



## **NASB Newsletter – October 2012**

### **HFCC/ASBU B12 Paris**

*by Jeff White, NASB Secretary-Treasurer*

The High Frequency Coordination Conference (HFCC/ASBU B12) took place at the Mercure Porte d'Orleans Hotel – part of the ubiquitous French Accor hotel chain – in the suburb of Montrouge, just south of Paris. Interestingly, the HFCC had one previous conference in Montrouge in 1994, and it too was held at the same Mercure Hotel. The hotel staff was very attentive, and during the conference week HFCC delegates made up the majority of the hotel guests. The HFCC Registration Desk was manned all week by NASB Assistant Secretary-Treasurer Thais White, who was assisted by TDF's Alexandra Lung during the busy Monday morning registration session.

The B12 Conference was co-sponsored by TeleDiffusion de France (TDF) and the NASB. TDF's Jerome Hirigoyen opened the meeting on Monday morning, August 27, welcoming everyone to France and introducing HFCC Chairman Oldrich Cip, who said:

“I will start with a recollection of a point in the history of shortwave broadcasting that we undertook about 20 years ago when a group, that later became known as the HFCC, introduced for the first time ever a workable frequency coordination. The system is still up and running, it has become global, and it has improved listening on shortwave bands. Now we face a development that reduces the importance of shortwave broadcasting: New methods of media delivery are emerging quickly and some decision-makers interpret the cuts or even closures of shortwave services as the inevitable outcome of technological changes. Yet we believe that there is a strong need for the delivery of programmes and other content both on traditional and new platforms depending on the personal choice of consumers and on their situation.”

Oldrich Cip went on to explain a current HFCC project (together with the ASBU and ABU-HFC) called International Radio for Disaster Relief. He said: “Reports on disaster and post-disaster communication in Japan, Haiti and during the Indian Ocean tsunami revealed that the flow of incoming information was identified as insufficient and even as a source of dissatisfaction and frustration among people affected by a disaster.”

Cip explained that “the unique – and even life-saving – role of radio in disaster and post-disaster situations has been well-known to listeners and broadcasters for decades, but no

attempt has ever been made to set up and prepare in advance a dedicated global system for the distribution of radio information to disaster stricken regions.” More information about this project is available in a document on the B12 Conference webpage, [www.hfcc.org/B12.phtml](http://www.hfcc.org/B12.phtml).

During his opening comments, the HFCC chairman also talked about plans for HFCC participation in World Radio Day 2013 (February 13). This project is being coordinated with UNESCO and will include a special webpage dedicated to the event.

In his own remarks at the Opening Plenary session, HFCC Vice Chairman Horst Scholz noted that at the first HFCC conference in Paris in 1994, also hosted by TDF, participants were provided with three computers and three telephone lines. TDF also offered interpretation from Russian to English and from French to English. There were 62 delegates representing 29 organizations.

Horst read apologies from a few members, including Andrew Flynn of Christian Vision who had informed members that CVC would have a limited shortwave schedule for B12 after the recent closure of its transmitter site in Santiago, Chile. A moment of silence was observed in honor of the recently-deceased HF frequency coordinator Stanley Leinwoll, who worked for Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty as well as NASB members WEWN and Family Radio. Rocus de Joode announced that Radio Netherlands had recently ceased most of its shortwave transmissions, but their former relay station in Madagascar would continue operations under the auspices of a new company called MGLOB. Another Dutch company called Free Press Unlimited would also continue shortwave transmissions. Ludo Maes informed participants that his company TDP had recently changed its name to Broadcast Belgium and its new FMO code would be BRB.

Other speakers at the Opening Plenary included conference committee chairman Jeff White of the NASB who explained the week's agenda, and Gary Stanley who gave some information about a new HFCC finance committee.

After the Opening Plenary and a short coffee break, the frequency coordination work began in earnest. A total of around 107 delegates participated in the conference either the full week or part of it, and they came from approximately 45 broadcasters and other organizations from roughly the same number of countries around the world.

After Monday's group lunch at the Mercure, I recorded an interview with Jerome Hirigoyen and Pablo Diaz-Bertin of TDF for use on a special edition of NASB member Adventist World Radio's program *Wavescan*, produced by NASB board member Adrian Peterson. We presented the half-hour program from the HFCC in Paris that week.

## **SHORTWAVE FOR AFRICA**

After the coordination work ended on Monday afternoon, Allistair Oliver, Manager of Business Development at Sentech in South Africa, explained all about their transmission facilities and the African coverage they can provide to interested broadcasters. Sentech is a state-owned company with infrastructure to carry transmission signals for the South African Broadcasting Corporation as well as commercial and community stations. It has 742 FM transmitters, 627 TV transmitters and satellite services. It has 16 shortwave transmitters (ten 100-kilowatt, four 250-kilowatt and two 500-kilowatt) and 43 shortwave antennas capable of covering Africa and

the Middle East. These SW facilities are located in Meyerton, about 80 kilometers from Johannesburg. The site was built in 1964.

Oliver said that due to the nature of shortwave frequencies, their travel over long distances makes shortwave an ideal medium for covering Africa. He said “shortwave is also suitable because many countries on the continent have limited resources and infrastructure for broadcasting. In some cases, there is also restricted freedom of speech. And in times of emergencies and humanitarian crisis situations shortwave is a technology solution of choice.”

Oliver said that “there is a strong value proposition for shortwave broadcasting in Africa due to the low penetration of other forms of terrestrial broadcasting. Compared to the rest of the world, Africa's communication infrastructure is lagging behind with limited FM radio coverage, limited television coverage and limited to no Internet coverage.” He said that up to 30% of the population in many African countries listens to shortwave. He cited a recent survey carried out by Trans World Radio to determine if people were still listening to them on shortwave. “Listeners responded overwhelmingly by SMS, e-mail, phone calls and letters that TWR should keep broadcasting on shortwave.”

Sentech currently provides shortwave services to 23 broadcasters for a total of 3300 hours per month. Current clients include Adventist World Radio, Babcock, the BBC, Radio France International, the South African Broadcasting Corporation, Trans World Radio and World Radio Network.

Each morning, the conference hotel package included a buffet breakfast (with lots of French breads and croissants, among other things), and a welcome coffee break, followed later by morning and afternoon coffee breaks. On Tuesday morning frequency coordination began anew, with a pause for lunch consisting of shrimp, codfish and fruit salad.

## **WHAT'S NEW WITH DRM?**

Just after lunch, Ruxandra Obreja, Chair of the DRM (Digital Radio Mondiale) Consortium came from London to talk to HFCC delegates about the latest DRM developments. She said that the “peak” for shortwave was in 2005, and it has declined gradually since then. She pointed out that 41 shortwave transmitter sites have closed since 2005. DRM's peak, she said, was in 2006, when there were some 2000 hours of DRM transmissions daily. Today there are somewhat more than 600 hours per day.

The DRM Consortium believes the solution to the decline of shortwave is digital radio, and DRM is recognized by the ITU. Obreja said half the world is currently covered by DRM transmissions. She gave an overview of DRM's status in various parts of the world:

- In Brazil, there have been DRM tests over the past five years. Both HD and DRM standards are being evaluated by the government there. TDF did shortwave tests to Brazil from Montsinery, French Guiana at the end of 2011. A local company in Brazil is now building DRM-capable transmitters.

- In India, successful DRM trials began in 2007. Regular DRM service started on shortwave from Delhi in 2009. In October 2011, All India Radio increased DRM shortwave hours to 16 per day. They have ordered two new high-power (1 megawatt) HF transmitters.

- DRM was presented as the plan for digital radio in Russia, but plans have been suspended recently pending the resolution of a TV matter.

- In Asia/Pacific, Radio Australia has two DRM-ready 100-kilowatt shortwave transmitters. Taiwan has recently acquired DRM transmitters. Radio New Zealand International is using DRM to feed local radio stations in the Pacific.

- There is “lots of interest” in DRM in Africa.

Obreja explained that multiplatform (DRM, DAB and HD) chipsets were launched in January of this year. Frontier Silicon is the biggest producer of chipsets. DRM receivers are being developed and upgraded, such as the Newstar DR111. Other models are available from Himalaya in Hong Kong and Uniwave. DRM car receiver prototypes are being made in India. The Fraunhofer company is making professional DRM receivers. There are various software-defined radios also on the market. Obreja believes that the tendency to produce multi-standard digital receivers will increase in the coming years.

What's next for DRM? “We need to build on the good news from India,” said Ruxandra Obreja. “We need to continue and increase our presence in Brazil, and watch the situation in Russia.” The DRM Commercial Committee needs to attract chipset manufacturers and work on receiver manufacturers. DRM will continue to have a meaningful presence at major events such as the IBS in Amsterdam (where a new DRM implementation guide was due to be released the following week), the Consumer Electronics Show in the U.S. and others. “In general, we need to fight the case for digital radio.”

Ruxandra Obreja's DRM presentation was immediately followed by an open meeting of the DRM's Commercial Committee, chaired by Ludo Maes, in a breakout room. This meeting was connected by conference call to DRM Commercial Committee members in several countries.

The Commercial Committee meeting began with an update on the status of DRM in various countries:

- In India, implementation of DRM continues, although a little slower than expected.

- The situation with DRM in Russia is uncertain at the moment, but the Voice of Russia plans to maintain the same number of hours of DRM transmissions to Europe and India next year.

- In Brazil, the government has not yet made a decision on which digital radio system will be adopted, but DRM is in the running, and the Consortium is working to promote DRM within the country, including its advantages for community radio stations.

- North Korea is making DRM broadcasts.

- In Ecuador, tests of different digital systems are underway, including DRM. HCJB has been participating in these.

The Committee noted that the number of hours of DRM transmissions has not increased lately. They stressed that it is important for broadcasters to implement and maintain DRM broadcasts in order to interest listeners and stimulate the demand for DRM receivers. It was suggested that broadcasters try to coordinate schedules into “bouquets” of DRM broadcasts for the benefit of listeners. Stations should also use their broadcasts to air spots promoting DRM and encouraging listeners to buy DRM receivers. Stations are also encouraged to share their latest DRM broadcast schedules with the DRM Project Office in order to maintain the DRM website listing up-to-date.

Chipset manufacturers are key to the development of DRM receivers, and more of them are becoming members of the DRM Consortium. The DR111 is the latest receiver on the market. It costs \$120, but the price is expected to fall somewhat. There is significant interest in DRM from the automotive market, particularly in India.

## **HF DEVELOPMENTS AT THOMSON BROADCAST**

After the afternoon coordination session, Moritz Steinmann of NASB associate member Thomson Broadcast and Multimedia gave a presentation about some of its recent shortwave projects, including:

- The Voice of Nigeria decided to build a new station near Abuja, which was a turnkey job by Thomson consisting of three DRM-ready 250-kilowatt transmitters. It was inaugurated in March 2012 by the Nigerian vice president. There is a large rotatable antenna (6-30 MHz) and three new curtain antennas. With the rotatable antenna, said Steinmann, “if a new problem area occurs or if you just want to change a target, you don’t need to buy a new antenna; you just change the direction.”

- A new 100-kilowatt DRM-ready transmitter was installed in Taskhent, Uzbekistan in December 2011. Steinmann pointed out that Tashkent is located on the famous Silk Road which was the most important trading route from China to the Mediterranean.

- A new 250-kilowatt shortwave transmitter and antenna for Betar Bangladesh was commissioned in mid-July. It’s not DRM-ready, but can be modified if the station decides it wants to transmit in DRM to India. Thomson is modernizing an existing

station 40 kilometers north of Dhaka, a site that is also used for rice-farming. Thomson built both the transmitter and antenna, so there is no interface problem.

- Four 300-kilowatt shortwave transmitters are being built for a site in Yamata, Japan. The first one will be on the air in April 2013, then three more at yearly intervals. At least the first two will be DRM-capable, so they save energy, allowing them to reach the same coverage area with less power.

- Another large project is underway in Taiwan.

Immediately following their presentation, Thomson invited all HFCC/ASBU participants to a French wine tasting in the Mercure. This was a good opportunity to try the local wines, and as they say, “a good time was had by all.”

## **THE DELIGHTS OF MONTROUGE**

There were many restaurants in Montrouge within easy walking distance of the Mercure Hotel for dinner during the conference. Montrouge is a pleasant town for walking, particularly during the conference week with daytime temperatures in the 70's (Fahrenheit) and nighttime temps in the 60's, with nary a drop of rain. Montrouge is full of flowers everywhere. A large shopping mall called La Vache Noire (“The Black Cow”) is only a 15- or 20-minute walk from the Mercure Hotel. TDF's headquarters is located in Montrouge. It used to be located in the building directly in front of the Mercure Hotel, but is now a few kilometers away. A large Carrefour supermarket is only a few blocks from the hotel, as well as a pedestrian street with many restaurants. Within a few minutes' walk of the Mercure there were several Italian, Japanese, Vietnamese, Greek, French of course, and even Iranian restaurants.

On Tuesday night, the NASB representatives at the HFCC Conference decided to have a board dinner at a French restaurant in Montrouge recommended by TDF. This was a rare opportunity for several of us to get together, especially board member George Ross who resides in Guam. Present at the dinner were NASB president Glen Tapley of WEWN, Jerry Plummer representing Vice President Brady Murray of WWCR, fellow board member George Ross of Trans World Radio and his colleague Shakti Verma, Secretary-Treasurer Jeff White and his wife Assistant Secretary-Treasurer Thais White of WRMI, Jerome Hirigoyen and Pablo Diaz-Bertin of NASB associate member TDF and Jerome's wife Carole who took part in the NASB 2011 Annual Meeting on the Majesty of the Seas, and Tom Lucey of the FCC's International Bureau. Jerome and his wife Carole were able to translate the menu for us. The prix-fixe menu began with sangria (or beer for those so inclined), followed by an appetizer. (Many of us had melted Camembert cheese.) The main course included options of steak, fish or pork (the latter of which came in a large ceramic dish covered with a flaky French pastry) accompanied by French wine or beer. After the main course, there was a selection of French cheeses to try, and finally a dessert. I had something called an “exploding volcano” which involved ice cream and meringue. Others had the more traditional crème brulee. Dinner began at 7:30 pm (early by French standards) and ended at 11:00 pm, giving us three and a half hours for pleasant conversation about shortwave-related and other topics, including an

explanation of the NASB's proposal to co-host the B13 HFCC Conference in Bratislava, Slovakia together with Radio Slovakia International.

Every night for hours after the frequency coordination ended around 5:00 pm, Vladislav Cip was hard at work in the HFCC Secretariat room, among other things preparing the daily collision lists which showed potential interference between stations on the same or adjacent frequencies. The stations would then attempt to negotiate changes to their own and other stations' schedules to eliminate these collisions before they occur at the beginning of the next frequency season. Each night from Sunday to Thursday, a new collision list was prepared for each station to work on the next day. Then around 11 pm or midnight, Thais and I would staple the collision lists together and distribute them to each FMO (frequency management organization) at their tables in the main meeting room. Each FMO's seating area was designated by a small Eiffel Tower with a three-letter FMO code on it. Of course the largest collision lists belonged to the Chinese, the Russians, the Iranians and the IBB, for example, but the FCC had a reasonably long list to work on as well, including collisions involving the NASB members.

The coordination process continued on Wednesday morning and afternoon, with a break for lunch featuring avocado-marinated salmon, roast sirloin and cheesecake. On Wednesday afternoon, Ms. Mirta Lourenco, Chief of the Media Capacity-Building Section of UNESCO's Communication Development Division, met with members of the HFCC Steering Board to discuss areas of potential cooperation. The two primary topics were the UNESCO World Radio Day webpage mentioned earlier and the HFCC's International Radio for Disaster Relief project.

## **RFI'S INCORPORATION INTO AEF**

At the end of Wednesday's coordination was a presentation by John Maguire, Director of International Development for Audiovisuel Extérieur de la France, the French government organism that manages Radio France International, France 24 TV and Radio Monte Carlo International (an Arabic-language station) and owns 49% of TV5 Monde. Maguire's talk was about how AEF is meeting strategic goals. He said AEF's three subsidiaries have merged structurally, but not editorially.

Radio France International has cut back on shortwave in recent years, but Maguire said there are certain areas where shortwave will be maintained for political reasons, such as China (even with jamming) and Hausa to West Africa, where shortwave is the only way for many people to listen.

Maguire said AEF is in competition with Western broadcasters like CNN, and they believe there is a place for a French element in the international media scene. But he said they are also in competition with China. "We impact by existing and influencing," he said. "We want to reach the maximum number of people in the maximum number of countries." They are developing a Farsi service for Iran, but overall they have cut languages from 13 to six in recent years.

Priority countries for AEF include:

- French-speaking Africa (Senegal, Guinea, Democratic Republic of Congo, Republic of Congo, Cameroon, Togo, Cote d'Ivoire, Niger, Burkina Faso, Benin, Chad, Gabon, Djibouti, Madagascar)
- English-speaking Africa (Nigeria, South Africa)
- North Africa (Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia)
- Middle East (Egypt, Iran)
- North America (USA, Canada)
- South America (Brazil, Argentina, Mexico)
- Europe (United Kingdom, Netherlands, Germany, Poland, Romania, Russia, Turkey)
- Asia (China, Vietnam, Indonesia)

RFI is broadcasting, for example, French-language programs on shortwave from the TDF site in Issoudun, France to West Africa. They are also using Sentech to cover parts of Africa on shortwave. But Maguire points out that in the last 10 years, RFI has cut shortwave transmissions from 200 hours per day to 70 hours per day.

At the end of John Maguire's presentation, he invited the audience to a French champagne reception elsewhere in the Mercure, which like the wine-tasting the previous night was an enjoyable social event.

For dinner on Wednesday night, Thais and I went to the Ibis hotel (also a member of the Accor chain) right next door to the Mercure, where many members of the HFCC/ASBU delegation were staying, since the Mercure only has 113 rooms and booked up far in advance of the conference. The Ibis has a Courtpaille restaurant (similar to a fancy Denny's in the United States), which is an Accor-owned restaurant chain.

### **“NEW” SHORTWAVE STATION IN MADAGASCAR**

On Thursday afternoon, I recorded interviews for Wavescan with Rocus de Joode of Radio Netherlands and Flore Ravelojaona, manager of the Radio Netherlands relay station in Madagascar. Radio Netherlands has owned and operated the Madagascar station for over 40 years, but as of November 1 of this year the station is being handed over to an employee-owned local company called MGLOB – Malagasy Global Business, S.A.

The station at Talata Volonondry is about 25 kilometers northeast of the capital city of Madagascar, Antananarivo. The large island of Madagascar is 400 kilometers east of the African continent and has a population of 22 million. The legendary animal life which has been made famous in a series of popular movies is unique. The site can reach central, southern and eastern Africa with one hop (up to 4000 km). Demand for shortwave coverage remains high for this region, which includes countries such as the Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Somalia, Sudan and Southern Sudan and Zimbabwe. The second hop from Madagascar – a 7000-kilometer radius – reaches west Africa, north Africa, the Middle East, Central and South Asia and Southeast Asia.

MGLOB will market the facility as a commercial station. It offers 100, 125 and 250 kilowatt transmitter power, as well as a 50-kilowatt transmitter for non-directional coverage of the island of Madagascar itself. Just last year, Radio Netherlands bought four former Radio Sweden ABB transmitters from a site in Horby, Sweden to renovate the Madagascar station



with newer equipment, and these transmitters should all be on line by the beginning of the B12 season. A full complement of 15 curtain array antennas capable of operating from 6 to 26 MHz enables the station to target various azimuths in Africa and Asia, and there's also a log periodic antenna which can operate in the same frequency range. For coverage of the island of Madagascar, the station has two dipole antennas which can operate in the 41, 49, 75 and 90-meter bands.

## **MULTIMEDIA MOVEMENT AT THE BBC**

Cath Westcott of the BBC World Service spoke to the HFCC Conference on Thursday afternoon. She explained that the BBC World Service is part of BBC Global News, which also includes BBC World (which is the only English-language channel we were able to watch in our hotel room), bbc.com, BBC Monitoring and BBC Media Action. It is funded by a UK parliament grant-in-aid, but editorial control is with the BBC. In 2010, after a UK government spending review, the BBC World Service funding was cut by 16%. As of 2014, the World Service will be funded by UK license fees. The BBC celebrated its 80<sup>th</sup> birthday in 2012 and moved from the famous Bush House to the new Broadcasting House.

Westcott reviewed some of the changes in international broadcasting. "Shortwave unlocked the world," she said. "State controlled broadcasters dominated." The transistor revolution led to a huge increase in receivers worldwide. But recently "political changes and increased competition from commercial broadcasters forced changes in what broadcasters were doing and how they were doing it." Media liberalization, deregulation and the advent of new technologies have all led to new opportunities. But the BBC's local FM strategy "has been the most adverse effect on shortwave usage by the BBC."

Westcott said the BBC World Service audience is estimated to be 180 million adults across all platforms. She said the AM audience (including SW) has dropped, partially because of the elimination of much of the BBC's shortwave transmissions. "But we recognize that there are certain audiences that need to be reached by shortwave, although at some point we won't be able to maintain the infrastructure of shortwave broadcast facilities." The television audience is now greater than the shortwave audience for the BBC World Service.

According to Westcott, questions that international broadcasters need to ask themselves include:

- Who and where is my audience?
  
- What content does my audience like or need?
  
- What delivery methods can my audience access?
  
- How will things change?

- How can I provide the best service I can for the funding I have?

Other considerations which must be taken into account include:

- The international regulatory environment – only shortwave is recognized by the ITU for international broadcasting
- Partnerships and their affect on your content – gatekeepers, no more long-form programs (local stations just want short newscasts that they can use as part of their local content)
- Costs to your audience (in addition to the costs to broadcasters themselves) – for example, costs to access the Internet, mobile phones, subscriptions, etc.

Westcott said mobile phones are being used increasingly for program distribution. As an experiment, in 2009 the BBC gave six villages in northern Nigeria one mobile phone each to use however they wished. In addition to receiving material, the villages used the phones to feed program material to BBC Hausa in London. And over in the US, there is now mobile phone BBC radio distribution in four languages via dial-up telephone numbers.

Following Cath Westcott's presentation, the HFCC Closing Plenary began. Horst Scholz mentioned that the A13 HFCC/ASBU Conference is scheduled for Tunisia, probably during the last week of January. Jeff White gave some preliminary details of the B13 Conference, which is scheduled for Bratislava, Slovakia August 26-30, 2013. The co-sponsors are Radio Slovakia International and the NASB. Proposals from various hotels have already been received, and the conference will likely take place in a hotel near the historic Old Town area of Bratislava, which is about 10 kilometers from the Bratislava airport and about 40 kilometers from the Vienna, Austria airport. Radio Slovakia International has offered to provide a tour for HFCC participants one afternoon during the conference. RSI is located in the famous "upside-down pyramid" building in downtown Bratislava. Sponsors for other events during the B13 Conference are being sought.

Also at the Closing Plenary, Sergio Salvatori reported on the Group of Experts meeting and its plans regarding the International Radio for Disaster Relief project. Gary Stanley gave the Financial Committee report. He said that HFCC income could go down as membership falls due to stations cutting shortwave broadcasts, so the Committee wanted to approve an increase in membership fees. However, they decided that it will be necessary to do a complete review of finances first, and they plan to present recommendations at the A13 Conference. Stanley reported that the last-minute change of venue for the A11 Conference from Tunis to Prague caused some extra expenses for the HFCC, but in the end there was a profit from the conference. He said the financial situation is good at the moment, but again warned that any reduction in membership could cause problems in the future.

The Plenary accepted two new members in Paris: MGLOB from Madagascar and Free Press Unlimited (FPU) based in the Netherlands, which is also loosely affiliated with Radio

Netherlands. MCIT, the Indonesia Ministry of Communications and Information Technology, was welcomed as an observer member and will be eligible for full membership at the A13 Conference in Tunis. The MCIT directs spectrum management in Indonesia as well as licensing and monitoring of the frequency spectrum.

## **SHORT EXCURSIONS TO PARIS**

In the late afternoons and evenings during the conference, many delegates went into Paris for sightseeing or dinner. On Thursday night, TDF invited several members of the NASB delegation to a very interesting but not-so-well-known part of Paris called Cours Saint-Emillion. Thais and I took a taxi there with Olivier Goinard from Radio France International. A delightful cab driver named Patrice who speaks six languages – English, French, Spanish, Arabic, Chinese and Russian – told us all about his hybrid Toyota Prius and gave us a guided tour commentary of Paris en route to Cours Saint-Emillion, which is where the wine from southern France used to arrive by train to Paris and was stored there. Nowadays there is a very nice pedestrian street that is lined on both sides with open-air restaurants and stores.

We went to a place called Casa del Campo, which is a Spanish tapas restaurant. Our waitress was a young lady from Venezuela. After another very long and enjoyable meal, Jerome from TDF and his wife Carole gave us an incredible tour in their car of Paris by night. This was especially appreciated by us because it was our only opportunity to do any sightseeing in Paris since we were busy from early morning to late night every day at the conference. During the tour, we saw such famous sights as the Eiffel Tower, the Louvre museum, the fashionable Rue de Rivoli shopping street, the Champs Elysees, the Arc de Triomphe, the Cathedral of Notre Dame, and even the infamous car tunnel where Princess Diana's car crashed in 1997.

Friday morning came soon enough, and the final HFCC coordination session. After thanking Jerome Hirigoyen and his team at TDF for a very successful conference, the meeting officially closed at noon with a drink of French champagne and a lunch consisting of something called “croaker steak” (which was some kind of fish) and a dessert of citrus fruit and chocolate chips. In the evening Thais and I had dinner with Sergio Salvatori and Paulo Lazzarini of Vatican Radio at a restaurant in Paris not far from Montrouge called Cafe Daguerre. The most memorable thing I had there was a crème brulee with pistachios in it. But lest we give you the impression that delegates at the HFCC Conference spent a lot of time at coffee breaks, receptions and meals, I should point out that these informal events are the scene of much conversation and even deal-making which often have profound impact on the international broadcasting scene. In that regard, the HFCC/ASBU B12 Conference in Paris was quite effective.

*This article can be found on the NASB Facebook page ([www.facebook.com/nasbshortwave](http://www.facebook.com/nasbshortwave)), along with selected photos from the HFCC/ASBU Conference in Paris.*