

Echo of Unification, Clandestine

Echo of Unification is a North Korean radio station that broadcasts propaganda towards South Korea, with start in Dec. 2012 and three blocks of programming each day. They dropped all mediumwave (AM band) broadcasting on December 21., 2016.

The move seemingly confirms the futility of the broadcasts, which consumed large amounts of electricity but were blocked by powerful South Korean government jamming transmitters, but the station isn't giving up. In their place, it has brought on air additional shortwave and FM transmitters.

It's all part of a game that's been going on for decades. North and South Korea both broadcast propaganda at each other while trying to stop their own citizens from hearing the other's broadcast. Similar battles used to be played out across borders around the world but have largely moved to the internet and social media. The lack of internet in North Korea and South Korean censorship mean radio still plays a part on the Korean peninsula.

The mediumwave -broadcasts were strong and could be heard across a large part of East Asia at nighttime, but suffered severe interference in the Seoul area where the South Korean government broadcast noise on the same frequency to drown them out. FM was also blocked in Seoul but could be heard very close to the border and shortwave was completely clear, perhaps a recognition that few homes have good shortwave radios these days.

The additional shortwave frequency gives listeners in South Korea an extra spot on the dial to tune into the station, although because shortwave radio ownership is so low and there's terrible electrical interference in most Korean cities, this is really only reaches people

who are already sold on the propaganda message. No South Korean is going to stumble across the station on shortwave like they might while tuning a car or kitchen radio on mediumwave. #

South Korea has already started jamming the FM broadcasts giving them limited reach into the country, but perhaps the target here is bored soldiers stationed along the border. The FM signal can be clearly heard in the border region and North Korea might be hoping to reach a few people here.

QRG's: 3970 khz, 5905 khz, 6250 khz