

CONTACT:

KWR International, Inc.
Keith W. Rabin
Tel: +1-212-532-3005
Fax: +1-212-685-2413
E-mail: wlf@kwrintl.com

Columbia University
Mariellen Gallagher
Tel: +1-212-854-5573
Fax: +1-212-678-4817
E-mail: mg1152@columbia.edu

**Heads of State from Africa, Asia, Europe, the Middle East
and Latin America Open Third Annual World Leaders Forum
at Columbia University -- September 12-19**

NEW YORK – September 7, 2005 – Iraq President Jalal Talibani, Venezuela President Hugo Chávez, Rwanda President Paul Kagame, Indonesia President Bambang Susilo Yudhoyono and Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf are among ten heads of state confirmed for the 2005/06 World Leaders Forum at Columbia University, beginning Monday, September 12.

The heads of state, in New York City for the U.N. General Assembly, will share their perspectives on the complex set of issues surrounding this year's Forum theme -- global development. Students, faculty, alumni and distinguished members of the greater New York City community are invited to join them in an open exchange of ideas.

Opening events will be held from September 12-19 on Columbia's Morningside Heights campus, located at 116th Street between Broadway and Amsterdam Avenues in New York City. A schedule of events follows. More information is at <http://worldleaders.columbia.edu>. Seating is available for Columbia University students, faculty, staff and guests of the University who register in advance. Space for accredited journalists can be reserved by contacting the representatives noted at the top of the release.

"The World Leaders Forum provides a rare opportunity for heads of state and thought leaders to come together to discuss the most pressing challenges of our times and engage in a free exchange with faculty and students that examines strategies and policy directions," said Lee C. Bollinger, President of Columbia University. "Columbia has long served as a center for thought and discussion

about critical global economic, political, social and cultural issues. The World Leaders Forum helps Columbia University in the City of New York further realize its role as a global university.”

Launched in 2003, the World Leaders Forum is an annual university-wide initiative that reflects President Bollinger's vision of the University as a center for public debate on critical global issues. The Forum convenes international leaders –from heads of state to leading economic, cultural and religious figures – to examine global challenges and explore cultural perspectives from rising global health needs to the influence of American films abroad.

“World leaders often like to visit Columbia during their travels to New York,” noted Lisa Anderson, James T. Shotwell Professor of International Relations, and Dean of the School of International and Public Affairs. SIPA is co-sponsoring this year’s Forum with the President’s Office. “It enables them to participate in an open discussion with Columbia faculty and students, as well as alumni, journalists, executives and financial, service and arts professionals based in the area. The World Leaders Forum builds on this core strength, enriching the understanding of all participants, including the speakers who welcome this opportunity to examine issues they cannot address in more formal settings.”

“Columbia is one of the world’s leading universities -- the nation’s fifth oldest institution of higher learning and host to 7,111 international students, interns, and scholars from more than 150 countries,” commented David N. Dinkins, Professor in the Practice of Public Affairs at the School of International and Public Affairs, and former Mayor of the City of New York. “Columbia has cultivated an environment that encourages discussions of important global economic, political, and social issues and promotes the level of exchange that underlies the World Leaders Forum program.”

A schedule of opening events follows. For more information and location details, please visit <http://worldleaders.columbia.edu>

Heads of State Launch 2005/06 World Leaders Forum at Columbia University

Tarja Halonen, President of the Republic of Finland

The Millennium Development Goals: Social Justice and Promotion of Equality
Monday, September 12, 2005, 3:30-4:45 p.m.

Bambang Susilo Yudhoyono, President of the Republic of Indonesia

Symposium: Working Together to Achieve the Millennium Development Goals
Tuesday, September 13, 2005, 2:00-3:30 p.m.
Co-hosted by The Earth Institute at Columbia University

Mikheil Saakashvili, President of Georgia and Boris Tadić, President of Serbia

Symposium: Taking Power Peacefully: Reflections on the Post-communist Revolutions of 2000-2004

Wednesday, September 14, 2005, 4:00 to 5:45 p.m.

Co-hosted by the Harriman Institute

Paul Kagame, President of Rwanda

The Millennium Development Goals from Rwanda's Perspective

Thursday, September 15, 2005, 10:00 to 11:30 a.m.

Aleksander Kwaśniewski, President of Poland

Poland in a Changing World

Thursday, September 15, 2005, 5:00 to 6:30 p.m.

News conference scheduled at 6 p.m.

Pervez Musharraf, President of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan

Pakistan: Meeting the Challenge of Peace and Development

Friday, September 16, 2005, 12:45-1:30 p.m.

Hugo Chávez, President of Venezuela

Friday, September 16, 2005, 4:00 to 5:30 p.m.

Jalal Talabani, President of Iraq

Saturday, September 17, 2005, 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Ahmad Tejan Kabbah, President of Sierra Leone

The Millennium Development Goals

Monday, September 19, 2005, 11:00 a.m. to noon

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About Columbia University

Founded in 1754 as King's College, Columbia University in the City of New York is one of the world's leading institutions of higher learning and research and a member of the Ivy League of U.S. colleges and universities. Columbia includes three undergraduate schools, 13 graduate and professional schools, a school of continuing education, four affiliated institutions, a world-class medical center, 22 libraries, and more than 100 research centers and institutes. For more information about Columbia University, visit [http: www.columbia.edu](http://www.columbia.edu)

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