



U.S. AGENCY FOR
GLOBAL MEDIA

UNITED STATES
BROADCASTING
BOARD OF
GOVERNORS

330 Independence Avenue SW | Washington, DC 20237 | usagm.gov

November 7, 2018

Mr. George Soros
Founder and Chairman
Open Society Foundations
224 West 57th Street
New York, NY 10019

Dear Mr. Soros:

I am writing to express my personal apologies for the report produced by the U.S. Agency for Global Media (USAGM), Office of Cuba Broadcasting (OCB), in May 2018 that made several false and negative assertions about you. It was based on extremely poor and unprofessional journalism, and it was utterly offensive in its anti-Semitism and clear bias. I take this breach in our fundamental obligation to provide accurate, balanced, and objective reporting very seriously.

In particular, I want to express my personal and heartfelt apologies for the aspersions cast against you amidst the virulent anti-Semitism expressed in the report. I deeply regret that a USAGM network produced something that feeds into age-old tropes against the Jewish community, at a moment when anti-Semitism is growing at home and around the world. I have much admiration for your personal history, long career, philanthropy, and activism on behalf of the voiceless. As a former journalist, I am particularly enamored of your work supporting free media.

On behalf of USAGM, I am deeply grateful for the Open Society Foundations' willingness to house and preserve an extensive collection from Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's (RFE/RL) Research Institute at the Open Society Archive in Budapest, Hungary. Your unflinching support for freedom of expression and for RFE/RL's mission and legacy, makes this tremendous breach in journalistic professionalism all the more wrenching for me.

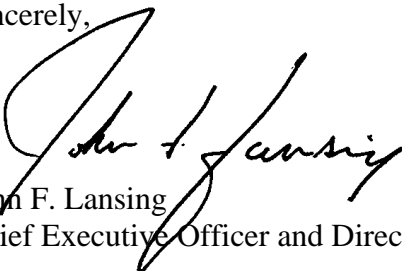
Upon learning about the report, I immediately took a number of steps to address the situation. I ordered Tomás P. Regalado, OCB Director, to remove the offensive story from the TV Martí website and social media. I placed the journalists involved on administrative leave pending a full investigation to determine appropriate disciplinary action (and identify any other individuals who may have been responsible for the conception, production, and broadcasting of the piece). I issued a public statement expressing my personal and professional outrage regarding the report in question. I instructed Director Regalado to require comprehensive ethics and standards refresher training for all OCB journalists, and to hire a full time "standards and practices" editor

to oversee all outgoing content with strict adherence to the highest professional standards of journalism. And finally, I ordered an immediate audit of all OCB content online to identify any unprofessional reporting, as well as a more thorough third-party audit of all content produced at OCB across all platforms during the past year to identify any patterns of unethical reporting.

As the CEO of the five U.S. media networks funded by taxpayer dollars—Voice of America, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, Radio Free Asia, and the Middle East Broadcasting Networks, as well as OCB—I will work diligently to ensure that each abides by the highest standards of unbiased journalism. I am committed to repairing our relationship with you and with the Open Society Foundations, and I am open to any and all further communications.

Once again, please accept my deepest apologies and regrets.

Sincerely,



John F. Lansing
Chief Executive Officer and Director