



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Ukrainian Jurists To Visit Norfolk Area, November 15 - 22, 2008

NORFOLK, VA - **Five Ukrainian judges**, participating in the **Open World Program**, will visit several cities in the Hampton Roads area from November 15-22, 2008, to examine the **“Rule of Law”** with their U.S. counterparts. **The Norfolk Sister City Association** is collaborating with **the Honorable Henry Coke Morgan, Jr., Senior U.S. District Court Judge and the local judicial community** to host the delegation for Open World. **“The Hampton Roads judicial community is delighted that we will have an opportunity, for the seventh year in a row, to share our democratic process and interact with our Ukrainian counterparts,”** said Judge Morgan.

Managed by the independent **Open World Leadership Center** in Washington, D.C., Open World is the only exchange program in the U.S. legislative branch. Under its six-year-old **Rule of Law program**, some 1,600 Russian and Ukrainian judges and legal professionals have been hosted in U.S. courts and communities. Participants get an inside look at the U.S. judicial system and develop ties with the U.S. judges who host them. They also gain insight into how the U. S. political system promotes and protects judicial independence and the rule of law.

Two of the visiting delegates, **Petro Karpechkin and Yuriy Titov** from Kiev, are judges on the Supreme Court of Ukraine. Other delegates are: **Serhiy Andrushchenko**, Judge, Deputy Head of Leninsky District Court, City of Poltava; **Volodymyr Korenyak**, Judge of the Kirovsky District Court, City of Kirovohrad; **Viktor Shevchenko**, Judge, Chernigov Regional Appellate Court, Chernigov City and Region; and the group’s facilitator, **Natalia Shtanko**, from Kiev. Two professional interpreters will also accompany the delegates as they tour and participate in activities with judicial representatives from Williamsburg, Virginia Beach, Portsmouth and Norfolk.

The **“Rule of Law”** theme will focus on such elements as expanded jury trials, immunity for judges and judicial ethics. In Norfolk, the Ukrainian judges’ delegation will be engaged by the U.S. Probation Office, the U.S. Bankruptcy Court and the U.S. District Court for roundtable discussions; by the U.S. Attorney’s Office and the Public Defender’s office in a mock criminal trial; and by the Norfolk Circuit Court for hearings

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and criminal sentencing. Williamsburg's prestigious William and Mary Law School and the National Center for State Courts will also present programs. In Virginia Beach, delegates will attend and discuss hearings in Circuit, General District and Juvenile and Domestic Relations Courts.

The Open World Leadership Center has awarded a grant to the **Academy for Educational Development (AED)** to administer this and similar exchanges in 2008.

As the local host organization, **Norfolk Sister City Association (NSCA)** has received a grant for the fifth year in a row from **AED** to plan the schedule of social and cultural activities and to provide lodging, meals and local transportation for the group. Home stays with Norfolk area residents will allow the Ukrainian guests to experience American family life. The Ukrainian judges will also take part in several cultural and community activities, including a visit to NATO's Headquarters of the Supreme Allied Commander-Transformation, and tours of the Chrysler Museum of Art, Nauticus, the battleship "USS Wisconsin" and the Virginia Aquarium and Marine Science Center.

Background Information:

* The **Open World Program** is a unique, nonpartisan initiative of the U.S. Congress that builds mutual understanding between the emerging political and civic leaders of the Eurasian region and their U.S. counterparts. It also exposes delegates to ideas and practices they can adapt for use in their own work. Delegates range from first-time mayors to experienced journalists, from non-profit directors to small-business advocates, and from political activists to high-court judges. Since the program's inception in 1999, more than 13,500 Open World participants have been hosted in all 50 U.S. states.

* 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 on Open World, please visit <http://www.openworld.gov>