



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. Patrick Gaspard
Open Society Foundations
224 West 57th Street
New York, NY 10019

Dear Mr. Gaspard:

I am writing to express my personal apologies and regrets for the report produced and aired in May 2018 by the Office of Cuba Broadcasting (OCB), which the U.S. Agency for Global Media (USAGM) oversees and funds, and to respond to your letter date October 29, 2018.

I agree with your assessment that the report in question was based on extremely poor and unprofessional journalism, and was utterly offensive in its anti-Semitism and its clear bias. I take this breach in the USAGM networks' fundamental obligation to provide accurate, balanced and objective reporting very seriously, and have also shared these feelings directly in a letter to Mr. Soros. Like you, I do not find an article that uses Judicial Watch as its sole source to be remotely credible. Because of weak sourcing for the report, it simply should never have been produced in the first place.

As you noted, it is all the more impactful, and regrettable, that news of the OCB report which was produced last May, broke within days of the terrible attack on the Tree of Life synagogue in Pittsburgh, the pipe bomb delivered to Mr. Soros, the doctored anti-Semitic poster of Connecticut state Representative Matthew Lesser, and other blatantly anti-Semitic attacks on candidates and individuals.

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 immediately 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, editing, 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

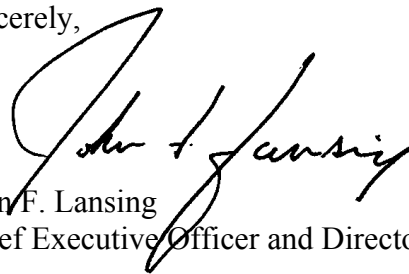
OCB content online to identify any unprofessional reporting, as well as a more thorough third-party audit of all content produced at OCB during the past year across all platforms to identify any patterns of unethical reporting.

In your letter, you refuted many of the false descriptions of the Open Society Foundations. I appreciate the time you took to set the record straight with verifiable facts. I also appreciate the information you included concerning the geographical and topical scope of OSF's work. While I was already well aware of the extensive and critical work that OSF does on behalf of journalism, independent media, and journalist safety, it was an important reminder.

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 OSF, Mr. Soros, and others in your community, and I would welcome the opportunity to meet with you at any time.

Once again, please accept my deepest apologies and regrets.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John F. Lansing". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "John" being particularly prominent.

John F. Lansing
Chief Executive Officer and Director