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DR. J.GREGORY PAYNE DELIVERS SEMINAR ON MEDIA RELATIONS AND MEDIA ETHICS

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Dr. J.Gregory Payne, professor of Political Communications at Emerson College in Boston, Massachusetts, led the professional development seminar for Azeri public relations practitioners, entitled "Media Relations" Media Relations and Media Ethics" on February 17, 2004.

More than 40 participants representing various local and international non-governmental, business and government organizations attended the seminar. This seminar was the fifth in the series on public relations topics organized by APRA. Further seminars are planned throughout 2004.

BAKU, AZERBAIJAN (FEB.19, 2004) - Azerbaijan Public Relations Association (APRA), in partnership with the Public Affairs Section of the US Embassy in Azerbaijan, was pleased to welcome Dr. J.Gregory Payne, professor of Political Communications at Emerson College in Boston, Massachusetts who led the professional development seminar for Azeri public relations practitioners, entitled "Media Relations and Media Ethics" on February 17, 2004 at the offices of World Learning, a US NGO.

Tristram Perry, Deputy Public Affairs Officer at the US Embassy in Azerbaijan, opened the seminar by introducing Dr. Payne and talking briefly about his professional experience.

Dr. Payne described some real-life ethical dilemmas faced by public relations practitioners in the United States, using recent news stories and anecdotes derived from his rich experience in political communication. He led a group discussion on key strategies for avoiding ethical pitfalls.

"I want you to tell me what is more important when you deliver your message - your company or your public", asked the professor. Most of the participants noted that every organization is accountable for its behavior to the society and public at large.

"You can lose your job or business, but you can always get those back", said Dr. Payne. "One thing that you can never get back once you've lost it is your reputation", he added.

"While it is important to protect the company image, it should not be done at the sacrifice of the public good", said Elyas Bakeerzadeh, director of Ratio, a private Baku based public relations firm.

Dr. Payne is an author, speechwriter and expert on political communication, ethics and media. A professor of Political Communications at Emerson College in Boston, Massachusetts, Dr. Payne previously served as speechwriter for Tom Bradley, four-term Mayor of Los Angeles. In addition to his full-time teaching position, Dr. Payne is a frequent on-air commentator for both CNN and NBC on issues of media and political communications.

In the field of political communications, Dr. Payne has worked on media analysis projects for two Russian presidential elections, and conducted communications workshops in Uzbekistan in 1998. Most recently, he chaired a forum in Saudi Arabia on U.S.-Saudi relations in December of 2003.

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APRA was founded in April 2003 by the public relations professionals representing Internews Azerbaijan, Mercy Corps International, Baku Interbank Currency Exchange,

United Aid for Azerbaijan, Cooperative Housing Foundation, Azerbaijan Young Lawyers Association, AzerNet, PRConsulting, Hatt Research Company and UniBank in order to research challenges, exchange best practices and perspectives in the field of public relations and promote public relations in the public administration, volunteer and business sectors in Azerbaijan.