

News of ABU activities and the broadcasting industry in the Asia-Pacific

ABU 47th General Assembly: Resilience in Broadcasting

During a time of huge change for the media industry, ABU members have met in Tokyo to discuss strategies for succeeding in the digital era.

Nearly 400 delegates from 42 countries gathered for the 47th ABU General Assembly and associated meetings, held from 14 to 20 October.

Given the nature of the discussions, it was fitting that the meetings were hosted by Japan's public broadcaster, NHK, a world leader in developing new broadcasting technologies.

The General Assembly itself took place on 19 to 20 October, chaired by the ABU President, Yoshinori Imai, who is also Executive Vice-President of NHK.

A highlight was the Special Topic session on the second day, which looked at the rapid growth of new media technologies and how broadcasters should respond.

Speakers agreed that broadcasters should embrace the new digital platforms – and that quality content would remain the key if they were to flourish in the face of intense competition.

The Professional Discus-

Looking to the future



NHK President Shigeo Fukuchi, ABU President Yoshinori Imai and ABU Secretary-General Javad Mottaghi at the NHK reception after the General Assembly.

sion, later the same day, took up a similar theme, looking at how digital television has penetrated the global market and the way broadcasters are handling the conversion process.

Delegates heard that 14 countries had completed the transition to digital broadcasting and that Japan would be the 15th – and the first in Asia – to complete the process in

July 2011.

Another highlight for many delegates – both programme makers and engineers – was a tour of the NHK Science and Technology Research Laboratories for a look at the latest broadcasting technologies.

They saw new broadcasting equipment developed by NHK that has been introduced into

daily newsgathering and production, such as an ultra light sensitive HD camera. And being developed for broadcasting in the future are breakthroughs such as 3DTV that does not require special glasses and Super Hi-Vision, NHK's experimental digital video format.

The ABU Technical Committee took the

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The ABU's new leadership: Secretary-General Javad Mottaghi, President Yoshinori Imai, Vice-President Ibrahim Yahaya, KBS' Cho Dae Hyun (representing Vice-President Kim In-Kyu) and Vice-President Murtaza Solangi.

Two new Vice-Presidents elected

The ABU General Assembly in Tokyo has elected two new Vice-Presidents.

The President of KBS-Korea, Kim In-Kyu, and the Director General of PBC-Pakistan, Murtaza Solangi, were elected unopposed to the ABU posts.

They replace Manuel Gonçalves of TDM-Macau and Hassan Khojasteh of IRIB-Iran.

The new Vice-Presidents join the President, Yoshinori Imai, and Vice-President Ibrahim Yahaya in the ABU leadership group.

Two new members of the ABU Administrative Council were elected during the General Assembly in Tokyo.

They are RTB-Brunei and BBS-Bhutan, each of which will serve a three-year term.

Another member, KBS-Korea, was re-elected for another three-year term.

New Admin Council members elected

This marks the first time that RTB has served on the Administrative Council since joining the ABU in 1964.

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'Broadcasting still resilient in face of new media'

opportunity to hold a special session at the laboratories featuring presentations by two senior researchers.

News management questions were addressed too, with the General Assembly agreeing that the ABU should look into the issue of whether broadcasters should appoint an ombudsman and adopt a code of practice to maintain trust with their audience.

Two new ABU Vice-Presidents were elected:

the President of KBS-Korea, Kim In-Kyu, and the Director General of PBC-Pakistan, Murtaza Solangi.

Six new members were admitted: from Tonga, Vanuatu, Maldives, Saudi Arabia and two from Mongolia. NHK's President, Shigeo Fukuchi, formally welcomed delegates at the opening ceremony.

His remarks reflected the General Assembly's theme, "Resilience in Broadcasting".



Kim In-Kyu of KBS-Korea is a new ABU Vice-President.

"Despite the evolution of the Internet and other media, broadcasting's role remains significant, particularly in the tasks of safeguarding of people's lives, and promoting

cultural development and international understanding," he said.

NHK proved a superb host, organising the meetings with quiet efficiency and laying on a number of social events for participants, including an excursion to the historic town of Nikko, about 125km north of Tokyo.

Next year's General Assembly will take place in New Delhi on 2-8 November, hosted by India's national TV broadcaster, Doordarshan.



Clockwise from left: Baljit Singh Lalli of India's Prasar Bharati, TVNZ's Rick Ellis, ABC-Australia's Mark Scott, KBS-Korea's Kim In-Kyu and RTPRC-China's Tian Jin (centre).

For the first time at the ABU General Assembly, the Secretary-General's address (see page 7) included a video presentation, which featured the thoughts of 12 heads or senior representatives of its member organisations. Here's what they had to say about the current climate of broadcasting and their perceptions of the ABU's role:

Mark Scott, Managing Director of ABC Australia, said that broadcasters operate in widely divergent markets today but the challenges of fairness and transparency remain the same and under the ABU, members work together and support each other in facing those challenges.

According to **Rick Ellis**, TVNZ's Chief Executive Officer, "Our most important challenge is to extend business beyond traditional free-to-air TV into the digital media space and to seek opportunities to launch commercial

channels, including pay channels. ABU can help by developing and sharing case studies of successful digital diversification initiatives by member companies. Sharing the successful experiences of others can help us accelerate the changes we all need to make."

Baljit Singh Lalli, Chief Executive Officer, Prasar Bharati, DDI India said: "Broadcasters have to strike a balance between the larger objectives of public broadcasting and financial concerns. Inherent in the challenge, is a great opportunity for all of us to assist our respective societies to grow and develop on the educational, cultural and economic fronts. ABU can assist by providing

platforms for the exchange of ideas, innovation and expertise."

Kim In-Kyu, President & CEO, KBS-Korea, said: "The most important task of ABU is to expand the horizons of what Asians can do for the international community. To make this happen, we need to raise the standard of our broadcasting and increase exchange among members."

Seyed Ezzatollah Zardhami, President, IRIB Iran said that: "Although the increasing amount of communication nowadays has brought about opportunities, it also poses challenges. By establishing common media markets, the ABU can promote interaction and exchange among member states."

Myanganbuu Naranbaatar, Director-General, MNB Mongolia, said that it is becoming increasingly more difficult for a public service broadcaster to survive when pitted against commercialised media. He said support was needed to create a framework for the administration of public service media with ethical standards within a financially stable environment.

Fiji Broadcasting Corporation Chief Executive Officer **Riyaz Sayed-Khaiyum** highlighted the challenge faced by small Pacific nations, which is keeping up with technological advancements when they lack the resources to do so. He suggested that the ABU offer more regionally



First row: Seyed Ezzatollah Zardhami (IRIB-Iran), Prof Dr Vu Van Hien (VOV Vietnam), Myanganbuu Naranbaatar (MNB Mongolia)
Second row: Ibrahim Sahin (TRT-Turkey), Riyaz Sayed-Kahiyum (Fiji Broadcasting Corporation), Jun Ogawa (TBS-Japan)

focused programmes to enable these small nations to catch up with the present technology.

RTM Malaysia's Director-General **Ibrahim Yahaya** said that with high definition, there is a larger number of platforms which present the challenge to provide more diverse and interesting content. He is of the opinion that the ABU should work to bring all members on board to ride the changes of technology.

Ibrahim Sahin, Director General, TRT Turkey, said: "Even though the new technologies have changed the way audiences consume media content, the broadcasters' role will remain important as long as they embrace this change and the ABU will, as it has always done, continue to help by provide technical consultative solutions to its members."

Tian Jin, Vice President

of RTPRC China, said broadcasters need to master new technologies and improve the production and coverage of their radio and TV programmes, adding: "We must also strive to let the world hear more voices from the Asia-Pacific region and enhance dialogue and communication."

Prof Dr Vu Van Hien, President of VOV Vietnam, said adapting to new technological advances will potentially make or break every media that's in the stage of development. He said that the ABU has a crucial role of enhancing exchange and communication among broadcasters to develop new media and technologies for the converged media.

Jun Ogawa, Director International Affairs and Strategy, TBS Japan, said that broadcasters' strength lies in creating



From left: Ibrahim Yahaya of RTM-Malaysia and Manuel Gonçalves of TDM-Macau.

and developing content themselves. However, he highlighted the need for broadcasters to educate the public to respect copyright and make people understand that good content has its price.

Other heads were also given a chance to voice their thoughts during the plenary session.

Manuel Gonçalves, CEO of TDM-Macau, said the digital divide within the

Asia-Pacific region was a major issue and the ABU should try to close this gap.

Shelten Neth, CEO, FSMBS-Micronesia, asked for more training from the ABU to enable the nation to go digital.

Immas Sunarya, President-Director of TVRI-Indonesia, said that the ABU has a significant role to play in enhancing

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'Strike a balance between broadcasting and broadband'

The ABU President, Yoshinori Imai, praised all members of the ABU who contributed to the Secretary-General's report, either in person or through a video message.

Mr Imai said he had attended a meeting of the UN Broadband Commission for Digital Development in New York.

The commission had looked at ways to speed up the spread of broadband around the world particularly in developing countries.

He said he had made the point that while broadcasting was only one of the many forms of communication, it had established a universal service rooted in people's lives that could provide information to a vast number of people simultaneously and at a low cost.



"I argued that it is vital to combine the distinctive features of broadcasting and broadband.

"I also mentioned that in terms of allocating frequencies, we need to consider striking a balance between broadcasting and broadband, given that many communities, countries

and regions are yet to launch digitalisation."

He said he had pointed out that broadband could not achieve its social goals without reliable information and quality content. This was an area where broadcasting could have a major role to play.



From left: Immas Sunarya of TVRI and Parni Hadi of RRI, both of Indonesia, Murtaza Solangi (PBC-Pakistan) Shelten Neth (FSMBS-Micronesia) and Thoyyib Mohamed Waheed, Minister of State of Tourism, Arts and Culture of Maldives.

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standards for educational programmes.

Parni Hadi, President-Director of RRI-Indonesia, said: "The ABU is great vehicle to promote a programme or idea

among its members. For example, RRI initiated the Green Radio programme and now ABU members can replicate it for their own localised versions."

Murtaza Solangi, PBC-Pakistan's Director-General, said that the ABU should help to build awareness among broadcasters on how to handle natural disasters.

Thoyyib Mohamed Waheed, Minister of State for Tourism, Arts and Culture of the Republic of Maldives, said it needed help in promoting freedom of expression.

'Enhance standards for educational programmes'

The enormous changes in the broadcasting industry are not only the ABU's biggest challenges but its greatest opportunities to serve best its members, the Secretary-General, Javad Mottaghi, told the General Assembly in Tokyo.

He said the ABU needed to be a forward-looking organisation in order to respond to the rapidly changing media landscape in the region.

"Today's audiences may determine for themselves what broadcast products they chose 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.

"These are the challenges of the day and we have to respond to them."

To engage members more effectively, he said the Secretariat would place the welfare and interests of members first and this would be reflected in all the ABU's activities.

Members were invited to participate in the decision-making process so that they feel they were having more ownership of the union.

One important area where this could be achieved was through improved communications.

"One of the very first pieces of advice I received from the President, Mr Imai, was to improve communications between the Secretariat, his office, our Vice-Presidents and members.

"With that in mind, we initiated a number of actions, including a monthly report to the President, Administrative Councillors and members of the Planning & Strategy Group.

"These reports highlight continuously and on a systematic basis the most important activities in which the Secretariat is engaged. They also report the outcome of various activities and provide a clear perspective about how our union is moving forward."

The content of *ABU News* had also been improved, including more interviews with members and news about their activities. Similar changes would be made to the *Technical Review*.

Riding the wave of change



The ABU weekly e-newsletter was also being improved and the ABU website would undergo a complete overhaul.

Mr Mottaghi said the overarching policy with regard to engaging members would cover:

- Respecting cultural diversity;
- Paying special attention to important events taking place within each member organisation;
- Promoting members' major activities and including members' articles and views in ABU's publications;
- Inviting members to participate in any possible ABU committee;
- Aiming to conduct more effective regional and in-country projects;
- Continuing to accelerate the ABU's successes, such as Robocon and Lights Off;
- Enhancing the profile of the ABU, not only in the international arena and but also within the member countries' national sphere;
- Awareness-building on copyright issues;
- Associating the union with projects of developed broadcasters for the benefit of all members

Mr Mottaghi said the union was moving to reduce operational expenses by introducing a lean management system within the Secretariat.

"The operational expenses should be limited to approximately 75 percent of the annual income, enabling the union to use the balance of the funds for activities and new initiatives.

"Naturally, this is not something that the union can achieve in a short period but we have started moving in that direction by cutting costs and increasing income."

In addition to cost cutting, the Secretariat was exploring the possibilities of increasing income. This could be done by soliciting more funding from international organisations and UN agencies, providing new, compelling services, marketing and distributing members' programming and developing co-productions, among others.

Mr Mottaghi, who took up his post in May, expressed his thanks to members of the Administrative Council and the General Assembly for their trust and confidence in him and in the Secretariat.

"Our role is to learn from our members and translate their views into a tangible action plan and implement them in a professional and effective manner as members expect," he said.

Broadcasting 'remains significant'

The role of broadcasting remains significant despite the evolution of the Internet and other media, NHK's President, Shigeo Fukuchi, told the ABU General Assembly.

In remarks reflecting the assembly's theme, "Resilience in Broadcasting", he said broadcasting had an important role to play in safeguarding people's lives and promoting cultural development and international understanding.

Speaking at the opening ceremony, Mr Fukuchi also expressed his condolences over the recent floods in Pakistan and China.

Japan's State Secretary for Internal Affairs and Communications, Hideo Hiraoka, then read a message to delegates from the Minister, Yoshihiro Katayama.

The Minister congratulated the ABU on its activities of technical assistance, training, content exchange and negotiation of sports rights. He gave an assu-



rance that Japan would continue to co-operate with broadcasters in the Asia-Pacific region.

The ABU President, Yoshinori Imai, said many new services using Internet technologies were emerging and some said these could threaten the realm of broadcasting.

"But we believe broadcasting is always ready to absorb innovation. It is

capable of taking in state-of-the-art technologies and acquiring new ways of expressions. By doing so, we believe we have the resilience of overcoming any kind of crises."

He said broadcasters in the Asia-Pacific region had the potential to create new products and services, and use them to benefit all the people living in the region and to enrich their culture and heritage.

The ABU has admitted six new members – one each from Tonga, Vanuatu, Maldives and Saudi Arabia, and two from Mongolia.

The General Assembly approved the admission of the six at its annual meeting in Tokyo.

Two are Full Members: Tonga Broadcasting Commission (TBC) and Vanuatu Broadcasting and Television Corporation (VBTC).

TBC was established in 1961 as a government ministry and the first broadcasting station in Tonga. It now operates as a state-owned enterprise

ABU welcomes 6 new members

under the Tonga Broadcasting Commission Act and does not receive any government subsidy.

The VBTC is both the national public broadcaster and the regulator for television and radio. Transformed into a corporation in 1993, it operates Radio Vanuatu, the national public service radio; Studio 5 North, a community radio station; a commercial radio station Paradise

FM and the country's only national television service called Television Blong Vanuatu.

Island Broadcasting Company Pvt. Ltd.

of Maldives is a new Additional Full Member. It is a private national broadcasting organisation and has operated a national free-to-air television station (VTV Station) since September 2008.

New Associate Members are Supervision Broadcasting Network TV (SBN TV) and DDishTV LLC, both of Mongolia.

SBN TV is a private broadcasting organisation that began its broadcasting operations in 2006. Its nationwide coverage contains a mix of entertainment and

reality shows, news, educational material and movies.

DDishTV is a private broadcasting company established in 2008. It broadcasts TV programmes nationwide.

Islamic International News Agency (IINA) of Saudi Arabia is a new Affiliate Member. IINA is an organ of the Organisation of Islamic Organisation (OIC) established in 1972. It distributes daily news in Arabic, English and French and prepares audio and video news files on topics of interest to member countries.



**Nanise Fifita, TBC
General Manager.**



**Ganbold Dende,
CEO of DDish TV.**

Adapting to the digital era

Launch new services and become more involved with your audience – this was the advice from top broadcasters in Tokyo on how to make the most of digitalisation.

In the Professional Discussion session on 20 October, broadcasters from Australia, China, Japan, Malaysia and Singapore described the strategies they were using to ride the digital revolution.

The session looked at how far ABU members had come in the digitalisation process, how the content and the way it was presented was changing, and how the role of the public broadcaster was being transformed.

The Managing Director of ABC-Australia, Mark Scott, said the broadcaster had adapted to the changing situation by creating an environment where the voices of the community were heard.

Traditional broadcasters had had control, he said, but now the audience was in control, and information was available whenever they wanted it. Broadcasters had to embrace the changes and become more versatile.

The ABC had moved towards this goal, creating a “digital town square” where people from different areas of society and different mindsets came and collaborated in creating the content they needed. The ABC was in the midst of a great transformation.

The Director-General of RTM-Malaysia, Ibrahim Yahya, said the broad-



Wang Lian, director-general of Radio and Television of the People's Republic of China, and Asaad Sameer Bagharib, President of Technology Support at MediaCorp-Singapore (right).

caster was moving towards establishing an environment where it would be able to serve multiple platforms by using digital technologies and streaming content through broadband IP networks.

RTM plans to embark on a national digital roll-out from 2012, with a simulcast period of three years to complete the analogue switch-off by 2015.

Content was being repurposed for web delivery from both radio and TV. The goal was to use digital technology to establish multichannel and multilingual services.

RTM plans to launch seven TV channels by 2012, catering for all genres.

Wang Lian, Director-General of Radio and Television of the People's Republic of China, described the progress in China's digital migration.

He said the digitalisation of studio facilities had started in early 2000. Almost all city-level radio and TV stations had reached 90 percent digital



implementation and there were now 10 TV stations providing HDTV channels.

The full infrastructure included over 30,000 terrestrial transmission stations, 58 transponders on eight satellites and over 1,500 cable operators providing coverage of over 96 percent for radio and over 97 percent for TV.

Mr Wang said a direct-to-home (DTH) service had been launched in 2008. It now carried 48 channels, mostly targeted at remote, mountainous regions.

The moderator, ABU President Yoshinori Imai, gave an update on the progress of digitalisation in Japan.

He said the process had begun in 2003. The public broadcaster, NHK, had upgraded all its production facilities and all content produced was now in HD.

NHK now provided catch-up and archive video selection through broadband connectivity to the public. The roll-out was progressing as planned

for the July 2011 analogue switch-off.

The Director of the ABU Technical Department, Sharad Sadhu, spoke on the digital TV take-up around the world. He said 14 countries in North America and Europe had already completed the transition to DTV.

South American countries were just beginning the roll-out of digital TV services and there had been some successful implementation in the Middle-East. However, African countries were still struggling to get a foothold in the DTV arena.

He said most of the bigger Asia-Pacific broadcasters had already implemented file-based workflows within their production and news environments, with digital transmissions already underway with multiple SD and some with HD services.

Asaad Sameer Bagharib, Chairman of the ABU Digital Radio Forum and Vice-President of Technology Support at MediaCorp in Singapore, said radio was still the most pervasive form of media available.

There were four main digital radio standards around the world, all supporting digital audio and multimedia services. The advantages included the ability to include additional information, spectrum efficiency, low power consumption transmitters and wider coverage areas.

Mr Assad said digital radio had a long road ahead in the Asia-Pacific region but with major players already starting the roll-out, the momentum was increasing.



Adelheid Feilcke said it has become almost impossible for the audience to distinguish between professional journalists and the wannabes.



In the digital era, media staffers have little time for ethical considerations, Shoji Motooka said.



Oyunday Tsagaan reported that Mongolian politicians treat the media as a propaganda vehicle.

Media ethics training ‘essential’ in digital era

Training in media ethics is essential for practitioners of new media, a seminar in Tokyo has heard.

Shoji Motooka of NHK-Japan told the annual ABU/FES Seminar that training was important because, in the digital era, media staff were extremely busy and had little time to consider ethics.

The seminar, which looked at Media Ethics and Media Freedom, was jointly organised by the ABU and the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES) of Germany. Riyaz Sayed-Khaiyum of FBCL-Fiji chaired it.

Mr Motooka said NHK was using some user-generated content found on YouTube. Before broadcasting it, NHK usually contacted the contributor to verify the footage and ask how it was filmed. It also would try find an expert to comment on the footage.



From left: Henning Effner of FES, Riyaz Sayed-Khaiyum of FBCL-Fiji and Alan Williams of Asiavision at the annual ABU/FES seminar.

This also helped confirm its authenticity.

Agha Nasir of Pakistan's GEO TV said the problem for broadcasters was not the technology but the people using the new media, many of whom lacked experience. They needed to be taught ethics.

The outgoing head of RRI-Indonesia, Parni Hadi, also stressed the importance of training. He

said young reporters in Indonesia tended to focus on covering violence and needed training on issues such as peace journalism.

Dagmar Skopalik of ZDF-Germany was also among those who called for more training. "You have to have a good education in journalism, including in-house training," she said.

Participants agreed that accuracy, not immediacy,

remained the first priority for broadcasters despite the ability of new media practitioners to post news online almost instantly.

"Journalist ethics is undergoing a difficult transition from traditional ethics to a mixed media ethics," Anothai Udomsilp of Thai PBS said.

Adelheid Feilcke of Germany's Deutsche Welle said the growth of non-professional broadcasters was providing a new challenge for traditional broadcasters. It was almost impossible for viewers to distinguish between professional journalism and "wannabe" journalism.

Also, traditional broadcasters who were now using new media had to learn how to handle instant criticism and insults from users.

The Maldives Minister of

State for Tourism, Arts and Culture, Thoyyib Mohamed Waheed, said media freedom in Maldives was not a reality. However, journalists were not yet free of powerful interests or financial pressure.

“Journalists are pressured to cover or not to cover certain stories,” he said.

Oyunday Tsagaan of Mongolia’s public broadcaster, MNB, said private TV stations had proliferated in the country since 1996, in recent years, almost all of them have strong ties to various politicians.

“The mindset of politicians in Mongolia, who believe that the media is only a propaganda weapon, hasn’t changed at all during the last 20 years of transition.”

Mr Sayed-Khaiyum said neither public nor private broadcasters had a monopoly on good media ethics.



Dagmar Skopalik (left) called for more training for journalists while Anothai Udomsilp opined that journalistic ethics was undergoing a difficult transition to a mixed media ethics.

There were private media outlets that were fully credible in their ethics and public broadcasters who were not.

Sally Begbie of SBS-Australia described how media self-regulation, including a code of practice and the appointment of an internal, independent ombudsman, could protect media freedom.

In his opening remarks, Henning Effner of FES said the media environment differed from country to country. The opening up of the media sector created new challenges related to media ethics.

Alan Williams of Asiavision said when a government allowed greater freedom to report fairly and accurately, journalists should respond with caution and

demonstrate that they were capable of using their new-found freedom responsibly.

This could encourage a government to ease the restrictions even further.

“If greater media freedom leads to sensationalism or chaos, it’s not in anyone’s interests. It’s up to us as journalists to show that this is not going to happen,” Mr Williams said.

The ABU is to look into the issue of whether broadcasters should appoint an ombudsman and adopt a code of practice to maintain audience trust.

The General Assembly in Tokyo agreed to a recommendation from SBS-Australia that the matter be referred to the ABU Planning & Strategy Group for study and discussion.

Proposing the recommendation, SBS’ Ombudsman, Sally Begbie, noted that ABU developing broadcasters had expressed a wish at both last year’s and this year’s annual meetings to develop a mechanism to manage issues of

Ombudsman for broadcasters?

accuracy and trust. She encouraged broadcasters to develop codes of practice based on the general principles of accuracy, balance, fairness and equality.

A code of practice needed to be accompanied by a proper complaints handling procedure, she said. An internal and impartial ombudsman was the public face of a code.

Ms Begbie said the President of the Organisation of News Ombudsmen (ONO),

Jacob Mollerup, had drafted a booklet called *On Public Broadcasting*, which UNESCO would publish shortly. It included an overview of complaints handling procedures in public broadcasting around the world.

She suggested that Unesco be invited in conjunction with ONO to present this material next year to broadcasters in the Asia-Pacific region.

Earlier, participants in the annual ABU/FES Seminar



Sally Begbie, Ombudsman for SBS-Australia.

in Tokyo discussed the issues of accuracy and balance, including the challenges of verifying the accuracy of user generated content.



Amid fierce competition, content still the key

Quality content remains the key for broadcasters in the era of convergence and multiple platforms, top speakers said in Tokyo.

Addressing the Special Topic session on 20 October, speakers from Asia, Europe and the United States agreed on the importance of content in the face of fierce competition.

“Content will win in the long run,” Albert Cheng, Executive Vice President, Digital Media, for the Disney-ABC Television Group of the US, said.

“At some point, consumers will decide who they want to go with.”

Robert Amlung, Head of Digital Strategy for ZDF-Germany, expressed



From left: Kwon Ohsuk of KBS, Somkiat Tangkitvanich of the Thailand Development Research Institute Foundation and Christoph Pleitgen of Reuters were among the speakers.

similar views.

“Very soon, only the quality of our programmes will distinguish the big broadcasters from other sources of content,” he said. “This is our only chance – but it’s a big one.”

Kwon Ohsuk, Director of



Contents Business at KBS-Korea, agreed.

“The key to survival for a broadcaster is content,” he said.

The half-day session looked at the rapid growth of new technologies that allowed people to watch



television online and on hand-held devices such as smart phones wherever and whenever they liked.

It focused on how broadcasters should respond to the rapidly changing media environment – and on whether it was a struggle for survival or a major



Robert Amlung of ZDF said public broadcasters can't depend on TV alone to connect with viewers.

opportunity for them.

Christoph Pleitgen, Managing Director, Reuters news agency, said the budgets of public broadcasters were under close scrutiny in many parts of the world. Few 24-hour news channels were profitable.

Companies that thrived would be those that focused on the power of communities, offering sites where the dialogue on the news was as important as the news itself, he said.

Technology had created a new concept of community and given that community the ability to connect, he said. This allowed broadcasters to tell the story in a more colourful and ultimately more relevant way than ever before.

Somkiat Tangkitvanich, Vice President of the Thailand Development Research Institute Foundation, spoke of the changes taking place in broadcasting in Thailand.

TV stations were facing a continuing decline in viewers, as were radio stations and newspapers. The popularity of satellite and cable TV had meanwhile grown by leaps and



Kaneko Sachno of NHK co-chaired the session.

bounds over the past five years.

Mr Kwon said in Korea, too, terrestrial TV was facing strong challenges from cable TV and the Internet.

KBS was coping with this by developing new kinds of content and using a multi-platform strategy. As traditional broadcasters were no longer the sole provider of content, making content available at any time was the answer.

Mr Amlung noted that television differed in various part of the world. Europe was a stronghold of public service media but competition was strong.

He argued the case for hybrid broadcast broadband TV, a technology standard that could be adopted by broadcasters and others. It combined TV services delivered via broadcast with services delivered via broadband for hybrid receivers including TV or set-top box.

Content became less tied to a physical way of distribution; broadcasting was now technologically neutral.

Mr Cheng, of the Disney-



Albert Cheng of Disney-ABC Television Group said it had received steady demand for services online and and for hand-held devices.

ABC Television Group, described the steady growth in demand for ABC services online and on hand-held devices. It was able to offer its programmes online without charge, supported by advertisers. Consumers had told ABC they had discovered new shows this way.

To keep up, ABC had needed to know how technology was changing, and how to make use of this. It had hired people with Internet and technology backgrounds and had found new partners. Television was still at the core of its business and it looked at other distribution platforms to complement this.

In the question-and-answer session that followed, Mr Amlung of ZDF said people under 40 in Germany tended not to use public broadcasters, preferring to watch private channels. Public broadcasters would probably not be able to connect with younger viewers through TV alone.

Mr Kwon said KBS was facing a similar situation. Asked about the return on investment in digital platforms, Mr Cheng said ABC had consolidated its digital efforts in order to streamline them. All its



Jun Murai of Keio University co-chaired the session.

online digital distribution was generating a profit, though not a large amount in comparison to the TV side.

The biggest challenges were on the news side; its online news services were not yet profitable. It was difficult to get consumers to pay for news content.

Mark Scott of ABC-Australia asked about the pressure public service broadcasters might be under to curtail their online activities.

Mr Amlung said he disagreed with private broadcasters who claimed there was no need for public broadcasters to have online services. It was an opportunity for public broadcasters to redefine why they existed. A society needed to ask whether it wanted the safeguard of public broadcasting services or whether it trusted the market, he said.

The session was chaired by Jun Murai, Dean and Professor, Faculty of Environment and Information Studies at Japan's Keio University, and Kanako Sachno, an anchor and presenter for NHK World.



Radio stations have been urged to consider employing younger people to make them active participants in the evolving media.

The new chairman of the Radio Working Party, Michael McCluskey of ABC-Australia, suggested this, remarking that it is vital to make the youth feel connected to the media.

He observed that more young people are now listening to serious talk-based radio programmes. While the number of radio listeners may appear to be decreasing, the fact remains that radio is still the initial point of reference for the audience before they move on to new media.

The challenge for the traditional radio industry comes from the impact of digital radio and multiple platforms as well as fragmentation arising from competition. However, Dr McCluskey asserted that the key to overcoming this is to establish a strong presence, offer good content and know what listeners want to hear.

In Japan, radio operators decided to use an Internet-based radio service called Radiko (Internet Protocol Simul Radio), which is also goes out to mobile and PC users. Because of Radiko's good sound quality of Radiko and its innovative functions, it is now popular among the youth in Japan.

Masaru Tashiro from NHK reported that radio stations in Japan have started to create radio content specifically targeting the younger

Engaging youth through multiple platforms

generation. There is a radio programme which discusses popular TV animation characters and has the voice actors as guests. Another show, *Shubuya-MagaZ*, acts as a forum for tertiary-level students and discusses campus-related activities and has guests on the show to offer hints on finding jobs.

The show is offered both over the radio airwaves and Internet – young people may find out about the radio show while searching for a topic on the Internet and may opt to either listen to the programme over the radio or online. Hence, to accommodate the listening behaviour of its younger audience, NHK has adjusted by offering the show in both formats.

Zakiah Halim of MediaCorp-Singapore commented that it has not been easy to get the youth to tune into radio. Among MediaCorp's 13 radio stations, three target the younger generation and the dedicated channel with ethnic-specific programming is the most popular, according to Ms Zakiah. She said that while radio is an old industry, it has proven to be resilient



NHK's Masaru Tashiro reporting on how its programmes have reached younger audiences.

and will thrive with better resources.

Meanwhile, Neal Lavon reported that among Voice of America's youth-oriented programmes, those which featured sports and the World Cup were most popular. He was of the opinion that prospects are good for programmes targeting the 15-24 age segment, although locking into this market may post a challenge.

A series of case studies by member organisations highlighted a range of successful formulae. Osman

Plans for the coming year

During the course of the Radio Working Party meeting, Michael McCluskey, Chief Executive Officer of Radio Australia (ABC-Australia), was confirmed as the new chairperson of the Radio Working Party. The position was previously held by Deborah Steele.



Vijay Sadhu

Vijay Sadhu, ABU Senior Executive, Radio, reported on radio activities undertaken in the past year and plans for 2011. She referred to the opportunities offered to members for content exchange, staff training and content development through events such as the Workshop on Content Creation for Digital Radio. The ABU's radio news exchange in providing foreign news at virtually no cost; the RadioAsia 2010 conference and ABU's role in helping organise the 3rd International Radio Forum in Iran were also outlined. The year's highlights included ABU Prizes Backpack workshops in Vietnam and Iran, underscoring the need for ABU members to be active in this area.

Mrs Sadhu also outlined the role played by the ABU and its members in enhancing public awareness on climate change and the Save the Future project.

The development of ABU radio programming activities were discussed and several presentations were made. One of the most interesting aspects of the meeting were the case studies from Korea, Malaysia, Europe, Pakistan, Pacific Islands, Iran and Australia.

The Radio Working Party meeting members approved the proposal to create a working group to study the Asia-Pacific Song Festival. This includes studying means to fund the project. The group also agreed that the Lights Off, Awareness On and Green Radio campaign should be annual events. The proposal for the ABU to establish a social networking site to enable members to share information, seek advice and keep in touch between gatherings was endorsed. Also endorsed was the work plan on radio activities for the next year.

Borhanuddin, CEO of AMP Radio Networks, commented that while the AMP stations targeted specific ethnic groups, the younger Malaysian audience had a strong preference for an international selection of music instead of purely local tunes. He added that with AMP's 19 radio stations broadcasting in multiple languages, it was able to cater for age-specific target audiences, including youths.

Jun Ogawa (TBS-Japan) mentioned

that a winning format for Tokyo FM has been its open studio which hosts major artistes every week. The show has been hugely successful in the Japanese capital.

Changiz Hasani of IRIB said that in Iran, there has been good cooperation between the telecommunications providers and radio broadcasting players for the transmission of Internet-based programmes targeted at youth. Participants agreed that it was

'Stay half a step ahead of your listeners'

A radio presenter could provide quality music by not only taking public demand into consideration but by leading the listeners, the ABU Programme Committee heard.



Peter Barakan (right), a radio and television presenter based in Japan, told the committee's annual meeting in Tokyo that a presenter could play music that was not mainstream and still retain a loyal audience.

If you played different music, he said, listeners would get used to it and start liking it. He said he had always liked non-mainstream music and played a lot of African music on his NHK show.

After a while, listeners would start asking for music they had not heard of, and you would have to go out and look for it. He described it as a healthy, two-way relationship.

"You have to take the public demand into consideration but you have to lead them as well," he said. If you were too far ahead, you could lose them, so the ideal position was for the presenter to stay half a step ahead.

Borhanuddin Osman of AAAN-Malaysia asked how a presenter could stay employed if the ratings were low. Mr Barakan said this was always a consideration on commercial radio, especially now with many young people preferring to listen to music on the Internet, through mobile phones and MP3 players.

A lot of programming was sponsor-driven and the quality suffered, but Mr Barakan said he hoped that if the programmes were good, people would respect the sponsors.

important to present content that matters. Also highlighted was the need to bring about the audience's transition from passive listening to active participation to address the advent of user-generated content.

This was the sixth year of the ABU Radio Working Party meeting, which proved to be quite productive with a high level of participation. Nevertheless, closer involvement of the major radio members in the region is still needed.

Broadcasters from Japan and China were among the big winners when the 2010 ABU Prizes were presented on the first evening of the General Assembly.

The awards ceremony was hosted by NHK. There were 172 entries this year, of which 112 were in the TV category and 60 in the radio category.

Radio

Drama

Winner: *Revival* (NHK-Japan)

Special Commendation: *Circus of Errors* (Radio New Zealand)

Infotainment

Winner: *Women's Generation* (MBC-Korea)

Special Commendation: *International Children's Day of Broadcasting* (Bhutan Broadcasting Service)

Children & Youth Radio

Winner: *Come Come Morning Dear* (AIR-India)

Special Commendation: *Zappelduster Christmas Special* (ARD-RBB, Germany)

News

Winner: *Trace the Reason of Cyber Space Addiction* (RTPRC/CNR-China)

Documentary

Winner: *The Too Hard Basket* (ABC-Australia)

Special Commendation: *Village of Loneliness* (IRIB-Iran)

Japan and China win the most ABU Prizes



Malika Alouane of Al Jazeera (at microphone) and Miki Mori of NHK receiving their prizes for *Discover Science – Let's see the speed of sound*.

Special Jury Prize

Winner: *The Right Sacrifice* (MNB-Mongolia)

Special Commendation: *Culture Guardians* (Voice of Vietnam)

External Broadcasts

Winner: *In the Days of Drought, What*

Can We Do? (RTPRC/CRI-China)

Special Commendation: *Syrdarya – River Journey* (BBC World Service)

Television

Drama Prize

Winner: *The Great Queen Seondeok* (MBC-Korea)

Special Commendation: *Mieruhi: Coming Home* (NAB-Hokkaido Television Broadcasting, Japan)

Entertainment Prize

Qualifications of Men – 101 Things to Do Before Death (KBS-Korea)

Children's Programming Prize

The Three Musketeers Episode 20: The Chaotic Ball (NHK-Japan)

Special Commendation: *Dandelion, Carbon Dioxide – A Gas Under Pressure* (ZDF-Germany)

Youth Prize

Discover Science: Let's See the

Rustam Qobil, *Syrdarya – River Journey* (BBC)
Special commendation in External Broadcast category

I'm happy that the BBC's Uzbek Service has been able to bring Central Asia's persistent water problems to the attention of our audiences. The region already has to cope with the ecological disaster that is the Aral Sea. Millions of lives rely on the Syrdarya and other rivers in Central Asia, but as clean water supplies are becoming more scarce, the question of shared resources becomes ever more pressing. After my trip along the river, I couldn't sleep for days, thinking of what may happen to my home region in the future.



I was very pleased to receive the award, especially as it came from colleagues in a region that we broadcast to on a daily basis. It was nice to receive recognition for a piece of work that required much research and travel across Central Asia.



John Blades, *The Too Hard Basket* (ABC-Australia)
Winner in the Radio documentary category

I made this programme to bring the long-ignored subject of disability and sexuality into the public arena, to “free” the lives of all of us living with a disability.

I’m very humbled and overwhelmed to receive this incredible international recognition. It is even more meaningful for me, living with a severe disability. It is the most beautiful trophy I have ever seen and it is a real treasure, as it is my first radio award in my 28 years in the industry.

Speed of Sound (NHK in partnership with Al-Jazeera Children’s Channel)

News Prize

Series Reports on Wangjialing Mine Tragedy in Shanxi Province, China (RTPRC/CCTV-China)

Documentary Prize

Cockroach (EBS-Korea)
Special Commendation: *Asia’s Monarchies – Japan* (Channel News Asia, MediaCorp-Singapore)

ABU TV Sports Prize

Miracle Body: Downhill Skiing - Race Against Fear (NHK in partnership with Eurovision Science, NHK G-Media)
Special Commendation: *Rivals for the Gold* (NHK-Japan)

Special Jury Prize

Zud Disaster Followed by Grim Future (MNB-Mongolia)
Special Commendation: *Dodo’s Lost World* (MBC-Mauritius)



The Great Queen Seondeok by MBC-Korea won the top drama prize.

2010 Asiavision Annual Award

CCTV-China
NHK-Japan
MCOT-Thailand

Dennis Anthony Memorial Award

Coverage of the immediate aftermath of twin car bombings in Baghdad (IRIB-Iran)

ABU Prize for Climate Change Reporting

The Pearl Report: Counting Carbon (TVB-Hong Kong)

ABU Prize on HIV/AIDS TV Programmes

The Condom Man (BBS-Bhutan)

The Children’s Rights Award

Let Them Touch the Sky (Smile Foundation-India)

Technical

ABU Broadcasting Engineering Excellence Award

Abdolali Aliaskary, Vice President, Development and Media Technology Division, IRIB-Iran

ABU Engineering Industry Excellence Award

Zhang Jianping, Vice President of Jiangsu Broadcasting Corporation, RTPRC-China

ABU Technical Review Prize, Best Article Award

Kazuyoshi Shogen, NHK Science & Technology Research Laboratories, Japan

Doing things differently >page 18

Doing things differently

For the first time, the final adjudication of the ABU Prizes 2010 was done ahead of the General Assembly. Previously, the selection would be done a day before the General Assembly.

From 1 to 3 September, the jury panels for the television and radio categories convened in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, to determine the winners.

ABU Senior Programme Executive Vijay Sadhu, who organised and facilitated the radio judging panel, said picking the winners before the General Assembly gave the judges more time to complete the process.

"This also helps the General Assembly host organisation in planning the award ceremony and it also gives the winners enough notice to attend the award ceremony," she said.

Her TV counterpart Hanizah Hamzah echoed her sentiments, and added that it was better not to have the judging coincide with the General Assembly period as it enabled all involved to focus on Programme



Members of the radio panel deliberating the shortlisted programmes.

Committee meetings during the General Assembly.

This year, the radio programme judging panel vetted 30 shortlisted programmes and the six panelists said they were "deeply impressed by the diversity of issues covered".

According to the panelists, the Documentary and Drama categories stood out, as they tackled "the most sensitive issues, exploiting the best possible production techniques".

The radio panel, headed by Chan Yiu-wah (Radio Television Hong Kong), comprised Rajeev Kumar Shukla (All India Radio), Thorsten Karg (Deutsche Welle-Germany), Tanaka Takanobu (NHK-Japan), Rose Tan (MediaCorp-Singapore) and S M Marikkar (MBC-Sri Lanka).



The TV judging panel.

The TV judging panel was chaired by Zhao Qi (CCTV-China) and included Shinichi Nagano (NHK-Japan), Deepa Chandra (Doordarshan-India), Prema Pon Rajoo (MediaCorp-Singapore), Tatsuya Nakamura (former ABU Programme Department Director/NHK) and Tyro Ahn (KBS-Korea).



Moon Dong Hyun, *Cockroach* (EBS-Korea)
Winner in the TV documentary category

I had previously received the Korean Producers Association's Grand Prize so I knew the Korean reaction. But I was curious about the international reaction to my work and was pleasantly surprised to be awarded with the ABU Prize. It means a lot to have international affirmation of my work!

To me, the cockroach serves as a symbolic metaphor to illustrate the conflict between human beings, even between human nature and culture. With *Cockroach*, I wanted

the audience to shed their universal loathing, even for a moment.

When informed, people can choose to switch from hatred, deep-set opinions and stereotypes. They could then choose to accept diversity in ideology, religion and culture, and eventually accept each other. With my films, I try to give a voice to the minority and the marginalised.

I'm currently researching my next project, which is on the desert. I haven't decided on the Sahara or Gobi but I'm looking to use desert traditions or philosophies to address the materialistic excesses of modern civilisation.

'Let Them Touch the Sky' wins Asia-Pacific Child Rights Award

This year's Asia-Pacific Child Rights Award was won by the Smile Foundation and NDTV India for the short film series, *Let Them Touch the Sky* (*Choone Do Aasman*).

The award was presented on 19 October in Tokyo during the ABU General Assembly. The award, created by CASBAA, ABU and Unicef, is given annually to the best television programme produced in the Asia-Pacific region with a focus on child rights.

Let Them Touch the Sky captured the real-life stories of children living in the slums of cities in India and brought to light the aspirations of less-privileged children, whose stories and dreams often go unheard or even ignored.

Estimates by international agencies put the number of street children in India at 18 million, which is the largest in the world.

"The poor in India – particularly children – have nobody to represent them. Even though India's children account for more than one-third of its population, their interests have never been given priority," said Santanu Kumar Mishra, CEO & Trustee of the Smile Foundation, which produced the series.

"*Let Them Touch the Sky* was an effort to seek attention of civil society groups, policy makers, corporate and other opinion makers towards ensuring rights of children – irrespective of their background, class and caste."

Let Them Touch the Sky was praised by the jurors for its use of children as the protagonists and narrators. Jurors also noted that the series was innovative, showed the social environment of the children and the children's telling of their own stories was powerful. The series enabled viewers to engage



Hetal, 12, was featured in *Let Them Touch the Sky*. She works as a domestic helper for 700 rupees (US\$15) a month to support her handicapped father and two siblings

with the children's stories on a more personal level, compared to news stories about children in slums.

"Congratulations to the production team of the *Let Them Touch the Sky* for giving voice to the dreams of some of the millions of underprivileged children in the Asia-Pacific region. The message of this thought-provoking journey through India is touching and hard hitting but uplifting and full of hope. *Let Them Touch the Sky* is a great example of how high-quality TV programmes can change the lives of the most vulnerable people and give wings

to their dreams," ABU Secretary-General, Javad Mottaghi, said.

"Now in its tenth year, the CASBAA, ABU, and Unicef Child Rights Award continues to reflect the high level of commitment from broadcasters in promoting the 'Rights of the Child'," said Simon Twiston Davies, CEO of CASBAA.

"There is no doubt that high-quality programming created by Asian broadcasters and delivered via Asian platforms can play a pivotal role in putting an end to issues such as child exploitation."

Japan will be the 15th country in the world – and the first in Asia – to switch to fully digital broadcasting when it completes the transition in July 2011, the ABU President, Yoshinori Imai, said.

Speaking at a news conference in Tokyo on the eve of the General Assembly, he said supporting members in their moves towards going digital was an important task for the ABU.

Mr Imai said digitalisation was also making good progress in Korea,

Japan on track for full digital broadcasting

despite the high costs and shortage of engineers.

The Secretary-General, Javad Mottaghi, said the union was arranging consultancies to help members make the digital transition. It was asking broadcasters in developed countries to assist those in developing nations.

"This is the practice in the union as a big family," Mr Mottaghi said

On another issue, Mr Imai said broadcasters remained concerned about the high cost of purchasing sports rights.

The ABU's Director of Sport, John Barton, said the cost of broadcast rights was a problem for most countries, especially for key sports events. The ABU was working to ensure that members did not pay more than they should.



ABU President Yoshinori Imai briefing journalists on Japan's digitalisation progress.

The news conference was attended by journalists from television and the print media based in Tokyo.