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Release: Immediate

Commemoration of human rights program at UI receives \$30,000 grant

IOWA CITY, Iowa -- The United States Institute of Peace has awarded a \$30,000 grant to the University of Iowa's ongoing commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights to create a lecture series on human rights issues that will continue past the current anniversary year.

The grant to "Global Focus: Human Rights '98" will establish the "HR98 Lecture Series on the Future of Human Rights," which will feature regular gatherings of diverse and distinguished human rights scholars, practitioners, and activists from throughout the world.

The series will publish the results of its scholarship and make its work available to human rights policy-makers and activists into the next century.

Burns H. Weston, professor of international law, chair of the HR98 Steering Committee and principal investigator on the grant, says one of the goals of the commemoration is to provide a legacy for the discussion of human rights.

"We want to ensure that the impact of HR98 extends far beyond the University of Iowa and far beyond the year 1998," Weston says. "No single conference can really give voice to the numerous human rights issues confronting the world as we approach the 21st century. We think a sustained series will have the greatest impact in keeping human rights at the forefront of political, social and cultural concerns."

The lecture series is one of several events and activities focusing on human rights at the UI campus in the coming academic year as part of Global Focus: Human Rights 98. The interdisciplinary initiative marks the 50th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which was signed by representatives to the United Nations on Dec. 10, 1948.

Other upcoming events sponsored by or associated with Global Focus '98 include:

- Noted Chinese dissident Wei Jingsheng will present a lecture at 8 p.m. Thursday, Sept. 10 in the Levitt Auditorium of the Boyd Law Building;
- Joan Baez, folk singer and activist, will perform at 8 p.m. Friday, Sept. 11 at Hancher Auditorium;
- Jerome Shestack, president of the American Bar Association, 8 p.m. Thursday, Sept. 24 in the Levitt Auditorium of the Boyd Law Building;
- Elie Wiesel, 1986 Nobel Peace Prize winner, 8 p.m. Wednesday, Oct. 14 at Hancher Auditorium;
- Dith Pran, Cambodian activist and journalist, 8 p.m. Tuesday, Oct. 27, Buchanan Auditorium, Pappajohn Business Administration Building;
- Rigoberta Menchu Tum, 1992 Nobel Peace Prize winner, 8 p.m. Wednesday, Nov. 12, Macbride Auditorium, Macbride Hall;
- Legal scholar Ronald Dworkin, 4 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 19, Levitt Auditorium, Boyd Law Building.
- Writer Adam Hochschild, 8 p.m. Tuesday, Dec. 1, Shambaugh Auditorium, Main Library.