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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Northampton MA: Dr. Gregory S. Prince, president of Hampshire College and a well known advocate of the United Nations, will address at the Zonta Forum on CEDAW, the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, to be held at 7 p.m. on Wednesday, March 31st, at the Unitarian Society in Northampton (next to City Hall).

Dr. Prince has long been a creative and energetic supporter of the UN, weaving his interests among the many leadership roles he has assumed locally and regionally. At Dartmouth College, he helped create a UN Institute, and also helped to initiate the North American Academic Council for the UN. In addition to serving as President of Five Colleges, Inc., he supports the Five College Peace and World Security Studies program for area students. Several years ago, he was pleased to introduce UN Secretary General Kofi Annan as speaker to a packed audience at Hampshire College. Dr. Prince is the 2004 recipient of the Millicent Kauffman Award from the Amherst Area Chamber of Commerce, the town's equivalent of Citizen of the Year.

The Zonta Club of Northampton Area is presenting the Forum, with the local Unitarian Society's Peace and Justice Committee and The Women's Fund of Western Massachusetts as co-sponsors. Zonta International, founded in 1919 and established locally in 1934, is a non-governmental organization (NGO) with the UN, and has a membership of 33,000 in 67 countries. Its mission is "to improve the status of women worldwide."

On International Women's Day 2003 at a Zonta International meeting in New York City, International President Margit Webjorn of Sweden challenged the countries of the world to halt the sexual trafficking of women and children. Ratification and implementation of the CEDAW treaty is instrumental to the effectiveness of any such challenge. Ironically, after the US helped to draft the treaty in 1979, the United States Senate Foreign Relations Committee has never brought it to the floor for a vote. The only other countries who have failed to ratify are the United Arab Emirates, Micronesia and Iran.

Rounding out the program are other notable speakers:

Dr. Janice Raymond, UMass Professor Emerita of Women's Studies, activist author and editor, now co-executive director of the Coalition Against Trafficking in Women;

Dr. Laura H. Roskos, visiting scholar at Suffolk University and coordinator of the Massachusetts CEDAW Initiative Center for Women's Health and Human Rights;

Dr. Connie Chow of Simmons College, of the Women's Rights Program Steering Committee of Amnesty International and coordinator of the Massachusetts CEDAW project;

Betty Jane Bourdon, area businesswoman, currently Vice President of Zonta International and a candidate for International President.

Mayor Mary Clare Higgins, who serves on the Massachusetts Commission on the Status of Women, will give a welcome from the City of Northampton. State Representative Ellen Story, who has been instrumental in presenting a resolution to the Great and General Court of Massachusetts advocating support of CEDAW, will bring greetings.

For further information, please contact 413-268-9241, or the Northampton Zonta website at www.zontadistrict1.org/northampton_ma