



Media Aid

China -- Xinhua's Growing Ranks of 'Foreign' Correspondents

Since July of this year, Xinhua's English-language service-- China's official news service for English-language audiences -- has hired several experienced Western journalists to serve as overseas correspondents. Following Xinhua's introduction in 2003 of bylines on items filed in English, OSC has observed that the number of non-Chinese correspondents employed by the news agency has grown to more than 80. Most of these new hires, however, have been non-Western reporters.

Beijing Xinhua in English has been observed to file items by the following five Western journalists since July (See appendix for titles of items filed by each journalist):

- **Matthew Rusling (Washington-based).** As detailed on his personal website, Rusling began working for Xinhua in May 2009 as a reporter covering issues such as US foreign policy in Africa, US-China relations, the economic downturn, and a broad range of other topics. He previously worked as an associate editor at *National Defense Magazine*, covering defense, energy and national security issues. Rusling spent four years in Japan and Korea, publishing items in the *New York Times*, *USA Today*, and the *Christian Science Monitor*, and giving interviews to National Public Radio and BBC Radio. He served in the Peace Corps in Zimbabwe and worked at the *Cambodia Daily* in Phnom Penh. He has a Master of Science degree from the Medill Graduate School of Journalism at Northwestern University.
- **David Harris (Jerusalem-based).** In his biography on the website of USA Radio Network, Harris is listed as "host and Bureau Chief of News Services for the Jerusalem desk of The Media Line news agency. He studied Middle Eastern politics and journalism in Manchester and Preston in the UK, and began working in radio as a news journalist in the independent sector in Northern England before joining the BBC in 1992. After arriving in Israel, Harris worked at *The Jerusalem Post*, first as an economics writer, then as the Post's senior political correspondent."
- **Alexander Manda (Mexico City-based).** The LinkedIn website reports that, before joining Xinhua, Manda was business editor at the Mexico City English-language daily, *The News*, and before that was emerging markets reporter at Reuters, and debt reporter at Dow Jones. He received a BA-Philosophy from the University of Sussex in 1993.
- **Lucy-Claire Saunders (United Nations/New York-based).** The ZoomInfo website says that Saunders - originally from Los Angeles - obtained a Masters in Journalism at the University of British Columbia, and then worked for 3 years as a senior writer and copy editor at the Post Media Group in Vancouver. She joined Xinhua in May 2009 and is an accredited member of the United Nations Correspondents Association.

- **Richard Smart (Tokyo-based).** The LinkedIn website notes that Smart was previously a copy-editor at *The Japan Times* from January 2006 – July 2009. He joined Xinhua in August 2009 as a "Japan English-language correspondent."

Xinhua's hiring of experienced Western journalists follows the growth in recent years of the number of foreign correspondents -- mostly non-Westerners -- employed by the news agency. Xinhua introduced bylines identifying its correspondents in 2003.

- Prior to 2008, bylines indicated that Xinhua had some 24 non-Chinese correspondents - - Zabbi Tamanna in Afghanistan; Mulyanda Djohan in East Timor; Rakesh Singh and Smith P. Fernandez in India; Heru Andriyanto and Mulyanda Djohan in Indonesia; Jamal Hashim, Laith Salman, Ali B. Al-Shouk, Muhsen Hussein, Musa Ja'far and Shaalan Ahmed in Iraq; Saud Abu Ramadan and Shelly Paz in the Middle East; Dhruba Paudel and Rajeeb Man Tamrakar in Nepal; Dai Adi in Nigeria; Emmy Karemera in Rwanda; Charles Akena and Ronald Ssekandi in Uganda; Bui Minh Long and Thai Thanh Van in Vietnam; and Salome Konke and Shame Makoshori in Zimbabwe.
- By 2008, the number of bylines for non-Chinese Xinhua correspondents had grown to 42 with the addition of Abdul Haleem in Afghanistan; Naim-Ul-Karim in Bangladesh; Edgardo Loguercio in Brazil; Raphael Mvogo in Cameroon; Neeraja Ganesh in India; Ghassan Awad in Iraq; Silvia Marchetti in Italy; Daniel Ooko in Kenya; Suzan Haidamous in Lebanon; Epifanio Cortes in Mexico; Claire Ben-Ari in the Middle East; Binju Sitaula in Nepal; Olatunbosun Awoniyi in Nigeria; Angelica Carballo, Jeffrey Maitem and Ana Santos in the Philippines; Abdurrahman Warsameh in Somalia; and Elias Shilangwa in Zambia.
- In addition to the six experienced Western journalists highlighted above, 2009 saw new bylines from 17 more non-Chinese Xinhua correspondents, including Abdul Daiyar in Afghanistan; Paul Ames in Belgium; Luc Roger Mbala in Democratic Republic of Congo; Emad Al-Azrak and Muhammad Yamany in Egypt; Mehdi Bagheri in Iran; Fares Akram, Emad Drimly and Hossam Hamdan in the Middle East; Shambhu Bhujel in Nepal; Prime Sarmiento in the Philippines; Aimable Twahirwa in Rwanda; Nuttanan Srithorn in Thailand; Ngoc Ha, Nguyen Thi Ngoc Ha and Vo Mai Nguyen Phuong in Vietnam; and Tichaona Chifamba in Zimbabwe.

Appendix – Titles of items filed by Xinhua's Western correspondents

Matthew Rusling

29 Jul -- "Analysis: US Commercial Real Estate Could Be Next Blow To Economy"

6 Aug -- "Analysis: US, China Cooperation Crucial To Slowing Climate Change"

13 Aug -- "Analysis: Can Obama Pass His Health Care Overhaul?"

15 Aug -- "Analysis: Experts Divided Over Obama's Sliding Support Rate"

28 Aug -- "Analysis: Can US Overhaul Immigration Detention System?"

6 Sep -- "Analysis: Green Technology May Spark New US-China Trade Boom"

7 Sep -- "Analysis: US-China Trade Ties Deepen Amid Challenges"

12 Sep -- "Analysis: How Bad Is the US Deficit Really?"

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- 15 Sep -- "Roundup: Experts Say Tire Tariffs Could Worsen US-China Trade Relations"
- 19 Sep -- "Analysis: Marred Afghan Elections Could Undercut US Strategy"
- 23 Sep -- "Analysis: Foreign Policy Week: Can Obama Walk His Talk?"
- 24 Sep -- "Analysis: Doubts Loom Over US Aims to Ramp up Exports, Reshape Global Economy: Experts"
- 29 Sep -- "Roundup: US Experts Divided on Whether US Troops Should Pull Out of Afghanistan"
- 20 Oct -- "Analysis: Dollar's Drop No Cause To Worry, for Now"
- 25 Oct -- "Analysis: Terror in US: How Dangerous Are Home Grown Jihadists?"
- 28 Oct -- "Analysis: Japan asserting itself, but how far will it go?"

David Harris

- 27 Jul -- "Analysis: "US Fall Deadline for Iran Not Coincidental"
- 17 Sep -- "Analysis: Israel's Counter-Gaza-Report Public Relation Fails to Make Waves"
- 21 Sep -- "Analysis" with Deng Yushan: "Obama-Netanyahu-Abbas Summit Unlikely to Break Peace Stalemate"
- 23 Sep -- "Analysis: Palestinians, Israelis Still Far Apart After Obama Meeting"
- 23 Sep -- "Roundup" with Geng Xuepeng: "Ahmadinejad, Netanyahu Speeches at UN To Draw Close Attention"
- 28 Sep -- "Roundup" with Geng Xuepeng: "US, Arab Countries Exchange Ideas on Mideast Peace"
- 27 Oct -- "Analysis: Israeli Ties With Key Players in Mideast Worsening"
- 28 Oct -- "Analysis: Israel Shows Restraint After Latest Rocket From Southern Lebanon"

Alexander Manda

- 21 Jul -- "Interview: Mexican Official Calls for Collaboration To Boost Trade With China"
- 18 Aug -- "Roundup: Latin America Recovers From Flu, WHO Warns Northern Hemisphere for Winter"
- 9 Sep -- "Roundup: UN Secretary General Calls for More Nuclear Free Zones"
- 10 Sep -- "Interview: 60 Years Witnesses Substantial Changes in China: Notimex Chief"
- 23 Sep -- "Interview: Great Cooperation Opportunities With China: Mexican Energy Official"

Lucy-Claire Saunders

- 25 Jul -- "Feature: Chinese Investment in Africa Creates New Opportunities"
- 20 Aug -- "Feature: Life in New York City Not Easy for Young People Out of Work"
- 24 Aug -- "Interview" with Xinhua writer Gu Zhenqiu: "Senior UN Official Sees China as Important Element in World Population Control, Poverty Reduction"
- 10 Sep -- "Interview: NY Fashion Week Adds Gloss To Recession"
- 11 Sep -- "Feature: Off the Beaten Path for NY Fashion Week"
- 15 Sep -- "Interview" with Xinhua writer Gu Zhenqiu: "United Nations Convenes 'Historic Conferences' Amid Multiple Crises"
- 20 Sep -- "Interview: Obama's Atomic Meeting at UN Attempts to Level Playing Field" (interview with Hamid Dabashi, professor of Iranian studies at Columbia University)
- 20 Sep -- "Interview: Getting Atomic Dominoes to Fall One by One" (interview with UN disarmament chief Sergio de Queiroz Duarte)

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22 Sep – "Interview: Shedding Sunlight on Climate Talks" (interview with Dr. Shi Zhengrong of Suntech Power Holdings Ltd)

25 Sep – "Interview: Call Them What You Will, 'Climate Change Migrants' are Illegal: UNHCR" (Antonio Guterres)

Richard Smart

21 Aug – "Japan Communist Party Aims To Be 'Constructive Opposition' After Election"

28 Aug -- "Interview: Japan's Foreign Policy Likely To Change If DPJ Wins Lower House Election: Scholar"

31 Aug -- "Analysis" with Ma Jie: "Changes Expected, But Not Dramatic in DPJ's Foreign Policy"

25 Sep – "Profiles: Three Candidates Challenge for LDP Presidency in Japan"

28 Sep – "News Analysis: Tanigaki Unlikely to Turn Around LDP Fortunes"