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AMBASSADOR RICHARD MILES NAMED EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF “OPEN WORLD” PROGRAM

Washington, DC – The Open World Leadership Center Board of Trustees announced today that former Ambassador Richard M. Miles has been appointed Executive Director of the Open World Leadership Center. The Open World Program is a unique, nonpartisan initiative of the U.S. Congress that has brought more than 10,000 emerging civic, political, economic, and cultural leaders to the United States from Russia, Ukraine and other countries since its inception in 1999. Ambassador Miles will assume leadership of the program on April 3, 2006.

Nominated by their professional peers, Open World delegates are chosen from among the most promising members of their professions. The delegates travel to communities throughout the U.S. for short periods of intensive professional exchange with Americans who have similar specializations while experiencing informal cultural interaction and homestays with American hosts. Upon return to their home countries, their involvement with the program and with one another continues through an active alumni network.

“We are very pleased that Ambassador Miles has agreed to lead the Open World Program,” said Librarian of Congress Dr. James H. Billington, Open World’s founder and Chairman of the Open World Leadership Center’s Board of Trustees. “He is the ideal person to oversee the program’s continuing growth at a time when its role in building closer relations between the U.S. and Russia, and other countries has never been more challenging – or more important – than today. He brings tremendous experience, knowledge and an appreciation for Open World’s critical role in creating informal links between the U.S. and Russia and other participating countries. We all look forward to his contribution to the Open World community.”

During the past seven years, Russian participants from all 88 Russian regions have been hosted in over 1,400 communities in all 50 U.S. states. Since 2003, Open World has conducted pilot programs with Ukraine, Lithuania and Uzbekistan.

“I am honored to serve as Executive Director of Open World,” said Ambassador Miles. “I believe that Open World’s mission has never been more important or relevant than it is today. I look forward to building upon Open World’s many successes and its invaluable role as a

conduit for substantive and lasting collaboration between citizens of the former Soviet Union and the American people.”

Ambassador Miles joins Open World after a distinguished 38 year career in the foreign service. He most recently served as U.S. Ambassador to Georgia (2002-2005). He has also served as Ambassador to Bulgaria (1999-2002), Chief of Mission to Belgrade (1996-1999), and Ambassador to Azerbaijan (1992-93). He also served in the 1990s as the Deputy Chief of Mission at the U.S. Embassy in Moscow and as Consul General in Leningrad (now St. Petersburg), and as Principal Officer of the U.S. Embassy Office in Berlin.

Ambassador Miles also worked in the Offices for Soviet and East European and Yugoslav Affairs and in the Politico-Military Bureau at the State Department. He worked for Senator Ernest F. Hollings (D-SC) on an American Political Science Fellowship in 1983-1984, and in 1987-1988 was a fellow at Harvard University’s Center for International Affairs. Since 2005, Ambassador Miles has served as Chairman of the Kennan Institute Advisory Council at the Woodrow Wilson Center in Washington, DC.

Open World is a unique, nonpartisan initiative of the U.S. Congress that builds mutual understanding between the emerging leaders of participating countries and their U.S. counterparts while exposing delegates to ideas and practices they can adapt for use in their own work. Open World delegates range from members of parliament to mayors, from innovative non-profit directors to experienced journalists, and from political party activists to regional administrators. The program’s administering agency, the Open World Leadership Center, is a legislative branch entity with offices at the Library of Congress.

For more information please contact George Felcyn, The PBN Company, at 202-466-6210. For more background on Open World, please visit <http://www.openworld.gov>.

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