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## Wiseman to direct USC Center on Public Diplomacy

LOS ANGELES, May 13, 2008 – Following a national search, noted diplomat and international relations expert **Geoffrey Wiseman** has been appointed to serve as director of the University of Southern California’s Center on Public Diplomacy at the Annenberg School. Dr. Wiseman is professor of the practice of international relations at USC College of Letters, Arts & Sciences’ School of International Relations.

As director of the Center, Wiseman will oversee a wide variety of research projects, including efforts to track the role played by Hollywood in the projection of American image overseas, the importance of new technologies in diplomatic activities and the status of public diplomacy efforts around the globe. He will also work closely with the Center’s distinguished group of international fellows, arrange seminars and conferences, conduct mid-career training programs, and work closely with the Master’s in Public Diplomacy degree program. Last month, the U.S. State Department gave USC the first ever Benjamin Franklin Award for Public Diplomacy, calling the Center “the world’s premier research facility” in the field of public diplomacy.

“The innovative work done by the Center on Public Diplomacy helps us take advantage of new technologies and methods to encourage international dialogue and redefine the nature of ‘soft power,’” says **Ernest J. Wilson III**, dean of the USC Annenberg School for Communication. “Dr. Wiseman’s background as a leader and a diplomat ensures USC will continue to have a profound impact in the burgeoning field of public diplomacy.”

Prior to coming to USC, Wiseman was principal officer in the Strategic Planning Unit of the Executive Office of the Secretary General of the United Nations, dealing with issues involving non-proliferation and disarmament. He also served as an Australian diplomat posted in Stockholm, Hanoi and Brussels, and as private secretary to Australian Foreign Minister Gareth Evans. He was also the program officer for international peace and security at the Ford Foundation in New York.

“We were thrilled with the level of applicants, including nine current or former ambassadors, but Geoff Wiseman uniquely blended diplomatic experience with a love of scholarship, a great talent for teaching and a proven track record as a manager,” says **Geoffrey Cowan**, USC University Professor, Center founder and the co-chair of the search committee. “We are confident that he is a superb choice for this job.” Other members of the search committee include **Adam Clayton Powell III**, USC’s vice provost for globalization; **Laurie Brand**, director of the USC College’s School of International Relations; and **Carola Weil**, associate dean for planning and strategic initiatives at USC Annenberg.

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“I am delighted to be a part of the team at the USC Center on Public Diplomacy,” Wiseman says. “I’m ready to roll up my sleeves and start working on the research and policy challenges of the fast-evolving public diplomacy field.”

An expert in international security and diplomatic theory and practice, Dr. Wiseman is co-editor of the book *The Diplomatic Corps as an Institution of International Society*. His research interests center on the viability of “non-provocative defense” concepts, which focus on how states convey non-threatening intentions by adopting defensive military capabilities. He is currently exploring the ways in which future diplomats will need to acquire innovative conceptual and practical skills as global patterns of power, identity and communication become more complex.

“As organizations of all kinds – corporations, nonprofits and governments – expand around the world to pursue their global interests, a comprehensive understanding of the importance of public diplomacy has become more valuable than ever,” says **Howard Gillman**, dean of the USC College of Letters, Arts & Sciences. “Geoff Wiseman will be able to build on our leadership in this area.”

Dr. Wiseman earned his Ph.D. in international relations from the University of Oxford. He also holds degrees in political science from Australian National University and the University of Tasmania.

The USC Center on Public Diplomacy at the Annenberg School – established in 2003 as a partnership between the USC Annenberg School for Communication and USC College of Letters, Arts & Sciences’ School of International Relations – is a joint research and professional training center dedicated to furthering the study and practice of public diplomacy around the world. In 2008, USC received one of four inaugural Benjamin Franklin Awards for Public Diplomacy from the U.S. State Department in recognition of the university’s teaching and research in public diplomacy. More information is available at **[www.uscpublicdiplomacy.org](http://www.uscpublicdiplomacy.org)**.

Located in Los Angeles at the University of Southern California, the USC Annenberg School for Communication (**[annenberg.usc.edu](http://annenberg.usc.edu)**) is among the nation’s leading institutions devoted to the study of journalism and communication, and their impact on politics, culture and society. With an enrollment of more than 1,900 graduate and undergraduate students, USC Annenberg offers degree programs in journalism, communication, public diplomacy and public relations.

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