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## **MEDIA ADVISORY**

### **Ambassador Hits the Road to Celebrate United States Peace Corps 50th Anniversary**

**May 2, 2011**

To celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the establishment of the United States Peace Corps, Ambassador Matthew Bryza, Peace Corps Azerbaijan Country Director Meredith Dalton and members of the media today departed on a three-day bus tour to visit Peace Corps volunteers and the Azerbaijani communities they serve.

The tour will visit Ismayilli, Oguz, Seki, Mingechevir, Ganja, and Dashkesen before returning to Baku on May 4. The Ambassador will meet with Peace Corps Volunteers, their local partners, host families, local officials, and the communities they serve and observe up close volunteers' work with local organizations implementing projects in the fields of community economic development, English language teaching, and youth development.

Before setting out, Ambassador Bryza said, "I'm looking forward to seeing the work that Peace Corps Volunteers are doing in communities throughout Azerbaijan. These mostly young people love Azerbaijan and, like the Peace Corps' founder, President John F. Kennedy, embody the American tradition of serving others, and helping Azerbaijanis develop skills that will help them as Azerbaijan continues its development. They are highly educated and fully committed to using all their energy to help Azerbaijan grow more prosperous, democratic, and stable. In the process volunteers enjoy Azerbaijan's amazing hospitality and strengthen the connection between the American and Azerbaijani people. When they return home, I hope they will increase America's understanding of Azerbaijan."

Peace Corps has operated in Azerbaijan since 2003. Currently there are 114 volunteers working in communities throughout Azerbaijan. Since 2003, 368 volunteers have worked in more than 150 Azerbaijani communities, impacting thousands of people and creating lasting connections between the people of the United States and Azerbaijan.

The Peace Corp was established by President John F. Kennedy in 1961 to promote peace and friendship around the world. Since that time, more than 200,000 Americans have served these goals in 139 countries.

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