

For Release: April 12, 2025

Fighting to Survive, US-Funded MBN Cuts Staff Drastically

Starved of funds by US Agency for Global Media network scales back operations – and vows to continue

(Springfield, Va.)--Dr. Jeffrey Gedmin, president and CEO of Middle East Broadcasting Networks, Inc. (MBN), announced today that the US-sponsored Arabic-language media organization has been forced to reduce staff drastically, cutting back its Alhurra television output and digital work. MBN will continue to operate with a sharply reduced number of employees.

“We have been left no choice but to make these cuts,” Gedmin said. “Congress approved our funding on March 14th. That funding was abruptly and unlawfully cut off the next day by the so-called Department of Government Efficiency and by Kari Lake, special adviser to the agency that oversees us.”

Gedmin continued: “As Ms. Lake declines to meet or speak with us, we’re left to conclude that she intends to starve us of the money we need to pay our hard-working staff. We depend on Congress and courts to rescue MBN’s future.”

MBN was established in 2003. The company’s reporting and programs reach more than 30 million people each week across 22 countries in the Middle East and North Africa.

“MBN is a treasure trove of talent and experience and a national security asset,” said interim board chair and former Ambassador Ryan Crocker. “The path we’ve been forced onto is senseless.”

“Media in the Middle East thrive on a diet of anti-Americanism,” Gedmin said. “It makes no sense to kill MBN as a sensible alternative and to open the field to American adversaries and Islamic extremists.

About Middle East Broadcasting Networks, Inc. (MBN)

MBN is a multimedia organization whose mission is to provide audiences with Arabic-language news about the United States, important coverage of human rights and governance issues in the Middle East and North Africa, and an essential alternative to the disinformation served up by China, Russia, and Iran. MBN seeks to inform, engage, and connect with the region's people to support universal freedoms.

MBN is a non-profit corporate media outlet financed by the U.S. government through a grant from USAGM, an independent federal agency. The USAGM is a firewall to protect broadcasters' professional independence and integrity.

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