to implement processes aimed at removing or minimising content theft. After all, the losers are not just the copyright holders but the broadcasters and platform providers as well and, ultimately, the public.

Regulation and Spectrum

From the perspective of broadcasters, the 'business' of regulation is one of the most important factors shaping the future of not only broadcasting but the whole telecommunications sector. Broadcasters are particularly keen to see political direction given to the future role of broadcasting, especially that of 'public service' broadcasting and the necessary funding support mechanisms for PSB.

Spectrum will continue to be the key issue for broadcasters in the future. Not only is the protection of the existing spectrum critically important but equally so is access

to the additional spectrum required to deliver new applications of digitally based services such as HDTV, mobile TV, and perhaps IPTV.

Despite the importance of spectrum to broadcasters, there appears to be a growing trend among regulators to assume that spectrum, presently reserved exclusively to broadcasting, must be shared with other wireless based services. The ultimate test for broadcast spectrum will be the period when analogue services close once digital TV is sufficiently well established. There is considerable pressure from the mobile communications industry seeking to gain access to such spectrum. Broadcasters must make and sell the case to spectrum policy makers in their respective countries in order to retain all or much of this spectrum long before switch-off time arrives. This is essential to protect the future growth potential of broadcasting services.

Conclusion

The nature of broadcasting since its inception has been based on the concept of 'push delivery' to all by the broadcaster. With the evolution currently under way in the digitalised world of broadcasting, this is rapidly moving to one of 'pull delivery' by the consumer. Today the audiences may determine for themselves what broadcast product they elect to access, and when and where they will view or listen to it. This marks a paradigm shift in the nature of broadcasting as we have known it so far.

The challenge for broadcasters facing the revolutionary technological change brought about by digitalisation is to meet the challenge in an evolutionary manner across the broadcast chain. Considerable work is under way throughout the Asia-Pacific region with all broadcasters taking different steps down the path. The changeover to fully digitally based services will take many years to complete across this region. It will perhaps be as long as 25 years before analogue services finally disappear here.

The task is a monumental one which will be expensive to undertake. At the same time, any delay is potentially risky. The competitive multimedia industry is hungry to establish itself. If broadcasters whose infrastructure is based around earlier technologies fail to grasp the need to join the revolution and fall behind in the march of the times, new entrants could well gain the technology advantage against them.

However, it is clear that broadcasters in the Asia-Pacific region are enthusiastic about the future of digital broadcasting and will rise to meet this challenge.

Wayne Heads is Director, Technical Department, Asia Pacific Broadcasting Union

Digital Convergence: New Challenges and Opportunities for Broadcasters

Clarence Yang

The question to ask now is: "Is content still King in the midst of media convergence?" The answer even today is: "Yes, content is still King." However, we have to then ask a second question: "What content for what platform?" The question itself implies a divergence.

As the Personal Media Player market grows, broadcasters are using the One-Source-Many-Use concept to reach the younger generation of audience. Since 2002, the online arm of Radio Television Hong Kong (RTHK-on-Internet) has rolled out a PDA (Personal Digital Assistant) version. Subsequently, short excerpts of TV programmes and news on SMS were launched on 3G-mobile phone services in 2004. In 2005, we started a PodCast Corner with dozens of video and audio podcast feeds targeted at compatible devices.

Content for these new platforms are modified or re-digitised from original radio and television programmes. But these new delivery devices and electronic gadgets have also created new audience communities on new platforms. The question now is, "Should we create different content for different platforms?" or "What kind of content should we create for these new audience communities?"

There is no **one** "killer" content that fits all media platforms. When one type of content works with one platform, it may not work with another. For example, a one-hour drama production will still work on the traditional TV set in the household environment, but you may have to re-package it with some adaptation to fit the needs and expectations of a mobile device consumer. Considerable audience research will be required to understand how the same content can be re-distributed according to the needs of the market.

Broadcasters are experts in creating content. In order to continue to be forerunners in content creation and lead the media market, we have to understand how and why media convergence has created such new audience communities.

Personal vs. Mass

As mentioned earlier, the emergence of new platforms on new digital devices has led to the emergence of new types of "audiences" or "media consumers". The line between majority and minority audiences is becoming less clear.

Personalisation is the trend. For example, end users are less dependent on traditional scheduling to access content. Today members of the audience choose their own scheduling and pick their own receiving devices. RTHK is testing the waters with projects like "myrthk" -- an online personalised media player with an editable play list function providing access to live programming and thousands of hours of archival programmes.

We are also seeing personalisation in the production of content. This is particularly true for the Internet, as seen with the emergence of web-blogging, podcasts, personal photo albums, user-defined wikipedia, users publishing news, movie reviews, stock tips, book commentary, etc.

Convergence and digitalisation have actually made it easy for the individual to create and publish content. End users are playing a much more active role in terms of content production. The concept of an Open Platform is hence becoming important. A broadcaster no longer acts as the sole provider of content. Individuals will use whatever tools they are familiar with and try to get their content distributed. Our next generation and future audiences are being "captured" by such "personalised content" and shunning what we used to call "mass media content".

Thus, broadcasters are facing challenges -- and not only from large telecommunication companies who have been penetrating the media market. Our potential "rivals" are also our "clients" -- individuals publishing their own content, whether it consist of a few photos, a personalised journal about themselves, a political comment, a report concerning some local news, etc. This is a potentially powerful trend. If used correctly, it may help us find the next "killer" content that can re-capture some of our lost audience and at the same time attract the younger generation, who currently do not really watch much TV.

A phenomenon known as Web 2.0 in the Internet world is very similar to what is happening in the world of broadcast content production: where the previous generation used one-to-many communication, now the trend is is many-to-many. Endusers become the producers. Wikipedia, Amazon.com, Googlemaps, etc., are among the sources encouraging the integration of user experience and activities in order to build the unique style of their content.

In the course of this transformation we have to be very careful. Personalized content often loses its charm and attraction once it is re-packaged and transferred to become mass media content. A lot of marketing research has to be done to see how the transformation works.

In 2005, RTHK began to explore the concept of transforming "personalised" content into mass media content by releasing a new website, "Campus Free TV (www.Campus3.tv), where we utilise the force of the newly established "School-based TV stations" in over 100 primary and secondary schools. These schools are already equipped with basic audio, video and digitisation tools; we give teenage students a free hand to produce whatever content they want. Such content is then collected from the 100 schools and categorised according to different themes -- e.g., sports, books, environmental protection, fighting crime, improving the curriculum, etc. It is then released publicly so that larger audiences can enjoy the content created by students.

In the course of this experiment, we have found that we are, on the one hand, able to nurture creativity and, at the same time, access content that is attractive to different communities. We have also found that it is crucial to offer basic, hands-on training sessions to students so that the editorial and technical quality of their content is guaranteed.

Interactivity

Interactivity is a feature that the audience or consumers will increasingly want, whether on a mobile phone, a laptop, a desktop PC, a home TV station or a PDA. Online content is now heavily involved with user participation. Content is often designed to explore possible new paths for communicating with the fresh generation of end users, who demand that their instant feedback is heard and seen by many.

To deal with the growing interest in interactivity, the broadcaster may have to take certain steps. Among these are:

1. Create content that engages the audience -- e.g., voting for a singing contest, providing answers for a game show, polling during an election, eCommerce transactions, etc.
2. Construct a corresponding website for some programmes where ideas, comments and suggestions can be collected from the audience -- e.g., how a particular drama should end.
3. Find a return path to gather users' input -- e.g., via broadband connection, 3G infrastructure, SMS, etc.

Since the traditional free-to-air transmission of programmes to households does not accommodate the required return path, broadcasters will have to work with other partners to achieve this goal. Broadcasting and telecommunications industries have to work together to implement systems to protect content and fight against content theft. It is appropriate for broadcasters to work with telecommunication service providers to develop a secure system that not only safeguards content against piracy, but also allows audiences a return path for full interaction so as to create a win-win situation for all parties.

Content & Digital Rights Management

The final product of a broadcaster is no longer just a transmission version of a video or an audio content. It could be an on-going forum, streams of video in-takes, audio podcasts, or even data from a poll. All these require a sophisticated content management system. The idea of pre-production, production and post-production is no longer linear. Each stage can become a "final product" in its own right. It is, therefore, extremely important for a broadcaster to develop reliable Content Management and Digital Rights Management systems for safeguarding as well as managing its contents and metadata.

Cost of Convergence Vs Return on Investment

In producing and delivering content to various audience communities on different platforms we have to keep in mind the cost involved as well as the return on investments. In the case of the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), the new strategy is to think of itself no longer as a broadcaster of TV and radio, but as a media organisation that delivers public service content to all types of audiences using whatever media on whatever devices are available on the market. It is up to specific audiences to discover for themselves what content on what device best suits them.

What will such a strategy cost? Extensive market research needs to be carried out to find out what the optimised content for different devices and different platforms are.

Conclusion

Broadcasters are still the leaders and front-runners in content creation. However, our grip on the market is slipping due to media convergence, the emergence of new media platforms, the manufacture of new media devices and the rise of new consumer types. We have to seize the initiative to turn personalised content into content for mass audiences. In doing so, however, we have to balance the cost of convergence with the return on investment. It is important that we explore our market and learn about individual behaviour before we leap into any new strategies of content creation that might revolutionise the traditional modes of operation of the broadcaster.

Does one want to become an omnipotent broadcaster, feeding contents to all devices, as the BBC does? If not, what is the choice? How many, and which new platforms, will one pursue? Broadcasters here will have to think about what strategies we will all have to adopt in order to remain the leaders of content creation that we have been for so many years.

Clarence Yang is Head of Radio 2, Radio Television Hong Kong

7 Coverage of the Beijing Olympic Games & Major Sports Events

Olympic Games: Success with no Limits?

Arthur H ächler

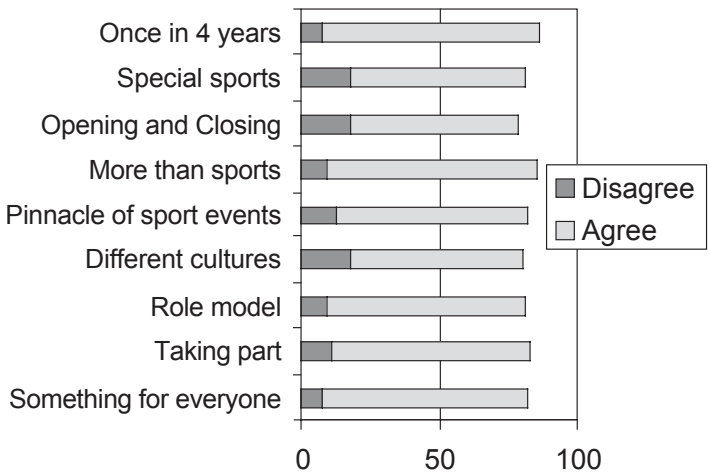
Asked to speak about television presentations of the Olympics, their impact on the Games and the many other aspects of the Olympic Games, I was not quite sure how to tackle the task; the Games have already been observed and analysed from every possible angle.

After the Torino Winter Games in February 2006 – a unique experience -- I decided not to give a philosophical lecture. I have chosen, instead, to share with you the following:

- first, some statistical "findings and facts"
- second, some personal observations, reflections and conclusions – reflections and conclusions of someone who took an active part in the recent Winter Games
- Finally, some key learnings that could lead to success in such operations in the future

1. Public opinion on the Olympics

Some time ago the International Olympic Committee (IOC) commissioned some major research: the Olympic Global Brand and Consumer Research study was done in 2004 and yielded the following results:



The graphic shows that a vast majority of people agree on some aspects of the nature and characteristics the Olympic Games - both summer and winter:

- The Games represent the pinnacle of sport events
- They offer a wide spectrum of sports
- They bring together the world's best athletes
- They bring together different cultures
- They comprise more than just sports - e.g., the opening and closing ceremonies
- They represent something for everyone: young, old, male, female
- Athletes constitute a role model, especially for young people
- What is important is taking part, being there
- The Games take place once in four years

2. Torino 2006

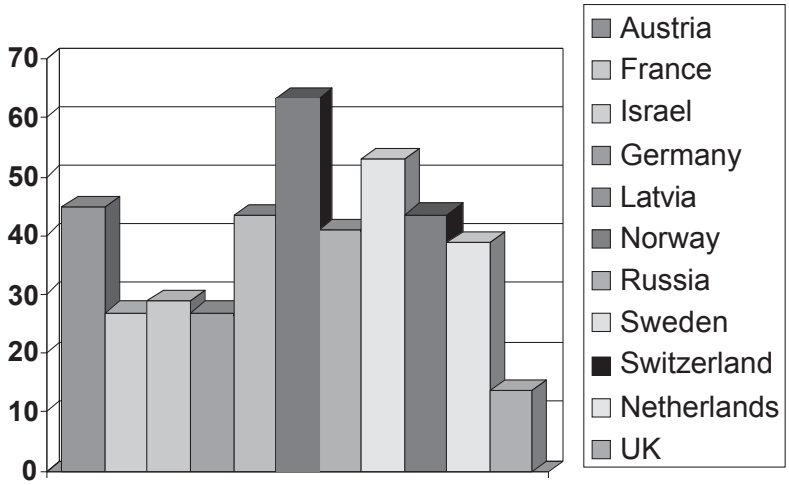
Going back to the Torino Olympics earlier this year, let us look at some interesting facts and then concentrate on one of the major events of any Winter Games: the men's downhill -- both the race and the medal ceremony.

Torino 2006 facts:

- 17 days of competition
- 14 venues
- 85 National Olympic Committees (NOCs)
- 2500 athletes
- 2500 coaches
- 2300 officials (IOC, NOCs, International Sports Federations/IFs)
- 10,000 Media Representatives

Opening ceremony audience facts

The research revealed that the Opening and the Closing ceremonies are something special that everybody likes; they appeal to all ages and both males and females all over the world. The Torino figures provide the best proof of this: excellent ratings in all of the EBU member programmes, live on a February Friday night from eight to ten o'clock in the evening, with a peak in Norway, which had a market share in the 60 percentiles.

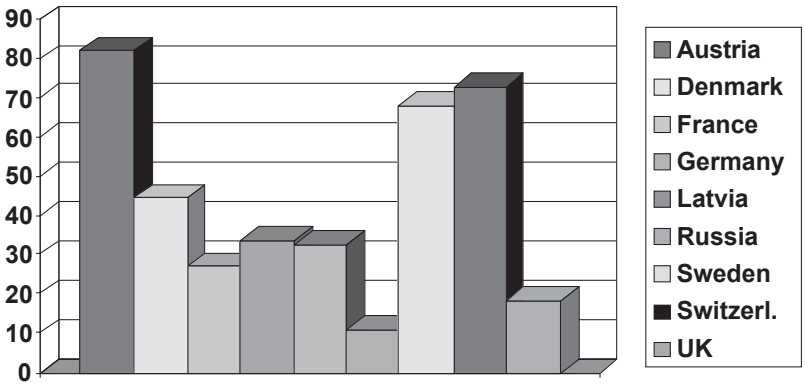


Market Share "Torino 2006 Opening Ceremony", February 10, 2006

Men's Downhill audience facts

One of the first highlights of the programme at any Olympic Winter Games is the men's downhill ski competition. Difficult to run, difficult to manage and also difficult to put on the air, it is definitely one of the pinnacles of all sports and a true challenge for everybody involved.

There are fantastic audience figures all over the world, especially in Europe — not only in the traditional alpine countries like Austria and Switzerland from where come the top figures. Remarkable shares are also evident in Sweden, above 40 per cent in Denmark, and in the 30 percentiles in Germany and Latvia.



Market Share "Torino 2006 Downhill Men", February 12, 2006

SRG SSR, the Swiss national public broadcaster was given the task of the TV production for all the alpine speed events -- i.e., the Downhills and Super-Gs for men and women. I had the privilege of heading this operation.

During the entire two-year preparation period and the final training days we – the entire production team of 150 people – felt like athletes who had to go through qualification and training runs before finally getting ready for the big day of the race. We all felt the tension because we knew from our past Olympic experience how close "top" and "flop" can be. We were only too aware of what extraordinary efforts it takes to make the production "top" as well as how little it takes to make it "flop." We all realised that not only the race itself, but also its TV production, were special.

Let us have a look at the run of the Olympic Men's Downhill champion, Frenchman Antoine Deneriaz: the host broadcaster was able to show the speed, the fascination, the beauty, but also the danger and the risks of this sport. The secret of these extraordinary pictures lies in the fact that we were allowed to place the cameras at the best possible locations, at the ideal positions: low and extremely close to the action. Only the race directors of the International Ski Federation (FIS) can approve a camera position. They were willing to go to the absolute limit of risk and security, thereby allowing the camera to catch not only impressive close-ups and super slow motion pictures as well as good sound, but also a real feeling of the steepness of the slopes, the drama of the jumps, of the drops and of the speed, of the tension at the start and of the joy or disappointment in the finish area -- emotion pure and simple. As a result, the Torino slogan came to life: the passion lives here.

All in all it was a successful broadcast – an accomplished task that everybody could be proud of and which was worthy of the Olympic Games.

Why did it develop into a success?

- There was a constant exchange of ideas between the Torino Olympic Broadcasting Organisation (TOBO), the host broadcaster, its management, the director, the producer, the local organising committee and the race directors of the international federation; this was an essential and indispensable key to the success of the broadcast.
- There was mutual respect, trust and confidence among these various actors, due to close cooperation that dates back many years.
- All the parties involved knew exactly what they wanted, what they had to do and what it took to make the common task and goal a success: a situation that clearly paid off.

For me it was a prime example of how to do it, of how to tackle a difficult job that cannot be done in a one-sided or single-handed manner.

The whole undertaking was a puzzle with many pieces:

- The sports people applied their ultimate know-how for a perfect race: a superbly prepared and highly challenging track with everything that makes this sport so fascinating: speed, jumps, turns.

- The world's best athletes were ready to go for the ultimate result.
- Nature played along and granted a perfect stage: fantastic weather with sun, blue sky, no wind, and an enthusiastic crowd
- The TV production company had a dedicated and highly qualified staff with state of the art equipment.
- All the parties knew their respective roles and pushed in the same direction

The pieces of the puzzle not only fitted together but also fell into the right place at the right time.

Men' Downhill: The medal ceremony

The Local Organising Committee (LOC) decided to have the medal ceremony of the Men's Downhill on site and not at the official Medal Piazza in Torino in the evening – as it is customary at Winter Games. Let us now have a look at the official medal ceremony of the Men's Downhill, which took place 15 minutes after the end of the race.

What a difference compared to the race: the ceremony looked like routine work, requiring no special exertion, no special setting, no real atmosphere – Italians would call it "ambiente," with few spectators, almost empty stands, no Olympic stage.

How could this happen only minutes after such a fantastic race, a true Olympic event? The "special something" was missing -- something here was noticeably not of "Olympic standard."

What went wrong? Why did the greatest moment in the life of an athlete not get the respectful attention it deserved? Why did the fans in the stadium and the millions of TV spectators not get a true Olympic spectacle such as what they were treated to just minutes earlier?

We can only guess at some of the reasons and try to avoid them in the future:

- no clear idea of how to run the show
- late with preparations
- protocol not ready
- chain of command not clear
- final decision on location too late

If we go back to our puzzle metaphor: the "ceremony-pieces" did not fit and they did not fall into the right place at the right time. This was unfortunate, especially for the athletes, but also for the spectators on site and in front of TV sets, and for the Olympic cause.

I felt elated after the race and lousy after the medal ceremony. It was a missed opportunity for all of us: an experience that should never be repeated and must be

avoided under all circumstances. After all, it is not that difficult to do a better job - it does not cost extra money: it just takes some mental effort and a little energy.

3. Keys to success

I would like to refrain from lecturing or simplifying the undertaking. We would all probably agree that there are no recipes for success. However, at least one lesson can be learnt from this "Torino downhill day":

We have to make sure that everything -- especially all jobs, duties and responsibilities -- are clear to every party involved. We have to tackle all tasks like an Olympic athlete does his or hers, taking care of the details up to the last second.

The few clues or keys to success do not represent any earth-shaking discovery. In fact, they are so simple, so evident, so "every day" that we have a tendency to forget them or, at least, to not live up to them.

It is clear that a number of items are not under our control. For example, the size and format of the Games: the number of disciplines and events, the number of athletes, coaches and officials, the number of media representatives, the look of the stadia and arenas, the facilities. But we have a big component in our hands in order to continue the success story. We have to ensure the following:

- that there is real cooperation among all the partners, at all times, not only communication but agreement and cohesive action
- that details are taken seriously
- that we accept lessons from previous organisers -- Vancouver 2010 just admitted this and restructured its organisation a few days ago
- that all parties pull on the same string, work in the same direction
- that we involve local people actively, and consequently, increase the identification factor
- that specialists are hired and listened to
- that there is courage for more modest and simpler solutions: stadiums, facilities, TV coverage
- that we resist false, unproductive prestige-oriented thinking
- that we stick to commitments

This list is far from complete -- it is meant only as an indication of the road to follow.

Staging the Olympic Games is a Herculean job for all parties involved: the IOC with the size and format, the LOC in charge at the location, the host broadcaster striving for top class coverage. The stage itself is enormous: Beijing 2008 will have 37 venues -- of them 14 will be newly built, 14 existing and 9 temporary.

Everybody is called upon and challenged by the request of the IOC President Jacque Rogge's at the IOC Executive Board Meeting in Seoul at the end of April 2006: "We, the IOC, have to control the size of the complexity and cost of the Games." If we do not succeed in doing so, the words of Elda Tessore, chief organising official of the Torino Games, could become a reality sooner than we wish: "The cost of staging the Olympic Games is becoming so high that in the future only a few powerful countries – or those that want to be powerful – may be able to host them."

Arthur Hächler is Head of Sports Operations, SRG SSR, Switzerland and Chairman, EBU Sports Group

Scaling the Mount Olympus of China's Sports TV

Jiang Heping

China Central Television's sports channel – CCTV-5 or simply Channel Five, as it is more commonly known at home -- was launched on January 1, 1995. It is China's first sports channel in the full sense of the word. Over the past 11 years, it has become the most influential media platform for Chinese sports television.

Back in 1980, CCTV covered the Olympics for the first time at the Lake Placid Winter Games. Since then, over 26 years, CCTV has broadcast six Summer Olympics -- from Los Angeles to Athens -- and eight Winter Olympics, from Lake Placid to Turin. For those in China's sports television, the biggest moment is going to be at 8:00 pm on August 8, 2008. In the 17 days to follow, CCTV's Olympic platform will be the centre of attention for billions of sports fans around the globe.

In 2008, CCTV will be the domestic rights holder of the Beijing Games. For most of us it will probably be the only opportunity to broadcast the Summer Olympics in our own country. We are preparing for it with a series of innovative measures. Besides a whole new look for our broadcasts, we are re-vamping the programming for better quality and style.

Our foremost goal is to spread the Olympic spirit and showcase the best performances of athletes from China and the rest of the world. Optimised mode of production, state-of-the-art technology, and remarkable dedication make us confident we can provide a distinctive Olympic coverage which will be second to none.

We are planning more than just 17 days of action in the arena. CCTV will also produce and broadcast a series of countdown celebrations. The first will take place two years before the opening ceremony, then periodically five hundred days, one year, one hundred days, and fifty days before the real action begins. We will also cover the global relay with the Olympic torch. In addition we have already started shooting a large-scale documentary production that looks back on all the memorable occasions of the Beijing Games.

On January 1, 2008 the CCTV logo will pair up with the Five Olympic Rings, as CCTV-5 becomes "The Olympic Channel." During the 17 days of dreams and glory, the Olympic Channel will focus on Chinese athletes in the arena. Most of CCTV's other

channels will also allocate major time slots for Olympic-related programming in the form of both news and entertainment shows. For the first time, the format of all the international Olympic feeds will be in high definition TV, and CCTV will have its own HDTV channel to boost its presence in China's sports television.

In order to meet viewer demands, CCTV plans to air thousands of hours of programming about the Beijing Games. This production feat will involve thousands of its reporters and technical personnel, as well as the latest technologies, including HDTV, blue-ray disk and mobile transmission. The new website of CCTV, which is currently under construction, will also be ready.

In addition there will be a host of fresh programming and production ideas -- in the form of news, documentary, live broadcasts, interview, commentary, as well as entertainment. The studios will provide multi-point coverage that crosses time and space. CCTV will set up unilateral camera positions at all the 40-plus Olympic venues for live interviews with athletes. We plan 6 plus 3 unilateral compound package coverage for the events in which Chinese sports persons excel -- gymnastics, shooting, diving, table tennis, badminton and weight-lifting, as well as the most popular ones, such as athletics, swimming and volleyball. Mobile production equipment will be located at the venue's international TV production zones. Live signals will be produced and distributed right at the venue of competition. Our vehicles and helicopters for mobile satellite broadcasting will have the Olympic Channel's antennas reaching into every corner of Beijing.

Since the 1992 Barcelona Olympics, TV broadcast technologies have undergone a drastic transformation. Olympic international signal production, once the sole responsibility of the host country, is now shared by broadcasters from the world over. In Athens in 2004, CCTV had its first such experience. The CCTV crew was responsible for table tennis, badminton and the modern pentathlon. Its superb production quality won high praise from the International Olympic Committee (IOC) as well as the Athens Olympic Broadcasting (AOB). Within a year, the same crew went on and produced signals for major world sports competitions like the 2005 World Table Tennis Championship, the Badminton Sudirman Cup and Stankovic Continental Champions Cup, the Commonwealth Games and the East Asia Games. They will be there again at the 2006 Asian Games in Doha. Their achievements have filled me with genuine pride.

In 2008, about 3,800 hours of international TV signals will be produced for the Beijing Games. That will be the most reliable resource for CCTV's coverage. I am pleased to tell you that Chinese sports TV workers, especially ours, will contribute a significant proportion of these thousands of hours.

As the country's leading broadcaster, CCTV will be responsible for live signals for seven main events. Besides table tennis, badminton and the modern pentathlon, we will be responsible for volleyball, basketball, soccer and tennis. And, of course,

CCTV will have a major role to play in the live broadcast of the opening and closing ceremonies. All I-S production will be in HDTV format. The challenge will help us to adopt international standards and professional practices. As CCTV becomes more involved in the world's sports TV sector, it is going to strengthen its place among the world's biggest names. At the same time, I-S production will greatly contribute to the promotion of the Olympic Movement by China's TV Industry.

The 2008 Paralympics is also a major concern for us. CCTV will produce all the Paralympic signals and provide comprehensive coverage of all events. While boasting the best media platform in China, CCTV has never hesitated to explore the potential of new media technologies. On November 11, 2001 we became the first broadcaster in the country to adopt interactive TV technology while broadcasting the Ninth National Games. We did the same for the FIFA World Cup in 2002, and the exceptional results were acknowledged by the Asia-Pacific Broadcasting Union. In 2003, we launched our digital TV platform. Once again, sports programming played a key role as "Soccer" and "Golf & Tennis" channels went into operation. With an eye to Internet TV, mobile phone TV, and 3G technologies, CCTV is prepared to go further with both traditional media and new media.

The Beijing Olympics is generating expectations across the world. And CCTV will help the Chinese see their dreams come true.

Jiang Heping is Head of Sports, China Central Television, China

Coverage of Major Events: The Value of Radio

Alan Marks

At the Atlanta Olympic Games in 1996, Australia had to wait until the second-last event on the last night of competition to win its first Gold Medal in the pool, despite its strong tradition in swimming. Expecting another success in the very last event, the Men's 1500, we were dismayed to find it was not covered on local television – quite understandably, with no American having qualified for the Final, local interest lay elsewhere.

Rather than committing to a 'live' coverage of an event in which it wasn't represented, the American network went to pre-packaged material featuring an event in which it was represented. Fortunately, we were able to hear the result on radio some hours before it was even mentioned on television.

This example is used not to pass judgment on what local audiences in another country might want, but to illustrate how different coverage philosophies and priorities can always justify a radio presence alongside television at major events. The essential difference between the two media is that while the main emphasis of television coverage is on particular events and athletes of local interest, radio has the capacity to remain less subjective and more 'internationally' representative of the entire celebration of sport.

The importance of the print media, computers, the Internet other technologies is acknowledged in all aspects of life, especially in terms of providing a historical record, a place for post-event analysis and explanation, and a tool for research. However, 'live' coverage of sports to mass audiences in 'real time' is the domain of radio and television, the two modes of mass communication used almost exclusively for this purpose.

We are all aware of the influence of television on our lives and of how important it has become to the staging of events such as the Olympic Games. On its website, the International Olympic Committee (IOC) reveals that of the US $4 billion revenue generated by the Olympic Movement in four years up to 2004, 53 per cent (about Aus $2.2 billion) came from its broadcast partnerships.

The IOC contributed 49 per cent of this broadcast revenue to the then current Organising Committee for the Olympic Games: the OCOG for Athens received $732

million and the one for Salt Lake City $443 million. The importance of broadcast revenue to the staging of a **viable** major event is obvious.

In the IOC's own words, "Television is the engine that has driven the growth in the Olympic Movement. Increases in broadcast revenue over the past two decades have provided the Olympic Movement and sport with an unprecedented financial base."

Because it doesn't generate anywhere near the same level of revenue, the role of radio is less significant. On account of this, in a largely television-driven environment, the value of the alternative service provided by radio is both underestimated and undervalued and often dismissed altogether.

But radio does have its own important place, its own status, thanks to the inherent advantages it has over television. We can better appreciate the value of radio by looking at the intrinsic differences between the two media and comparing them with regard to audience reach and accessibility, as well as the question of what radio does that television does not.

Radio and television are both media of mass communication because they ensure "The delivery of information to the greatest number of people in the shortest possible time with the least amount of effort". But which of the two better conforms to this definition?

This needs to be answered from two perspectives: that of the supplier (the broadcaster) and of the consumer (the audience). From the broadcasters' perspective, television can be expensive, the preparation and set-up are time-consuming, and the production and delivery of the product require considerable effort. From the consumers' stand-point, television makes certain demands of its audience: viewers need access to a signal and a receiver; their numbers are restricted by space; and there are many locations and activities individuals undertake that preclude watching at a given time.

In the past, television has suffered because of its lack of mobility; it has not always been portable enough to access virtually anywhere at any time. Although miniaturisation in digital formats is changing that situation, the cost of these devices is still prohibitive for many people. Then there's the question of broadcast revenue: will large sums still be paid by broadcasters when exclusivity cannot be protected because signals can now be transported on hand-held devices?

Radio remains not only a 'unique instrument of grassroots communication,' in many respects, it is a superior medium of mass communication. From the Broadcasters' perspective radio has several advantages:

- It is relatively inexpensive
- Its signal covers great distances
- It reaches many people simultaneously with little effort

- It is flexible
- Its effectiveness does not depend upon the location of the audience or their activities at a particular time

Among the many benefits of radio for audiences are:

- It is affordable, compact and portable
- It is accessible to most people, including those who cannot access or watch television
- It overcomes the barrier of illiteracy
- It overcomes barriers of time and place to reach audiences
- It is immediate -- radio can be almost anywhere whenever something is happening at the time

There are many places where populations are still dependent upon radio as their primary source of information, particularly among communities in isolated locations where the importance of radio cannot be underestimated.

Radio is also a vital means of communication in emergency situations, capable of functioning even when local infrastructure is rendered inoperable or is destroyed altogether by natural phenomena or malicious intent.

Radio often spells the difference between being informed or remaining oblivious. Batteries are available when power is not and signals can still be received from other, distant locations when local transmissions are interrupted. Reach and accessibility are among the main advantages of radio.

The second of the two areas of comparison between radio and television is: what do each of them do or not do. The basic premise is that, essentially, "radio and television both inform and entertain us." We know that television does both. But, to what extent do we use television for continuous information-gathering when the precise information is available in great detail in print or on the Internet?

Using television to examine list after list of facts and figures may be informative, but it is far from entertaining. It is not unreasonable to suggest that the more detailed, subject-specific and information-oriented a television programme is, the fewer the viewers who will be interested. In truth, the subject-matter of the material does not capture the interest of the mass audience. Generally, the more information a television programme provides the less entertaining it becomes — much of the time, the information factor is secondary to the entertainment value.

In radio the balance between information and entertainment is the reverse of that for television. Of course, radio is used as a means of entertainment but, because it is devoid of images, listeners use their imagination to form a picture. And, for this, they have to rely on the information they hear. So, first and foremost, the value of radio lies in its ability to inform. It can do so quickly, with little set-up time, and with

relatively little effort. Radio is flexible, can reach its target audience almost anywhere, independent of what listeners are doing at the time, because radio can deliver its information without interrupting other activities.

But it is not the actual reception of the signal that is important here -- it is what the signal is carrying. Even with split-screen and interactive technologies, television best provides 'live' coverage in real-time by concentrating on one event at a time. Once television establishes coverage of one particular event it cannot start to chop and change continually to other venues. If it does, it would seriously disrupt the prime coverage, detracting from its value, and the resulting disjointed programming would only further fragment a dissatisfied audience.

This is a particular, and unenviable, dilemma for producers of multi-sport events such as the Olympic or Asian Games, where many different sports may be in progress at the same time but any single broadcast rights-holder can only show them one at a time. Other sports have to be recorded for later 'turn around' resulting in an inevitable backlog of material to be replayed.

To counter this, some television rights-holders have sub-licensed their rights to allow other broadcasters to distribute more sports over more channels. Such arrangements have obvious benefits. For the network itself, it eases the pressure on its own schedules and production resources. At the same time viewers are presented with more choice over what they want to watch.

Multi-sports events do not pose such a problem for radio. In fact, radio excels when numerous events are taking place simultaneously – that is where the advantages of radio as a 'live' broadcaster are brought to the fore. Listeners actually have an expectation that radio will switch quickly from venue to venue to capture important events immediately, as things are happening. This is when 'live' radio broadcasting stands alone in its ability to inform fully.

In one particular hour during the Sydney Olympics, competition was in progress simultaneously at 20 different venues and Australians were involved in 9 of them -- all at the same time. What was a scintillating evening of 'live' radio must have been a nightmare for the television producer. The latter must have envied those attributes of radio that make it such a powerful mass communicator: immediacy, flexibility and spontaneity.

To summarise, radio can have impact by doing some things differently from how they can be done on television, and with great effect.

There are, however, two issues, which can affect what radio does. These are: convincing host broadcasters to cater for the specific needs of radio as distinct from those of television; and the question of rights fees.

Just one example of a radio-specific need is that of 'International Sound.' While television productions incorporate a wide array of devices and technologies to enhance the pictures they transmit, radio requires few embellishments. For example, for sports coverage, it needs only access to the venue (or vision feed) and a place from which to broadcast. Apart from the basic equipment it uses, the only enhancement radio needs is sound -- the atmosphere at the venue.

Because radio relies entirely on the sounds the listener hears, using audio to its best advantage makes for good radio: often the sounds can convey as much to the imagination of the listener as the spoken words themselves. For many years, both radio and television relied on the general venue ambience as 'background' sound. Nowadays, separate feeds of "International Sound" are incorporated into coverage.

The desirability of having a separate 'radio-only' feed of International Sound became a consideration when the F/X for television became so camera-based that it was no longer relevant to radio. It did not match the expectations of what might be heard in a commentary position in the grandstand rather than in the middle of the action where a camera might take a viewer.

Examples of such situations would include an underwater shot in diving or water polo, the splashing of oars and paddles in rowing and canoeing, the clunk of the bar falling in the high jump or the sniffing of smelling-salts when the hand-held camera goes backstage into the warm-up room at the weightlifting. The radio audience, while able to hear the sound, would not understand its relevance because it is not what they would expect to hear from the grandstand.

There is no doubt that camera-based F/X carried on the International Sound feed add immeasurably to the effectiveness of television coverage, but it is not entirely appropriate for radio. At the same time it is also not sufficient to merely hang up a microphone or two around the stadium to pick up the general 'ambience' of the venue -- even radio is more sophisticated than that.

Good radio needs a mix of the 'clean' sound of things such as the introductions of athletes, the starter's orders, announcements of points and decisions, the instructions of officials, announcements for ceremonies, national anthems and so on. At the moment, instead of these being an integral part of a high-quality radio broadcast, they often become merely a part of the background ambience -- too far 'off-mic' to add anything to the broadcast. Radio does not need visual embellishments but it does need appropriate, good quality International Sound to give it the impact and effect it should have.

And, finally, there is the matter of broadcast rights for radio. When Electronic Media Rights for important events are acquired by a broadcast union (for example, the European Broadcasting Union or the Asia Pacific Broadcasting Union) on behalf of its members, those rights generally include both radio and television and are passed on to the relevant member organisations of that organisation.

Obviously, this makes life easier for the Organising Committees, which are thereby freed of the task of negotiating separate radio and television agreements with every single member organisation: just one rights agreement is negotiated and the union secretariat is left with the responsibility of sorting out the details with its members.

But the situation is not the same in every country, especially those for which rights are not negotiated through an all-embracing, blanket agreement with a broadcast union or pool. In many countries, radio rights are included as a component of an overall rights package acquired by a television organisation. This is again, no doubt, a more efficient and less tiresome process than drawing up numerous, separate agreements. However, it raises two questions:

1. How is the true, 'market-value' of stand-alone radio rights quantified when they are included merely as a component of overall rights?

2. What guarantee is there that the radio rights will be allocated or sub-licensed to the organisation which is best able to utilise them as the controlling body might have intended?

It is understandable that an organisation will seek to maximise the return it receives from the sub-licensing of radio rights, especially when it has no capacity to service them. But does this arrangement not enable an organisation acquiring primary rights to demand a rights fee that is above their likely, true market value and use the return merely to subsidise its own expenditure? This is not a question of getting "something for nothing" – every product has its own worth. The question is whether radio's dues have been greatly exaggerated in line with the expectations of television revenue.

Rarely does radio compete directly with television. It certainly does not have the capacity to generate anywhere near the same level of revenue. On occasion we have asked why rights fees should be payable for radio in the first place, particularly considering the way radio is used to provide an information service for the public.

The controlling bodies of many sports are realistic in balancing their perceptions of the value of radio's involvement with what radio should pay for it. But even though the law of 'supply and demand' will determine a product's value, some rights fees expected of radio – and, I dare say, of television as well -- have been ridiculous in the extreme.

So, for the cause of radio, let me end with the IOC's own words regarding its policy on "Media Coverage of the Olympic Games." Although this relates specifically to "Free TV Coverage," I would suggest that the intent of the statement can be used to justify the recognition of radio as a valuable commodity and worthy of its own place in media coverage of major events:

"The IOC has often declined higher offers for broadcasts on a pay-per-view basis or because a broadcaster could reach only a limited part of the population, as this is against Olympic Broadcast Policy.

This fundamental IOC Policy, set forth in the Olympic Charter, ensures the maximum presentation of the Olympic Games by broadcasters around the world to everyone who has access to television.

Rights are sold only to broadcasters who can guarantee the broadest coverage throughout their respective countries free of charge."[1]

From a radio perspective, the relevant passages in this are:
"...reach only a limited part of the population..."
"...maximum presentation of the...Games..."
"...guarantee the broadest coverage..."

Radio does not expect to have access to the world's most important events without giving something in return. It asks only that expectations are realistic. If they are, what radio can provide in return is: "...the broadest coverage and maximum presentation to, not only a limited part, but almost the entire population who have access."

Alan Marks is Executive Producer/Coordinator of ABC Radio's Special Events, Australia

[1] ***www.olympic.org***

8 North America – Asia Media Dialogue

North America - Asia Media Dialogue: View from the P acific

Tarun P atel

Asia has the population. It also has a growing middle-class with disposable income. North America has the big studios, the distribution network, the marketing prowess and the finance. The two giants of Asia -- China and India -- are showing more of an interest than before in the international media arena. My paper today will contain views on how we, in the Pacific, see these influences, including how it will impact us in the islands.

The Pacific has many islands but few people. Its remoteness presents its own challenges in the areas of communication, transportation, etc. In Fiji TV, we had our own challenges once we reached 85 per cent coverage of the population through terrestrial transmission. The question was: how do we get to the remaining 15 per cent?

This section of our population is normally very isolated, located away from any mainstream transportation routes, let alone electricity. We could have installed one terrestrial transmitter at a time over the next 30 years, trying to negotiate access routes to mountain tops, building the infrastructure and then ensuring that the site continues to be maintained for signal generation.

We decided that we would take the more financially challenging route -- uplinking to satellite and thus providing not only Fiji but the entire Pacific with television services. Until last April, many of our neighbours in the Pacific had not seen their own country representatives take part in sporting events around the world. This has changed with SKY Pacific. In the recent Commonwealth Games, we carried over 250 hours of programming.

SKY Pacific has a bouquet of 16 Channels. While the service is predominantly for the Fiji market, there is enough content on the service to be attractive in other Pacific Island nations.

The channels we carry are:

	16 Channels	
1	Fiji 1	ALL
2	STAR PLUS, STAR ONE, CHANNEL V	HINDI 1
3	CARTOON/TCM	KIDS/MOVIES
4	MTV/NICK	KIDS
5	ABC AP	GEN ENT
6	CNN	NEWS
7	DISCOVERY	DOCO
8	STAR MOVIES	MOVIES
9	E!	GEN ENT
10	ESPN	SPORTS
11	ZEE PREMIER	HINDI 2
12	SUPER SPORTS	SPORTS
13	BBC	NEWS
14	TRENDZ/ZEE NEWS/SMILE+ EROS MOVIES	HINDI 3
15	CCTV 4	ETHNIC
16	PPV	ALL

Approximately 44 per cent of Fiji's population is of Indian descent. This financially well-disposed community forms an important 70 per cent of our Pay TV market. It is through the existence of Pay TV that we have been able to extend Fiji 1, our free-to-view channel, to the entire nation and, at the same time, extend this to the rest of the Pacific.

Fiji Indians have kept their own culture, their traditions, their dress and their language -- so their consumption of entertainment continues to be weighted in favour of content produced in India. They have been a part of Fiji for over 125 years and many have no idea about where in India their ancestors originated. But their marriage ceremonies, rituals of cremation and celebrations associated with a new life remain unchanged from the days their ancestors made Fiji home. A fast emerging language now is a mixture of Hindi and English -- increasingly being called Hinglish -- which forms the basis of the language their programmes of choice are being produced in.

In Fiji, we also carry CCTV 4 and 9 for a growing community that is migrating from mainland China to Fiji and the Pacific as entrepreneurs and farmers. In addition we have Star Plus, Star One, Channel V and three channels from Zee TV. This is the Asian influence in the Pacific.

The American influence is present in the form of ESPN, Star Movies, TCM, Cartoon Network, MTV, Nickelodeon and E!. We also have an Australian influence through ABC Asia Pacific and an English influence via the BBC and other English programmes on our free-to-air channel.

Repurposing Content

The interaction between Asia and North America is already evident, not only in entertainment but also in sports. We are seeing cricket teams from India and Pakistan invited to play one day internationals in the USA and Canada.

Reach

I read an article last week -- an interview with Mr Kishore Lulla of Eros International. Over the past 30 years, Eros has accumulated approximately 1,300 movie titles. They are now able to reach out worldwide via a new media initiative partnering with Intel-V. This is in direct response to piracy and the experience that consumers would want. EROS is also going to reduce the time window between release in cinemas and on DVD to six weeks. All new content is available with sub-titles, at least in the English language.

What the leading edge commercial world is doing will also impact us -- the broadcasters. We need to reach our customers wherever they are. A growing market for producers and distributors out of Asia and the Pacific is not just North America but the world. This region is in demand, in fashion, and we must capitalise on this.

In the words of Kishore Lulla, "Embrace technology -- don't hold back -- and monetise the content you have. If you don't embrace technology, the consumer who wants this experience will get it through other illegal ways."

What we are seeing here is just an emerging trend that is only going to get stronger. Global interaction is already happening -- learn it, understand it and use it to your advantage.

Tarun Patel is Chief Operating Officer, Fiji TV, Fiji

Global Challenges Require a Global Approach

David Jackson

Over the past couple of decades, the advance of commerce and the evolution of politics have moved the centre of gravity of world affairs from Europe to the Asia Pacific region in a variety of ways. Every day, events taking place in this region are having a profound impact on the economy, the political development, and even the public health of the rest of the world. From Avian Flu to the tsunami disaster... from nuclear development to trade imbalances... these issues are shaping economic, political, and social priorities around the world.

As a result, this region demands and deserves the highest quality media to inform its people with a truly global approach. It has never been more important than now that the media of Asia and North America explore how we are responding to these changes, and how we can expand our relationships with each other.

In the past, the media of North America have been Euro-centric. This was largely the result of traditional ties with Europe and the events that shaped the world in the 20th Century, such as industrialisation, Germany's role in both World Wars, and Russia's role in the Cold War. In the mean time, Asian media, with few exceptions, remained largely local and regional in terms of their operation and coverage. In the era of globalisation and the Internet, however, the time has come for both Eastern and Western media to work together to meet the needs of the people of both our regions.

The Voice of America (VOA) has been broadcasting balanced and objective news and information to the Asia Pacific region for 64 years. We have come a long way since the year we first went on the air, from the days when we sent a short-wave signal across the Pacific and hoped someone with a radio receiver would hear us. Today we still use shortwave, but we are also on medium wave, FM and television – as well as on the Internet – in order to reach our audiences in the 44 languages in which we broadcast.

We have hundreds of radio and TV affiliates in the Asia Pacific region that relay VOA programmes, and we communicate frequently with them about how to cover the world. In many parts of Asia, VOA often serves as the Washington and international news bureau for local stations, providing news and information that is tailor-made for their specific markets. We are co-producing radio and television

talk shows with affiliates from Taipei to Jakarta. And we have run seminars and journalist workshops from Ulaan Bataar to Chiangmai, where we discuss the kind of journalistic issues we all face. We strongly believe in the value of working with local partners.

Before I came to VOA, I spent part of my career based in Hong Kong and Seoul as a correspondent for Time magazine -- so I became acquainted with this region as a working reporter. Since I have been director of VOA, I have made several changes that reflect my belief in the growing importance of Asia and the need for VOA to increase and improve our coverage of – and our ties to – this important part of the world. I have opened new bureaus in Seoul and Jakarta and laid the groundwork to expand VOA's existing bureau in Hong Kong to give us the ability to react faster – and smarter – to news and other developments in this region.

But the signs of growing Western attention to the East can be seen not only at the Voice of America, but also across American society, from the numbers of American students studying Chinese to the expansion of domestic news coverage in the Pacific Rim. Asian-Americans are playing an increasingly influential role in American life, from schools to the dynamic high technology industry in California's Silicon Valley and elsewhere.

Americans are interested in Asia and, from my personal travels and experiences, I know the people of Asia are interested in America. The United States is one of the – if not **the** – largest trading partners of many countries in this region. So, naturally, the people of Asia want and need to know what is going on in the U.S. Decisions made in Washington, whether they affect immigration, trade barriers, or interest rates, or investment opportunities, will often have a direct impact on your audiences. That is one reason why VOA has been able to grow such large and loyal audiences in this part of the world.

We have found that cooperative ventures with our affiliates are a good way for us and our partners to reach out to each other. For example, joint broadcasts that bring together people from the U.S. and an affiliate in another country are a great way to start a dialogue – not a speech, but a two-way conversation – about an issue in the news. This can help our audiences understand and make sense out of our fast-changing world. And that is a positive role that we in the news media can play.

That is not to say there are no challenges. On the American side, we need to recognise that there are suspicions in certain parts of Asia about Western media and how they are perceived. We need to understand the historical, cultural, and political context of such suspicions and work hard to earn the trust of the region... On the Asian side, there has to be a universal recognition that the free flow of information is beneficial to both economic development and social stability. Trying to restrict the flow of information by jamming broadcasts or blocking Internet sites is, at best, ineffective in the age of the Internet and satellite television and, at worst, breeds

misunderstanding and even hostility. No nation that blocks its citizens' access to information can compete in today's global marketplace of commerce and ideas.

There is no question that our world is getting smaller, thanks to travel, communications and modern technology. The good news is that, as communicators, we can play a positive role in helping to bring people closer together. If we can just focus on the things we have in common, rather than on our differences, no matter who we are or where we live, we can help all of us better meet the challenges of the 21st Century.

David Jackson is Director, Voice of America

A Tale of Two TVs: Asian and North American Broadcasting

Drew McDaniel

Three decades ago, electronic media in North America and Asia were developing along utterly different paths. Their separate approaches to broadcasting policies since then presents some interesting and surprising turns.

In 1976 in North America – especially in the United States and Mexico – broadcasting was based largely on a private, non-state ownership model. Although US media did have public broadcasters, such as stations affiliated with National Public Radio and the Public Broadcasting System, they were greatly overshadowed in audience size and funding by stations affiliated with the main commercial networks: CBS, NBC, and ABC. In Canada, the situation was a bit different; the main network was public broadcaster CBC, although there were a great many privately-owned stations. In short, the dominant media policy in North America favoured private – not government or public – ownership of radio and television.

Thirty years ago in Asia, there were only a few countries where privately owned media predominated. Broadcasting tended to be based exclusively, or at least mainly, on government ownership. Exceptions to this rule included Japan and Philippines, countries that had a historic relationship with the US.

In short, Asian broadcast media of the early 1980s were mostly state-owned while North American media were mostly privately owned. However, beginning in the 1980s, neo-liberal reforms swept across the globe, leading many countries to divest themselves of some of their state-owned enterprises. Neo-liberal economic theories assume that market forces optimise efficiency and productivity. According to advocates of such reforms, state-owned enterprises tie up scarce public capital, promote bureaucracy, and reduce competitiveness (Hula, 1988; Coburn & Wortzel, 1986); hence divestiture should act as a stimulus to the national economy.

In the liberalisation process, even state broadcast media were subject to privatisation or doors thrown open to privately owned broadcasters. In some European countries, for example, policymakers modified broadcasting rules to allow a range of new private networks. France sold some of its television channels to private investors (see Le Duc, 1987), while in Germany steps were taken to diversify investment in its broadcasting system (Dyson & Humphreys, 1986). Many nations in Asia followed this trend.

Of course, a shift in emphasis away from state broadcasting and public service broadcasting also gained impetus from technological changes. Satellite broadcasting stole large chunks of television audiences away from terrestrial networks. In India, a combination of satellite and cable television systems turned audience patterns upside-down, causing a sharp loss of audience share for Doordarshan.

However, media privatisation brought to the surface some troubling issues because broadcasting ownership is closely tied to the information policies of nations. Among developing countries, a common justification for state media ownership has been that, because governments are responsible for national planning, state control of media must be exercised in order to ensure their effective use in the development process.

Thirty years ago, policymakers in most Asian nations believed that private broadcasting would lead to domination by commercial interests, rather than national needs. It was believed that audiences would prefer titillating entertainment shows to important, but necessarily less fascinating, development programs. Moreover, private media's presumed appetite for imported foreign shows was a problem in countries that were at the time already experiencing a large influx of imported programmes.

Of primary interest to policymakers weighing the advantages and disadvantages of state ownership is privatisation's effect on media content. Research by economists in the 1980s revealed that profit-oriented commercial programmers in Europe tended to increase production budgets until audiences are optimised for advertising revenues. This contrasts with the fixed budgets usually given producers in non-profit state-owned or public service broadcasters. As a result, private media were able to use more costly production techniques that afforded their programmes higher audience appeal, thus giving private networks a competitive advantage over state-owned media.

Research has also shown that private broadcasters tend to present information and programmes from a greater variety of sources than state-owned media, which tend to focus on governmental activities and objectives. Private radio and television have been shown to cater more to viewers' tastes, both in content and in styles of presentation. This inevitably leads to less emphasis on development presentations in the productions of private broadcasters.

As neo-liberal reforms occurred in Asian and European media, audiences for public service broadcasters – whether publicly owned or state owned – plummeted. The declining audience share brought about a loss of income from advertising. Doordarshan's share of television advertising revenues dropped from 81 per cent in 1994 to 28 per cent in 2000 (Carat Media Services cited in Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, 2006). Ultimately, the loss of audiences to private media threatened the very existence of public service broadcasters in some cases. In the Netherlands

and in Indonesia, for example, pressures brought about by wildly escalating competition led to the restructuring of the public service sector of national broadcasting. Due to such trends, something of a mood of pessimism has crept over public service broadcasting in Asia.

It is interesting to see what has occurred during this same period in the United States of America. In the US – undoubtedly the bastion of private media – the main television networks have seen their audience share dribble away to satellite and cable channels. From a 75 per cent audience share in 1985, the combined audience of commercial networks fell to just slightly more than 35 per cent in 2005. This took place even in the face of an expansion from three to six major commercial TV networks: Fox, UPN and WB networks had joined ABC, NBC, and CBS by 2005. Even worse, audiences for key segments of the programme schedule were badly hit at the commercial networks. The nightly newscast of the three old TV networks sank by 34 per cent in the past decade and nearly 44 per cent since 1980.

What is even more surprising is what has happened to public broadcasting in the US. Asian colleagues often know little about public service broadcasting in the United States, possibly because the Hollywood image of American TV has been promoted so aggressively abroad. Or maybe the stereotype of the powerful commercial US TV networks of the 1970s has simply stuck. At any rate, audience trends look rather different for public broadcasting network, PBS. Among the national networks, it alone has held its audience steady over the past decade, although it faces the same challenges from cable channels as commercial networks.

A recent national survey shows that 96 million Americans watch PBS each week and 80 per cent of American homes are tuned into public television channels each month. PBS now has average prime-time ratings at about the same levels as the UPN and WB networks. The average prime-time viewing of PBS is greater than Discovery, the National Geographic Channels, or even the sports channel, ESPN. And its ratings are more than double that of CNN.

Public radio in the US presents an even more remarkable picture. From 1999 to 2004 audiences for National Pubic Radio grew by about 65 per cent. About 20 million listeners tune in to an affiliated station every week. The growth in listenership has taken place at a time when overall over-the-air radio audiences shrank dramatically due to the growing popularity of satellite radio and mp3 players.

Public broadcasting in the US relies in part on funding from tax revenues and, therefore, must be accountable to the citizenry. In a Roper Poll in July 2005, Americans ranked public radio and public television as the second and third best values in return for tax dollars spent. Only national defense ranked higher.

Perhaps there is a lesson in all of this for Asian colleagues. The American experience shows that public broadcasting can survive, and potentially prosper, even in a

disadvantageous setting. By September of this year UPN and WB will merge their programme services as a response to their disappointing ratings. In the same month PBS will launch a new season and NPR will advance its heavy schedule of news and information programming with additional new shows. If these comparatively small public service broadcasters can succeed, surely better positioned Asian organisations can do even better.

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North America - Asia Media Dialogue

Bill Roberts

As a multi-faith and multicultural television network serving one of the world's most diverse populations, VisionTV is tasked with promoting exchange and understanding among people of different beliefs and cultures. Dialogue is our business. So I hope that I might bring to this discussion a unique Canadian perspective that others will find helpful.

Thomas Friedman, the *New York Times* columnist, has lately acquired some notoriety for claiming that the world is flat. It is not geography that he has in mind, but economics. According to Friedman, a whole host of developments over the past two decades – from the fall of the Soviet Union to rise of Wal-Mart – have brought India, China and other Asian nations into the global supply chain for manufacturing and services, creating new prosperity in these countries. Such developments have levelled the economic playing field between West and East. They have made the world flat, in other words.

And so does history come full circle. In 1492, a Westerner seeking riches in the East discovers that the world is round. Five hundred years later, another Western man contemplates the growing wealth of the East and concludes that the world is flat after all.

It is indeed a powerful metaphor, but not without its flaws. Friedman means to suggest that the forces driving globalisation – the faster pace of business communications, the mobility of labour – have brought all of us closer together. And this may be true economically. But North America and Asia have been much slower to close the gap culturally. In many ways, we are still quite distant from one another.

North Americans like to think of ourselves as Thomas Friedman's cool 21st Century technocrats, fluent in the digital lingua franca of a borderless world. But when we contemplate the diverse and vibrant cultures of the new Asia, we are more like the stranded tourists of ***Lost in Translation,*** trapped in the anonymous rooms of a giant luxury hotel because we cannot read the street signs outside. Clearly, there is still a great deal for us to learn.

Over the past two decades, we have seen – on both sides of the Pacific Ocean – a growing recognition of this need to know one another better. The result has been

the beginnings of an effort to forge new cultural ties between Asia and North America. Film and television, those two most universal of media, are natural vehicles for this kind of cross-cultural activity.

In Canada, as in much of the Western world, film and television creators now actively seek out new opportunities to collaborate with Asian counterparts. Telefilm Canada, our federal film and television agency, launched its Asia Pacific Initiative in 1997 to help open up partnership and distribution opportunities for Canadian producers in this part of the world.

Today, Telefilm administers co-production agreements with China, Hong Kong, Japan, South Korea, Singapore and the Philippines. And our government is in the process of negotiating a joint agreement with India on film, television and animation co-production. In addition, the National Film Board of Canada has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Japan Broadcasting Corporation to work together on co-production opportunities and to share expertise on High Definition Television.

Under the various co-production agreements administered by Telefilm, producers from Asia and Canada have worked together on almost two dozen different projects over the last six years, from children's animation to television documentaries to feature films.

In 2003 VisionTV had the privilege of presenting the world television premiere of ***Quiet Mind,*** one of the first projects to be completed under Canada's co-production agreement with Singapore. This six-part documentary series, a collaboration between Omni Film Productions of Canada and Peach Blossom Media of Singapore, explores the many different forms of meditation, and reveals how this ancient practice is changing and adapting to the contemporary world. An apt choice of subject matter, speaking as it does to the potential for the merging of Eastern and Western traditions in a globalised society.

Co-production agreements open up new markets for film and television producers, and provide opportunities for creative people in North America and Asia to combine their considerable skills. But they represent only the beginning of a true East-West media dialogue.

For the most part, the common language of these partnerships is that of commerce. And the resulting products often are designed to be broadly appealing, so as to maximise the potential for sale and consumption in the international marketplace. As such, they do not necessarily offer profound insight into either of our cultures.

Co-production agreements are certainly important. But real understanding between cultures takes a long time to foster. It is the slow accumulation of a thousand small exchanges – the sharing of ideas and dreams, of hopes and fears and fantasies. It

happens step by gradual step. We listen and we learn – until, almost imperceptibly, we come to know what it is to see the world through different eyes.

We need to find more creative ways to facilitate this kind of interaction. And that is something I believe broadcasters are uniquely positioned to do. Working in the universally accessible, highly emotive language of images, we have the power to transport our viewers instantly around the world, and to afford them intimate access to the lives of others – from a Buddhist monk in Vancouver, Canada to a Muslim storekeeper in Jakarta, Indonesia. We have, when we choose to exercise it, the ability to help create empathy between people a world apart – people who might not otherwise have the chance even to know of one another.

As Asia and North America become ever more economically intertwined, I believe it is incumbent upon broadcasters in both societies to seek out opportunities to tell these kinds of stories. To tell the stories that will truly open our eyes to one another.

In 2002 and again in 2003, producers from VisionTV traveled to Sri Lanka to participate in an exchange facilitated by the Canadian International Development Agency. They came to share their storytelling expertise with producers from Young Asia Television, and to help their counterparts develop programming on peace building and reconciliation. And they returned with documentary reports of their own, about life in the aftermath of Sri Lanka's civil war – reports that aired on prime time Canadian television.

It is a small example, to be sure. But at a time when the North American broadcast giants have closed foreign bureaus and cut back on international news coverage, choosing instead to report on world events from their bunkers in New York and Atlanta, it becomes even more important for us to pursue opportunities to tell stories such as these whenever they present themselves.

East-West dialogue has never mattered more than it does now. Whether round or flat, our world is most certainly growing smaller. The destinies of Asia and North America are linked inextricably. We need to know one other: as partners, as allies – and as people. And I believe the men and women in this room hold the key.

Bill Roberts is President & CEO of S-VOX, Canada

9 Inter-Continental Media Dialogue

Inter-Continental Media Dialogue

Dali Mpofu

The bonds between Malaysia and the people of South Africa actually predate the birth of our democracy in 1994. Even during the apartheid era, which inflicted such injustice and pain on the people of South and Southern Africa, the leaders of our liberation movements were in contact with their compatriots in Malaysia to share information and knowledge about ways of confronting and defeating oppression and colonialism.

Then, during the very early days of democracy – when the majority of the world adopted a wait-and-see attitude because of a lack of faith in the newly-liberated peoples of South Africa – Malaysians arranged a number of state and business visits to our country to explore ways in which they could help us rebuild our economy. At the same time, teams of South African economists visited Malaysia to learn first-hand how the people of this country addressed economic redistribution after centuries of colonialism.

Those lessons contributed in large part to the blueprint for South Africa's current macro-economic policies, including specific interventions into the economy to ensure the transfer of wealth from privileged white people to previously-disadvantaged black people. So a certain dialogue already exists between South Africa, Malaysia and, indeed, the rest of the world.

I mention this to illustrate how specific countries across continents are able to develop historically based and strong ties for the mutual benefit of their citizens. Indeed the freedom of my country came in no small measure as a result of massive international solidarity in the form of economic sanctions, cultural and sports boycotts and even material and financial assistance.

The challenge, and it is no minor challenge, is to expand that dialogue into structured forms of dialogue not only between countries but between regions and continents themselves.

That dialogue is beginning to happen in multilateral forums such as the United Nations, where developing nations are collaborating on issues such as the reform of the Security Council and other organs of the United Nations and, for example, tackling the question of how to meet the Millennium Development Goals.

It is also happening in the more assertive posture that is being adopted by countries of the South – including Malaysia, India, Brazil and my own country – in engaging with the Group of 8 (G8), the European Union and the United States.

Across the southern nations of the world, we are seeing a new unity in the fight against poverty, in the battle against unfair trade treaties, and in the war on HIV/AIDS, amongst others, which in its own way addresses the "global vision of a fully integrated world civilisation." We need to increase our energies in realising this goal and, working together as global citizens, ensure that we bring about a better world.

Central to all this is our role as broadcasters. There can be no doubt that we have a historic mission to facilitate the conversation among the people of the world, and to add our voice to the global conversation around the many issues that face us. To succeed, we also need to build and consolidate conversations between broadcasters – in particular, between those working in the poorer countries of the world.

The challenge that confronts us is largely about disparities. Those disparities apply not only to the economies of our countries, but also to the disparities in technology, access, skills and knowledge among the people of Africa and among the African broadcasting community. As the programme for this session so clearly states: "The broadcasters of the world must seek an open and frank cross-cultural dialogue between continents to remove misconceptions, to eliminate misrepresentation and to seek unity in diversity."

In South Africa, we have been hard at work for several years to build partnerships with our broadcasting compatriots across the continent. We do this because we are well aware of the need to develop a pan-African consciousness and because of the historical importance of initiatives such as the African Renaissance and the New Partnership for African Development (or NEPAD, as we call it). Our President was one of the founding fathers of this initiative, which is rooted in the notion that Africans themselves need to uplift that continent from the many ills of under-development.

We obviously need to spread this message of the emerging, positive sentiment both within the continent and towards it from those outside, and to challenge the negative perceptions that exist towards our continent. As the global community of broadcasters, we have a crucial role to play in tackling Afro-pessimism.

The negative perceptions that exist in the Northern states of the world emanate from and are reinforced by media coverage, as opposed to personal experience, and can only be changed by a different kind of media coverage – coverage that highlights the positive developments that are taking place across the continent. Such coverage will be further enhanced by contextualised, rather than stereotyped and sensational, reporting on African developments – negative or positive. Our SABC

Africa channel unashamedly intends to play the role of bringing the missing African perspective into the treatment of the African continent by foreign, mainly European and North American, networks.

Of course, that does not mean ignoring the challenges and difficulties we face. We cannot, and must not, turn a blind eye to these difficulties or the impact that they have on the lives of ordinary people. But, we would hope that these are balanced alongside coverage of the extraordinary progress that is being made in the political and economic democratisation of Africa.

In South Africa, we could not help but notice the dramatic increase in media coverage of Africa during last year's G8 Summit, when Africa and its Millennium Goals were the major item under discussion. All the major global networks went out of their way to focus on Africa and its challenges. What was striking about this coverage was the extent to which these broadcasters for once consciously searched for positive stories about development and transformation on our continent.

This is what we need and what we as the SABC promise to deliver in collaboration with other African broadcasters: Africans speaking about their own destiny, shaping their own solutions, addressing issues such as sustainable development, water and sanitation, HIV and AIDS, gender violence and job creation. All this in a positive way, in a way that avoids the over-done and tired format of babies staring blankly into space with swollen stomachs, in a way that avoids death and destruction, and in a way that shines a positive light on our continent and shows what some governments, but mostly ordinary people, are doing and can do to turn these situations around.

Sadly, once the G8 Summit had come and gone, it was back to conventional imaging of the continent, characterised by most of the world through the same old images of pirated oil pipelines in Nigeria and the Janjaweed sowing mayhem in Dafur. The positive stories from the Summit were rapidly buried in the dustbins of stereotype and cliché. It was back to business as usual on the part of non-African broadcast media.

One of the key challenges we face is around the fairly fundamental task of organising broadcasters into some form of collective force, so that we may take collective action. Indeed this, the third Asia Media Summit to which we have been invited, acts as a catalyst in achieving this objective.

My basic point of departure is that inter-continental dialogue cannot proceed without a semblance of intra-continental consensus. At the same time, intra-continental dialogue depends on regional cooperation. In our region, the Southern African Broadcasting Association (SABA) is nurturing the dialogue between broadcasters at the southern end of the continent. We have a website (saba.co.za), we have regular interaction and conferences, and we are gradually developing a common vision for

southern Africa's broadcasters. The urgency for these multiple dialogues to occur means that we cannot wait for one to conclude and another to begin. We need them all to take place simultaneously.

Significantly, in view of the theme of this session, this regional initiative is enabling us to think continentally: it is facilitating our understanding of how broadcasters can be a vehicle to build a pan-African consciousness. We need to prioritise building bridges between northern and southern Africa, between eastern and western Africa. We intend to use technology to share information, to educate, to entertain and to promote media dialogue within Africa and across the globe.

Therefore, we cannot stop with SABA. If we are to work effectively as a team of African broadcasters, we will have to step up our efforts to rebuild and re-focus the Union of National Radio and TV Organisations of Africa (URTNA). An effective and well functioning continental body would play a crucial role in increasing inter-and intra-continental media dialogue, and we must re-dedicate our efforts to make this happen.

Efforts are already underway to transform URTNA into an efficient, professionally-managed and technologically up-to-date broadcasting union that can offer the strength of service needed by the African continent. At the URTNA New Vision Committee meeting held in Algiers on 15 and 16 May this year, the meeting resolved to set up a working group to develop new statutes, establish effective structures and transform the Union to realise the vision described above and turn the organisation into the broadcasting arm of the African Union. In the future the organisation should enable us, for example, to fashion minimum standards, co-sign continental conventions and protocols and, perhaps, voluntarily subject ourselves to peer review mechanisms.

We are all well aware of the benefits of sharing resources and prioritising exchanges on all levels – whether it be around broad experiences, around technology, or around content. Together, we can strengthen true public service broadcasting in our region, the continent and the world.

There is no doubt that the current phase of technological development presents many opportunities for broadcasters when it comes to increasing dialogue. An example of this is the concept of "re-versioning," where programmes produced in one country can be adapted slightly to make them more accessible to people in other countries. This can be done through subtitling or other technological processes, resulting in both cost savings and the provision of a broader platform for African and inter-continental programming.

Content is obviously king, and we need to ensure that technology serves the needs of audiences directly – resulting in more African content produced by Africans, for Africans, with Africans. In addition, although we are obviously all members of the

global community and face the same challenges across the globe, there is much that broadcasters in the region can learn from each other.

I am confident that we have gathered during this encounter around a collective will to take advantage of the valuable opportunity this Summit represents. Not only is this an opportunity to further meaningful and real dialogue between broadcasters of the world, but it will become yet another milestone on the road to the true emancipation of Africa and the realisation of Africa's Millennium Development Goals.

Indeed, the Asia Media Summit also represents an opportunity to deepen dialogue and define the activities that are the life-blood of our global multilateral commitments - both in the arena of broadcast, specifically, and amongst the global family of nations in marching towards a "fully integrated world civilisation."

As South Africans, we took a special interest in the discussion yesterday about the Beijing Olympics. As you may know South Africa won the bid to host the FIFA Football World Cup in 2010. This was won on the basis that it will be an African World Cup. We will need to collaborate with your region and the ABU, in particular, to share ideas concerning our desire to ensure that this great sporting spectacle will be used to highlight what is right about Africa. We will hopefully also use the event to benefit all the peoples of our continent and also to dispel some of the negative stereotypes that I referred to earlier.

Finally, as an African broadcaster, we wish to endorse the call made yesterday by a member of the Tanzanian delegation for a unitary world body of broadcasters which will constitutionally bring continental and regional bodies under one roof, at least once every two years. Apart from the urgent tasks of bridging the gaps referred to earlier, such a body will tackle issues like the proliferation of technological standards which clearly works against under-developed parts of the world. We could also deal with the common issue of reaching the national diaspora spread across our respective territories. Given the common issues brought about by socio-economic globalisation and technological convergence is now not the time to form such a global body for broadcasters?

Dali Mpofu is an advocate and Group CEO of the South African Broadcasting Corporation

Inter-Continental Media Dialogue

William Beaubien Chambers

"Just as independence has been the motto of states and individuals since 1750, so the motto of the coming generations should be interdependence. And just as no state can now survive by its own unaided power, so no democracy can long endure without recognising and encouraging the interdependence of the racial and religious groups composing it."

Will Durant
commenting on the Declaration of INTERdependence, 1945

The era of globalisation has made this last thought true for the world as a whole. The world can no longer endure without recognising and encouraging the interdependence of the racial and religious groups composing it. Knowing and understanding one another are prerequisites of interdependence. Modern communications technology equips us to know and to understand one another much better than we do. It is part of a public broadcaster's mandate, and maybe the responsibility of journalism more generally, to ensure that we use these new tools to promote that understanding.

When Canadians want to know what happened today in the world they might as often turn to CNN -- but when they want to understand what happened in the world, they are more likely to turn to CBC. As a brief review of the take of Fox News and Al Jazeera on many a story will show, perspective is everything. What a world event means to a Canadian is not the same as what it might mean to an Italian or a Malaysian.

My boss, Robert Rabinovitch, whom I represent here today, is an economist. He is fond of saying that there is no template for a public broadcaster because what is most important is that it be adapted as closely as possible to respond to the specific market failure of the economic and cultural systems it serves. It therefore differs from country to country -- and must be redesigned from time to time to recognise changes that occur in the broadcast environment.

More people immigrated to Canada in the 1990s than in any previous decade of the 20th Century. And most of those immigrants came from Asia – almost 60 per cent. The people of Canada speak more than one hundred languages: English and French, of course, but Chinese is now in third place. Italian and German are next but in the top fifteen we also find Punjabi, Tagalog and Vietnamese.

Many countries assimilate their immigrants into the host culture as quickly and completely as possible. In Canada we seem to have developed a less prescriptive way of integrating new arrivals. There is no one way to be Canadian. Modern Canadian identity is a mix of individualism and mutual responsibility in which interdependence is a self-evident reality. There has emerged a younger generation of Canadians, not only of recent immigrants, but also of old stock, that sees difference as richness and the international just as an extension of the domestic, if a little more turbulent.

In the Canadian environment, an increased focus in our programming on understanding the world is more than a duty; it is a requirement of relevance. With our population mix, we are forced not only to cover many foreign events, but also to cover them with some sophistication. Our audience has more than a superficial knowledge of the rest of the world.

We have 13 international news bureaus. We also broadcast, in addition to English and French, in nine international languages and eight Canadian aboriginal languages. We recently adopted a concerted international strategy with the following five thrusts:

- Highlight the importance of public broadcasting in affirming cultural diversity
- Distribute our programming to a wider audience and acquire top international productions
- Promote journalistic excellence
- Contribute to development of the Francophonie
- Ensure technology expertise transfer

The strategy includes new initiatives such as the creation of the Canadian Institute for Training in Public Broadcasting. The Institute is committed to strengthening freedom of the press around the world by initiating, organising and participating in international training projects.

The strategy also incorporates some long-standing services. For 60 years Radio-Canada International has broadcast around the world. Today its mandate is to "produce and broadcast programmes specifically designed to better acquaint foreign audiences with Canada, its values, and its social, economic and cultural life."

But the most important international role the CBC has is in bringing understanding of the world home to Canada. The challenge is to find the right balance between the following:

- on the one hand, the importance that international reporting be based on an objective and sophisticated knowledge of the subject at hand, even if it is half a world away
- on the other hand, the need for reporting to be in tune with the Canadian reality – that it be more than a factual account of events that happen a great distance

away; in effect that it bring out the relevance of those facts to the lives of Canadians – that it make international news local.

How many resources can we afford to post abroad and how often to rotate them? When is a full bureau the answer and when will parachute journalism – more flexible but less nuanced -- serve better the needs of our audiences.

These are issues that we are wrestling with. But the goal is clear: Recognising the interdependence of the world and fulfilling Canadians' thirst to understand it and participate in it fully.

William Beaubien Chambers is Vice-President, Communications, CBC/Radio-Canada

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David Lewis

I am pleased to be speaking in a session whose description in the programme has been touched by poetry: "Human beings are parts of a body, created from the same essence. When one part is hurt and in pain, the other parts remain restless ..." Here we are far from the relatively dry themes of digital television and Internet technology, media ownership and subliminal propaganda that have been addressed in some earlier sessions. Instead we are told, "Media are the nerves that communicate pain and pleasure from one part of the world to the other."

None would deny that the world can benefit from dialogue – "frank cross-cultural dialogue," as our programme has it -- to remove misconceptions and eliminate misrepresentations. As Winston Churchill once said, "Better jaw-jaw than war-war."

I am sure we would all hope that there is not much danger of war or physical violence between the media of different continents. At the same time, the high passions roused by the controversy over the Danish cartoons might give pause for thought. A difficult meeting I attended in Brussels on that matter earlier this year was followed by an avalanche of disagreement by e-mail. So if we could not even agree within Europe on that affair, intercontinental agreement would be far beyond our reach.

Inter-continental media dialogue, however, is exactly what the Asia Media Summit has been about. The name might suggest that it is a meeting of media leaders from Asia alone. In fact, as we have seen from the list of speakers and participants – and indeed from this panel, this is rather a summit in Asia of global media leaders.

In the very first session, we heard from my own boss – Jean Réveillon, Secretary General of the European Broadcasting Union, the professional association of 74 national broadcasters from 54 countries in and around Europe. (And those figures do not include the EBU's 44 associate members from elsewhere in the world.)

Elsewhere on the agenda we learned about preparations for the 5th World Summit on Media for Children, of an international seminar on public interest and broadcast development, of a North American-Asia Media Dialogue, and of the Asia-Pacific and Europe Media Dialogue that will take place in Paris in September. And so on.

Much of this might be dismissed as just more jaw-jaw: better than war-war, but does it really lead to anything? Yet all this talk does more than help us to get to know

one another and remove misconceptions and prejudices. It is also a transfer of knowledge and a sharing of experience that can lead to very useful and concrete results - in skills, technology and regulation and, of course, in the area of content, which is the main *raison d'être* of all broadcasters: the *raison d'être,* at least, of all broadcasters whose owners do not treat them simply as vehicles to sell eyeballs or earholes to advertisers.

Content was at the core of Session 3 – Local content for global audiences – and of Session 7 yesterday afternoon, which was devoted to coverage of the Beijing Olympic Games. Sport is the perfect of example of content through which media communicate pain and pleasure across the world, of content which brings the countries of Planet Earth together for competitions of fierce but essentially friendly rivalry, and of unity in diversity (to quote again the introduction to this session).

Even people who are not huge sports fans cannot remain unaware of the powerful emotions felt and transmitted across the globe as brave individuals challenge themselves and others in the Olympic competitions – sometimes fulfilling a lifetime's ambition; more often, inevitably, being disappointed.

And then there is football. The late soccer club manager, Bill Shankly, said that football was "not a matter of life or death: it is much more important than that." Of course, there are people who are not avid football fans, but even they will feel the high emotions of the World Cup soccer competition in Germany in June-July. Intense pleasure and pain, joy and frustration, will be broadcast across the world to billions of viewers of every nationality, colour and religion: sport and television bringing the world together (with the help of the EBU's global Eurovision network of satellite and fibre, if you will pardon the plug).

There are, of course, other forms of programming, other kinds of content, that can bring the world together: shocking pictures of disasters, natural or man-made, and the horrors of war, earthquake, famine or terrorist attacks. There are certain blockbuster movies, or cartoon films, which speak a universal language and can touch a global audience. There are royal weddings and funerals. And there is music. (Here again, the EBU is active, distributing and sharing through "Euroradio" many thousands of concerts of different styles not only between countries in Europe and north Africa, but also to broadcasters (and via them to their listeners) in north America and Asia.)

This brings me to the question of intercontinental cooperation in which the EBU is involved. The foundation of this lies in our strong links with our sister broadcasting unions: the Arab States Broadcasting Union (ASBU), based in Tunis; the Caribbean Broadcasting Union (CBU, based in Barbados); the International Association of Broadcasting (IAB), based in Montevideo; the North American Broadcasters' Association (NABA), based in Toronto, the Organizacion de Telecomunicaciones Iberoamiercanas (OTI), Mexico; the Union des Radiodiffusions et Télévisions

Nationales d'Afrique (URTNA), in Dakar. And lastly, and most importantly, the Asia-Pacific Broadcasting Union (ABU), based here in Kuala Lumpur.

The work of the eight broadcasting unions is coordinated through the World Broadcasting Unions (WBU), which was established in 1992 to seek global solutions on issues of key importance to its member unions. Based in Toronto, where its secretariat is operated by NABA, the WBU works on several levels.

First of all, the Secretary Generals meet in person once a year on the fringes of the EBU's General Assembly. Their next meeting will take place in Cascais, in Portugal, in early July. They also hold phone conferences several times a year.

In addition, the WBU also has three working committees:

- The International Satellite Operations Group (ISOG), which meets twice a year as a global forum for members of the WBU. ISOG aims to exchange information and resolve common operational problems associated with transmission of video and audio from sites of news, sports, special events and entertainment.
- The Technical Committee, which is responsible for addressing technical issues affecting broadcasters in all regions of the world. The "WBU-TC," as it is called, coordinates collective action to promote common technical and operational standards or interoperability, as the second best option. WBU-TC also prepares guidelines for frequency planning. Additionally, it organises workshops and seminars designed to equalise expertise by sharing best practices among broadcasters in different parts of the world.
- The WBU Sports Committee through which, for example, the unions negotiate together on financial and logistical issues linked to major sporting events, such as the Olympics. But we have heard enough about sport already.

While there is no formal WBU Legal Committee, lawyers representing the different unions work together regularly -- for example on important copyright issues at WIPO, the World Intellectual Property Organisation in Geneva.

Let me conclude by mentioning briefly a few specific areas of concrete intercontinental collaboration between the unions of the WBU.

- In 2003 in Geneva, and in 2005 in Tunis, the eight sister unions took the leading role in organising a World Electronic Media Forum (WEMF) as a major side-event to the two phases of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS). These meetings stressed the key role of broadcasters in the information society – a role almost totally neglected by the Summit itself, which concentrated on the infrastructure of the Internet rather than on the essential reason why it is important: its ability to make information of all kinds, including the programmes of broadcasters, widely available as never before.

The two WEMFs endorsed an important Broadcasters' Declaration and, in 2005, handed over to United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan a 10-point platform which, among other things:

- called on the United Nations Security Council to adopt a resolution on the safety of journalists (who are dying in record numbers in pursuit of their stories)
- appealed for urgent action to preserve the world's audiovisual heritage, which is rotting away in archive vaults around the world
- requested recognition of broadcasters as full participants in the Internet Governance Forum, which will hold its first full meeting in Athens this autumn.

On the safety of journalists, although our efforts have been stalled in the Security Council, the issue was taken up earlier this year by the UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Freedom of Expression. In a lengthy report on the subject, he called -- among other things -- for international guidelines and rules which could be drafted with the Commission on Human Rights and subsequently adopted by the General Assembly.

On the archives question, I can report good progress. A committee including the unions, UNESCO and the International Federation of Television Archives has been set up, and the results of a global survey on the state of audiovisual archives worldwide will be considered by the WBU Secretaries General in July with a view to launching a series of concrete actions.

Finally, on the participation by broadcasters in the Internet Governance Forum, we were delighted to learn only two weeks ago that – thanks to intervention from the highest level in New York – the WBU will have a seat at the table.

This in itself is a great achievement, as it marks the first time that any broadcaster has been involved in any international body dealing with the Internet and/or the information society. To the annoyance of the telecommunications and information technology communities, no doubt, we will be there to raise awkward questions relating to intellectual property, rights management, and the right of access to news.

In brief, broadcasting unions can achieve much through their own intercontinental media dialogue and collaboration. And we can achieve much more.

David Lewis is Assistant Secretary General, Head of Governance, European Broadcasting Union

Inter-Continental Media Dialogue

Chandra Muzaffar

More than perhaps at any other time in history the media today have the role and the responsibility of fostering understanding, empathy and unity within the human family. Universal human solidarity transcending all religious, national, ethnic, cultural, class and gender barriers is no longer an esoteric ideal. Its realisation is vital to our very survival as a species.

Almost all the major crises that have confronted us in the last few years – environmental, health-related, economic, political, security-related -- have underscored the irrefutable truth: that humankind is one. Indeed, some of these crises tell us that what we should strive to achieve is more than mere human solidarity. We should endeavour to be truly cognizant of the inter-connectedness of all living things: of the intimate relationship between human beings, the animal kingdom and our physical environment. This is one of the profound, perennial truths embodied in all our religious philosophies.

Are the media, specifically the mainstream media, helping to develop this understanding of unity and inter-connectedness? Radio and television reports of natural disasters, in particular, in recent times have undoubtedly elevated awareness of, and empathy for, the suffering of 'the other,' of people who are separated from us by thousands of kilometers and yet linked to us through our common humanity. For instance, the tsunami tragedy of December 2004, which killed tens of thousands of people living on the rim of the Indian Ocean, evoked an outpouring of compassion from men, women and children all over the world, expressed partly through their mammoth donations to bereaved families and victims which, in some cases, even exceeded the contributions of governments.

Radio and television coverage of wars and violent conflicts also serve to raise public consciousness of the tragedies that burden people living in faraway places. Scenes of hunger and starvation from some corner of some continent also tend to elicit sympathy from people in distant lands. Material assistance for victims of such catastrophes from across the oceans is now commonplace.

But human sympathy arising from both natural and man-made calamities lasts only for a while. The routine of living takes over very quickly. We forget. However bloody a war and however devastating the impact of starvation, even the media cease to focus upon the episode at hand after some time. The deaths among Occupation

forces in Iraq, for instance, have now become mere media statistics. Of course, Iraqi deaths do not even figure in the statistical count!

While the mainstream media generates transient sympathies and even some superficial understanding of certain tragic situations, they fall short of the mark in a fundamental sense. They seldom explore the root causes of conflicts, especially if they are related to major political and economic structures of power. As a result, they fail to create the sort of awareness in the public mind that may persuade at least a small segment of society to act on behalf of justice.

As a case in point, if those who have no background knowledge of the Israel-Palestine conflict relied solely upon CNN or the BBC to inform and educate them, the impression they would get is that two peoples who are equally right or equally wrong in their stance (depending upon the circumstances) are embroiled in an unending struggle for control over disputed land. The audience will have no inkling that the conflict is essentially about the dispossession of the Palestinian people, who are the tragic victims of the imposition of a state upon their territory brought about by a combination of European guilt stemming from the annihilation of Jews in Europe, British colonialism, Western imperial power and, most of all, Zionist ruthlessness.

Because the mainstream media do not address root causes or question the structures of global power, they are not able to create genuine understanding and empathy among peoples. The dispossessed and the oppressed, as well as those who champion their causes, feel alienated from media that marginalise or ignore their pleas for justice. By employing subtle and sophisticated means to persuade the victims of injustice to accept their subjugation and subordination, the mainstream media are only widening the chasm that separates the powerful from the powerless. They have thus become a source of disunity and division rather than a force for unity and harmony. The mainstream media are, in that sense, a barrier, not a bridge, between people.

It is not difficult to understand why the mainstream media have failed to facilitate unity within the human family. They are so much a part of the global political and economic power structures. Since they are beneficiaries of the system, they have no qualms about perpetuating the existing asymmetries of power.

It is, of course, true that once in a while a mainstream radio or television channel may carry a critical commentary on the system. Those who own and operate these channels know that an infrequent concession to dissent does not affect the overall thrust of their media. Besides, it helps to enhance their credibility since these media outfits often portray themselves as beacons of free speech and democracy. Nonetheless, dissident voices on mainstream radio or television should be welcomed -- in the name of the larger quest for genuine unity and solidarity within the human family.

However, at the end of the day, one must realise that one cannot trust the mainstream media to promote the kind of unity that will endure, which is founded upon justice and fairness. Sections of the alternative media offer much greater promise. Already, a number of such radio stations, especially in the West, are addressing salient issues in the global power structure. They are the harbingers of that global transformation which will lead eventually to the realisation of the unity and interconnectedness of the human family -- and of the universes.

Chandra Muzaffar is the President of the International Movement for a Just World (JUST), Malaysia

ASIA MEDIA SUMMIT 2006

Mediating Dialogue between Continents and Cultures

The third Asia Media Summit established itself as a global summit of media professionals in Asia. 420 participants - Broadcasters, stakeholders, policy makers, media activists, scholars and NGOS – from 60 countries in Asia Pacific, Africa, Arab world, Europe and North America came together to discuss issues of common concerns. As powerful tools for social transformation, media professionals reflected on the means to integrate different societies into the global village and to celebrate the differences. Will the new media technologies shrink the world further and improve interactions between societies with widely differing economic and political interests? What is the role of media in tomorrow's world?

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