

# RFE/RL Review

The Best of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty Reporting



June 1-30, 2007

## **RADIO FREE AFGHANISTAN ON SCENE AS NATO STRIKES KILL 25 CIVILIANS...**

Radio Free Afghanistan correspondent Salih Mohamad Salih reported live from the southern province of Helmand on June 21, after NATO air strikes killed 25 Afghan civilians. Some 20 militants were also killed. Salih told listeners that the strikes had targeted a group of homes in Gereshk district, where Taliban fighters were firing on foreign and Afghan forces. Radio Free Afghanistan broadcast the reaction of NATO spokeswoman Maria Carl, who said, "We take absolutely every measure possible to try to minimize the risk to civilian casualties in our operations and that is an important component of our operations and our planning."

## **...COVERS RELEASE OF ANNUAL UN WORLD DRUG REPORT**

Radio Free Afghanistan organized a roundtable on June 26 to discuss the release that day of the annual United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime World Drug Report. Roundtable guests included Afghan Minister of Counternarcotics Habibullah Qadiri, parliamentary Commission for Counternarcotics member Najibullah Qadiri and two representatives of the Afghan opposition group the United Front, Amin Wakat and Burulah Mansori. During the two hour roundtable, the guests stressed that while reform is needed of the government's approach to tackling the narcotics issue, the international community also holds a stake in the battle and should do more to curb demand for drugs in their countries. The UN report found that more than 90 percent of opium, the main ingredient in heroin, now comes from Afghanistan; early indications point to a further rise in poppy production in 2007.

*\*\* The Director of RFE/RL's Radio Free Afghanistan, Akbar Ayazi, may be reached by email at <ayazia@rferl.org>. Radio Free Afghanistan's website is located at <http://www.azadiradio.org/>; English-language news about events in Afghanistan can be found at <http://www.rferl.org/featuresarchive/country/afghanistan.html>*

## **GEORGIAN PRIME MINISTER VISITS RFE/RL, SEES GEORGIA IN NATO BY 2009**

At a press conference at RFE/RL's Prague headquarters on June 11, Prime Minister Zurab Noghaideli of Georgia said that he expects his country to become a member of the NATO alliance by 2009. In his wide-ranging remarks, Noghaideli also spoke about his country's success in combating corruption and instituting economic reform that is boosting the economy into double-digit growth. Noghaideli said his government expects Georgia's economy this year to grow 12 percent compared to 2006. "We have overcome the Russian embargo that meant we lost 70 percent of our export market,"

(more)

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he said, adding that a ban on selling Georgian wines in Russia, imposed in March 2006, is still in place. Noghaideli dismissed questions drawing comparisons between Georgia's breakaway regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia, on one hand, and Kosovo, an independence-seeking Serbian province populated mostly by ethnic Albanians, on the other. "The future of Abkhazia can only be decided by the whole prewar population of Abkhazia, not only by those who have managed to ethnically cleanse the region and are now claiming independence." Noghaideli said, "I strongly believe that there is no possibility, no way, to draw these parallels [between Kosovo and Abkhazia and South Ossetia] and to repeat this precedent"

(<http://www.tavisupleba.org/special/politics/2007/06/20070611160212.asp>; an article in English can be found at <http://www.rferl.org/featuresarticle/2007/6/007903DC-405E-43F6-A02D-5AE7F7E485D7.html>, while a transcript of Noghaideli's interview with RFE/RL's Central Newsroom can be found at <http://www.rferl.org/featuresarticle/2007/6/A2CF56B4-B1B5-4EE8-8357-BE1D994A2344.html>; <http://www.rferl.org/releases/2007/06/474-110607.asp>)

### ***GEORGIAN SERVICE INTERVIEWS EU SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE FOR THE SOUTH CAUCASUS...***

The European Union's special envoy to the South Caucasus, Peter Semneby was interviewed on June 11 by representatives of RFE/RL's Georgian Service and two other media organizations following his visit to Abkhazia and meeting with EU ambassadors to Georgia. During the interview, Semneby stressed that the EU supports Georgia's territorial integrity and does not see the resolution on Kosovo as a precedent in any way: "The [Kosovo] case is unique, because of a number of factors which are also well known. And in addition to that one could also add that each conflict situation is a unique one. Each one is based on its own characteristics, beginning with the very roots of the different conflicts, therefore they will require different approaches"

(<http://www.tavisupleba.org/special/politics/2007/06/20070614112454.asp>).

### ***...GEORGIA'S PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE TO THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE...***

On June 14, RFE/RL's Georgian Service interviewed Georgia's chief diplomat at the Council of Europe, Zurab Chiaberashvili, who is the driving force behind Georgia's lawsuit against Moscow at the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg. The suit addresses the fall 2006 mass deportation of ethnic Georgians from Russia, a measure widely seen as retaliation for the arrest of four Russian officers in Tbilisi on spying charges (<http://www.tavisupleba.org/programs/studio10/default.asp>; an English transcript of Chiaberashvili's interview with RFE/RL's Central Newsroom is at [http://www.rferl.org/features/features\\_Article.aspx?m=06&y=2007&id=941F0270-A293-4CA1-A470-AA6FCB8EAC23](http://www.rferl.org/features/features_Article.aspx?m=06&y=2007&id=941F0270-A293-4CA1-A470-AA6FCB8EAC23)).

### ***...REPORTS ON DEPLOYMENT OF ADDITIONAL GEORGIAN TROOPS TO IRAQ***

On May 30, Georgian Service interviewed Defense Minister David Kezerashvili in Tbilisi. Kezerashvili said additional Georgian troops will be sent to Iraq in June to be deployed in Wasit Governorate to patrol the city of Al-Kut

(<http://www.tavisupleba.org/special/military/2007/05/20070531115454.asp>; <http://www.rferl.org/featuresarticle/2007/5/E2717EAC-B5AD-4B79-993B-66ECF853858C.html>).

*\*\* The Director of RFE/RL's Georgian Service, David Kakabadze, may be reached by email at <kakabadzed@rferl.org>. The Georgian Service's website is at <http://www.tavisupleba.org/>; English-language news about events in Georgia can be found at <http://www.rferl.org/featuresarchive/country/georgia.html>*

### **UZBEK SERVICE INTERVIEWS MOTHER OF ACCUSED HIZB UT-TAHRIR MEMBER**

RFE/RL's Uzbek Service aired an interview on June 4 with Nasiba Orunova, the mother of an accused member of the Islamist organization Hizb ut-Tahrir. Orunova told RFE/RL she spent a night at the prison where her son is being held, where she claimed jailers were torturing prisoners, including her son, throughout the night. Orunova said she heard her son and other people screaming and asking for mercy. Her son has been sentenced to six years in prison on charges of involvement in religious activities; Orunova claimed to RFE/RL that the criminal case had been fabricated. Nasiba Orunova went to the prison the day when her son's jail term was scheduled to end, but was told that it had been extended when she got to the prison. Orunova told RFE/RL she demanded her son's release and threatened to commit suicide if her plea was rejected (<http://www.ozodlik.org/domesticreports/domestic/uz/2007/06/B3196A53-B3D6-4D1E-BD28-88E4829AA76B.asp>).

*\*\* The Director of RFE/RL's Uzbek Service, Sojida Djakhfarova, may be reached by email at <djakhfarovas@rferl.org>. The Uzbek Service's website is at <http://www.ozodlik.org/>; English-language news about events in Uzbekistan can be found at <http://www.rferl.org/featuresarchive/country/uzbekistan.html>*

### **KYRGYZ SERVICE COVERS HEARING ON 2002 AKSY SHOOTING...**

On June 28, the Kyrgyz Supreme Court Collegium agreed to prosecutors' request to reopen the investigation of the March 17-18, 2002 bloodshed in the southern Kyrgyzstan town of Aksy, where local police shot five people dead during an anti-government demonstration (a sixth died in hospital of injuries sustained during the incident). RFE/RL's Kyrgyz Service aired interviews with several former and current politicians, human rights activists, lawmakers, victims and relatives who were involved in the incident. A number of these guests also participated in the Kyrgyz Service's weekly television program "Inconvenient Questions" on June 27 (<http://www.azattyk.org/rubrics/politics/ky/2007/06/09b497fb-d778-40ac-89cc-fc3191a99455.asp>; <http://www.azattyk.org/rubrics/politics/ky/2007/06/31A84A1C-80D5-447C-A55E-567783D4EF63.asp>; <http://www.azattyk.org/rubrics/politics/ky/2007/06/30D2F8AD-DBB3-42A9-962B-3613871D14D5.asp>; [http://www.azattyk.org/programs/round\\_table/ky/](http://www.azattyk.org/programs/round_table/ky/); <http://www.azattyk.org/rubrics/politics/ky/2007/06/8D89542E-8618-47B3-BB5D-906416E410E0.asp>; an article in English can be found at <http://www.rferl.org/featuresarticle/2007/6/57DFE9E3-D554-44F9-A2A1-2AB139EE2192.html>).

### **...INTERVIEWS U.S. AMBASSADOR YOVANOVICH**

On June 21, the Kyrgyz Service broadcast an exclusive interview with U.S. Ambassador to Kyrgyzstan Marie Yovanovich on the subject of Kyrgyz-American relations. In the interview, conducted in the southern Kyrgyzstan city of Batken, Amb. Yovanovich stressed that international terrorism is a common threat for both countries

and mentioned her recent visit to Afghanistan, where President Hamid Karzai praised Kyrgyzstan's contribution to the fight against terrorism.

(<http://www.azattyk.org/rubrics/politics/ky/2007/06/B524990B-75AB-4A58-A767-AFEE507B1622.asp>).

*\*\* The Director of RFE/RL's Kyrgyz Service, Tyntchtykbek Tchoroev, may be reached by email at <tchoroevt@rferl.org>. The Kyrgyz Service's website is at <http://www.azattyk.org/>; English-language news about events in Kyrgyzstan can be found at <http://www.rferl.org/featuresarchive/country/kyrgyzstan.html>*

### **KAZAKH SERVICE COVERS ARREST OF PRESIDENT'S KIN**

RFE/RL's Kazakh Service devoted extensive coverage in early June to the arrest in Austria of Rakhmat Aliiev, the former son-in-law of President Nursultan Nazarbayev. Aliiev was Kazakhstan's Ambassador to Austria and is currently awaiting extradition back to Kazakhstan. He has been charged with money laundering in Austria, and with abduction and assault in Kazakhstan. The Kazakh Service highlighted in its coverage the way in which this case highlights several endemic problems being faced at this time by President Nursultan Nazarbayev and his regime. The Kazakh Service has consistently scooped its competitors with breaking details of the scandal (<http://www.rferl.org/featuresarticle/2007/6/D76D68E8-E98A-46E9-8B78-FF965662EC39.html>);

<http://www.azattyq.org/rubrics/domestic/ka/2007/06/CBD3C95B-F6BD-420D-9B65-22AD8114CEAD.asp>;

<http://www.azattyq.org/rubrics/domestic/ka/2007/06/B576DC31-BBB6-40DE-ADD6-6CF23A6B7D43.asp>; <http://www.azattyq.org/rubrics/domestic/ka/2007/06/86090AF5-68BE-4E65-933E-A90CDFDB1323.asp>;

<http://www.azattyq.org/rubrics/domestic/ka/2007/06/386E49CB-78A6-4B28-8628-D46126BB6E4A.asp>; <http://www.azattyq.org/rubrics/domestic/ka/2007/06/02067C90-D25A-4ECA-83CA-82BA2432FE9D.asp>;

<http://www.azattyq.org/rubrics/domestic/ka/2007/06/46A1FBFD-B79C-4392-94DB-8B54E0C7D280.asp>; <http://www.azattyq.org/rubrics/domestic/ka/2007/06/2A386956-7F44-4FF8-B0D1-A2DC48D0D22D.asp>;

<http://www.azattyq.org/rubrics/domestic/ka/2007/06/ADF5BFE3-541E-428B-B700-F90F9A1B5FF9.asp>; <http://www.azattyq.org/rubrics/domestic/ka/2007/06/45D14AC9-8969-4636-9CAF-3034F8D9A870.asp>;

an article in English can be found at <http://www.rferl.org/featuresarticle/2007/6/D76D68E8-E98A-46E9-8B78-FF965662EC39.html>).

### **...COVERS TRIAL OF PHYSICIANS JAILED FOR INFECTING CHILDREN WITH HIV**

The Kazakh Service also provided comprehensive coverage of the sentencing, in late June, of 17 physicians to up to eight years in prison for infecting dozens of children with HIV in three children's hospitals located in and around the southern Kazakhstan city of Shymkent. A total of 21 medical officials were found guilty in the case; four were given suspended sentences. To date, 118 children have been diagnosed with HIV and ten have died of the disease

(<http://www.azattyq.org/rubrics/domestic/ka/2007/06/3BFF779D-507B-4441-96BB-B4A3F20F0374.asp>; <http://www.azattyq.org/rubrics/domestic/ka/2007/06/ACD22852-39D8-4594-9C5F-AC52E07E5CB4.asp>;

<http://www.azattyq.org/rubrics/domestic/ka/2007/06/066A4297-4D82-4D4A-80E8->

[B2BDFC241D3D.asp](http://www.rferl.org/featuresarticle/2007/6/93EAE14F-24BD-4CAE-A9D9-CDA75DD66F5C.html); an article in English can be found at <http://www.rferl.org/featuresarticle/2007/6/93EAE14F-24BD-4CAE-A9D9-CDA75DD66F5C.html>).

*\*\* The Director of RFE/RL's Kazakh Service, Merhat Sharipzhan, may be reached by email at <sharipzhanm@rferl.org>. The Kazakh Service's website is at <http://www.azattyq.org/>; English-language news about events in Kazakhstan can be found at <http://www.rferl.org/featuresarchive/country/kazakhstan.html>*

### **COUNCIL OF EUROPE SECRETARY GENERAL TALKS TO RUSSIAN SERVICE ABOUT SECRET TERROR PRISONS...**

In an exclusive interview with RFE/RL's Russian Service, Council of Europe Secretary General Terry Davis discussed the Marty Reports -- the findings of Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly Rapporteur Dick Marty concerning "Alleged secret detentions and unlawful inter-state transfers involving Council of Europe member states." The interview, conducted by Russian Service correspondent Jefim Fistejn, was aired on June 19 during the programs "Time and World" and "Time of Liberty." In addition to his comments on the Marty Reports, Davis also spoke about the wide range of human rights violations in Russia and friction between the Council of Europe and Russia (<http://www.svobodanews.ru/Article/2007/06/19/20070619203126250.html>).

### **...AIRS INTERVIEW WITH KHODORKOVSKY LAWYER MOSKALENKO...**

The Russian Service aired on the June 22 edition of "Time of Liberty" an exclusive interview with Karinna Moskalenko, whose appeal of a ruling by the Prosecutor General's Office to disbar her because of alleged "negligence" while defending former Yukos CEO Khodorkovsky was rejected by the Russian Federal Bar Association. Moskalenko, a distinguished Russian lawyer, is representing Mikhail Khodorkovsky's interests before the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg; in 2006, Moskalenko received an award from the International Helsinki Federation for Human Rights. Moskalenko has at various times in her career represented opposition leader Garry Kasparov, dissident former KGB officer Aleksander Litvinenko and other prominent opposition figures (<http://www.svobodanews.ru/Article/2007/06/22/20070622095611500.html>).

### **...COVERS DEVELOPMENTS IN LITVINENKO-LUGOVOI CASE...**

On June 26, RFE/RL's Russian Service broadcast an interview with London-based former Soviet intelligence officer Boris Volodarsky, who commented on Russian media reports and claims by Russian businessman Andrei Lugovoi that exiled "oligarch" Boris Berezovsky was recruited and employed by the British intelligence service MI6 (<http://www.rferl.org/featuresarticle/2007/6/41A814EC-294D-44E5-8ED7-239886EF8BEB.html>). Volodarsky told the Russian Service he is convinced murdered former KGB agent Alexander Litvinenko was poisoned by former Russian security agents because of his criticism of Russian President Vladimir Putin (<http://www.svobodanews.ru/Article/2007/06/26/20070626205844373.html>).

### **...TALKS TO HARASSED INDEPENDENT MEDIA ACTIVIST...**

On June 19, RFE/RL Russian Service correspondent Andrei Shary spoke to Manana Aslamazyan, who resigned her longtime position as director of the independent Educated Media Foundation (formerly "Internews"), an NGO that helped fund and train

journalists and media managers across Russia and fled the country. In January, Aslamazyan was detained at Moscow's Airport for failing to declare nearly 10,000 euros that she was carrying from Paris; she now faces smuggling charges in Russia. The exclusive interview was broadcast during the Russian Service's "Time of Liberty" program

(<http://www.svobodanews.ru/Transcript/2007/06/19/20070619215329363.html>); a transcript in English of the interview can be found at [http://www.rferl.org/features/features\\_Article.aspx?m=06&y=2007&id=009D16DD-99ED-41CA-A7FF-79D504EBC72D](http://www.rferl.org/features/features_Article.aspx?m=06&y=2007&id=009D16DD-99ED-41CA-A7FF-79D504EBC72D)).

### **...INTERVIEWS FORMER DISSIDENT NATAN SHARANSKY**

Former Soviet dissident and Interior Minister of Israel Natan Sharansky visited RFE/RL's Prague operations center on June 6, where he was interviewed by Russian Service correspondent Vladimir Tolz on various subjects, including the 1968 Six-Day War (<http://www.svobodanews.ru/Transcript/2007/06/09/20070609191849777.html>). Sharansky, who currently serves as chairman of the Adelson Institute for Strategic Studies at the Shalem Center as well as president of Beit Hatefutsot, the Jewish diaspora museum, also served as an organizer of the June 5-6 "Democracy and Security Conference" in Prague, where he was interviewed on the sidelines by RFE/RL Central News correspondent Brian Whitmore; a transcript in English of that interview can be found at

[http://www.rferl.org/features/features\\_Article.aspx?m=06&y=2007&id=CAEF1C58-8ABC-4F53-A709-75DAE6C0E6C8](http://www.rferl.org/features/features_Article.aspx?m=06&y=2007&id=CAEF1C58-8ABC-4F53-A709-75DAE6C0E6C8).

### **FORMER RUSSIAN DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER NEMTSOV VISITS RFE/RL, GIVES INTERVIEWS**

Nemtsov gave a number of interviews to RFE/RL language services and Central Newsroom during his visit at RFE/RL in mid-June. During an interview with RFE/RL Central News correspondent Brian Whitmore, Nemtsov urged Russian opposition forces to back a single presidential candidate and discussed strategies the opposition should adopt in preparation for presidential and parliamentary elections expected in Russia in 2008

([http://www.rferl.org/features/features\\_Article.aspx?m=06&y=2007&id=655B412B-4A4D-4C07-A4E8-4F0BF5905F27](http://www.rferl.org/features/features_Article.aspx?m=06&y=2007&id=655B412B-4A4D-4C07-A4E8-4F0BF5905F27)).

*\*\* The Director of RFE/RL's Russian Service, Maria Klein, may be reached by email at <[kleinm@rferl.org](mailto:kleinm@rferl.org)>. The Russian Service's website is at <http://www.svobodanews.ru>; English-language news about events in Russia can be found at <http://www.rferl.org/featuresarchive/country/russia.html>*

## **RFE/RL In The News**

### **LEGISLATION THREATENS RFE/RL REBROADCASTING IN ARMENIA**

Legislation submitted to the Armenian parliament in June by the Ministry of Justice would ban the rebroadcast of Armenian Service programming on the public airwaves. The draft legislation not only provided for a ban on the rebroadcasting of foreign radio

programs on Armenia's public airwaves, but would also have imposed a tax of 70,000 Armenian drams, or more than \$200, per program per day for every time a private station rebroadcast a foreign-produced program. In a statement released by RFE/RL on June 30, RFE/RL President Jeffrey Gedmin said, "This legislation, which formally bans the rebroadcast of any foreign-produced Armenian language programs on public broadcast channels, is clearly targeted at RFE/RL's Armenian language broadcasts. It would set a dangerous precedent for public media in all of the countries of the former Soviet Union, where people have listened for decades to RFE and RL broadcasts in order to get news otherwise unavailable from local, state-run media. I hope that Armenia's parliamentarians will reconsider their support for this flawed bill" [The bill was defeated on July 3 due to the lack of a quorum-eds.]

(<http://www.rferl.org/releases/2007/06/476-300607.asp>).

*\*\* The Director of RFE/RL's Armenian Service, Hrair Tamrazian, may be reached by email at <tamrazianh@rferl.org>. The Armenian Service's website is at <http://www.azatutyun.am/>; English-language news about events in Armenia can be found at <http://www.rferl.org/featuresarchive/country/armenia.html>*

### **BELARUS SERVICE PRESENTS LATEST MULTIMEDIA PROJECT**

At a cafe in Minsk on June 27, 28 and 29, RFE/RL's Belarus Service unveiled its latest project, a multimedia CD of highlights from its "Night Liberty" program, which recently marked its first anniversary on the air. "Night Liberty", which airs weeknights from 10:00-11:00PM local time, is a live talk show focusing primarily on cultural and social topics of interest to younger audiences. The new CD features audio, text and photos of a year's worth of "Night Liberty" guests, including 50 Belarusian known and unknown writers of all generations reading selections of their works, which encompass various literary styles and genres. The three evening presentations in Minsk were hosted by "Night Liberty" moderator Aliaksei Znatkevich and RFE/RL Minsk Bureau chief Valiantsin Zhdanko. Many of the guests featured on the program and CD also were on hand for the presentations. The CDs are being distributed among the service's loyal listeners ("Friends of Liberty") and awarded as prizes in various Belarus Service competitions (<http://www.svaboda.org/articlesfeatures/culture/2007/6/81C81778-1BDD-4551-A317-702CFC14EC92.html>); <http://www.svaboda.org/articlesfeatures/culture/2007/6/1807D7BE-E546-4B82-AA71-C48E1DA12769.html>).

*\*\* The Director of RFE/RL's Belarus Service, Alexander Lukashuk, may be reached by email at <lukashuka@rferl.org>. The Belarus Service's website is at <http://www.svaboda.org/>; English-language news about events in Belarus can be found at <http://www.rferl.org/featuresarchive/country/belarus.html>*

### **RFE/RL KAZAKH SERVICE CORRESPONDENT WINS PRIZE**

A report by RFE/RL Kazakh Service Almaty correspondent Neliya Rushanova has been awarded first prize in a contest, sponsored by the Central Asian office of the International Labor Organization and Kazakhstan's Women's Labor Union, on the topic of "Child Labor: The True Story." The award was announced on June 12, World Day Against Child Labor.

*\*\* The Director of RFE/RL's Kazakh Service, Merhat Sharipzhan, may be reached by email at <sharipzhanm@rferl.org>. The Kazakh Service's website is at*

*<http://www.azattyq.org/>; English-language news about events in Kazakhstan can be found at <http://www.rferl.org/featuresarchive/country/kazakhstan.html>*

### **RFE/RL FEATURED AT MEMORIAL TO THE VICTIMS OF COMMUNISM AND THE RESISTANCE IN ROMANIA**

A message from RFE/RL President Jeffery Gedmin was read by Romania-Moldova Service broadcaster Lucian Stefanescu at the opening on June 12 of a permanent exhibition dedicated to RFE's Romania Service at the Memorial to the Victims of Communism and the Resistance in the Romanian city of Sighet Marmatiei.

*\*\* The Director of RFE/RL's Romania-Moldova Service, Oana Serafim, may be reached by email at <serafimo@rferl.org>. The Romania-Moldova Service's website is at <http://www.europalibera.org/>; English-language news about events in Moldova can be found at <http://www.rferl.org/featuresarchive/country/moldova.html> and in Romania at <http://www.rferl.org/featuresarchive/country/romania.html>*

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