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Ambassador Edward S. Walker Jr. Presents Founders' Day Address

January 20, 2005

BLOOMINGTON, Ill. - Ambassador Edward S. Walker, Jr., president and chief executive officer of The Middle East Institute, a highly regarded Washington-based think tank on Middle East policy, will address the Founders' Convocation at Illinois Wesleyan on February 9.

The convocation will be held at 11 a.m. in Westbrook Auditorium of Presser Hall (1210 N. Park Street in Bloomington). The event is open to the public.

The title of Walker's address is "Iraq and the Future of the Middle East."

Before assuming his position with the Middle East Institute in 2001, Walker served as Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs under Secretaries of State Colin Powell and Madeleine Albright. During that time he helped initiate and negotiate U.S. policy toward Iraq, including a complete revision to our sanctions policy. He also engaged in recalibrating U.S. policies toward Iran during the Middle East peace process.

Walker's many distinctions include being the only U.S. official who has served as Ambassador to both Israel and Egypt and as Assistant Secretary for the region. His diplomatic career includes successive years (1989-1999) as Ambassador to the United Arab Emirates, the United Nations (as Deputy Permanent Representative of the United States), the Arab Republic of Egypt, and Israel. In the course of his 35-year career, Walker worked with every Israeli Prime Minister since Golda Meir, with Presidents Sadat and Mubarak of Egypt, with Presidents Assad and Bashar Assad of Syria, with King Fahd and Crown Prince Abdullah of Saudi Arabia, and with Kings Hussein and Abdullah of Jordan, among others. During his time as Ambassador in Israel, Walker worked closely with Prime Minister Netanyahu in preparation for the Wye negotiations and agreement. In Egypt he worked with Vice President Al C and President Mubarak on a major initiative to reform the Egyptian economy.

In the aftermath of September 11, Walker was invited to write what is now a bimonthly column, "Letters from Washington" in Al Hayat - one of the most widely read Arabic language newspapers in the Middle East.

A 1962 graduate of Hamilton College, Walker earned the M.A. at Boston University in 1965. He is the recipient of various U.S. government honors, and holds an honorary degree from Hamilton College, where he served as the Linowitz Professor of Middle East Studies.