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# *Dwight D. Eisenhower Memorial Commission*

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## **President Eisenhower and the Voice of America**

*“It is essential in the world struggle that the world know something about our good intentions, latent strength [and] respect for rights of others... the truth must be nailed, banner-like to a staff—and we must do that by convincing the whole world that our announced intentions of peace **are** the truth.”*

-General Dwight D. Eisenhower, Congressional testimony (July 5, 1950)

- **President Eisenhower established the United States Information Agency** on August 3, 1953 and made the Voice of America (in existence since 1942) its principal component. This reorganization unified the Executive branch’s international information efforts.
- **President Eisenhower transferred the headquarters of the Voice of America** in 1954 from New York City to its current location at 330 Independence Avenue in Washington, DC, just three blocks from the United States Capitol.
- **President Eisenhower’s vision for the Voice of America lives on** in the *VOA Charter*, introduced in 1960. Later signed into law by President Gerald Ford in 1976, the *Charter* promises “accurate, objective, and comprehensive” news coverage.
- On January 26, 1953—just six days after his inauguration—**President Eisenhower established the Committee on International Information Activities** to recommend ways to improve information efforts abroad. He explained his position in a letter on January 24, 1953, to the Chief of the National Security Council, affirming that “It has long been my conviction that a unified and dynamic effort in this field is essential to the security of the United States and of the other peoples in the community of free nations.”
- **Eisenhower emphasized positive and accurate public diplomacy.** On May 1, 1953, the President wrote to William Benton, publisher and chairman of the *Encyclopedia Britannica*, that America’s information effort “must be done so accurately, with such careful regard for the truth, that it will come to be respected and trusted throughout the world. To my mind this is the real function of the Voice of America.”

