



Contacts: Dr. Michelle Michot Foss
Director, CBA Energy Institute
(713) 743-4634

Ms. Robin Griffin
Director, Communications, CBA
(713) 743-4619

NEWS

For Immediate Release

**UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON CBA ENERGY INSTITUTE
JOINS CENTRAL ASIA CONSORTIUM**

The Energy Institute at the University of Houston's College of Business Administration has joined a major consortium managed by Hagler Bailly Consulting for the U.S. Agency for International Development (U.S. AID). The Consortium is providing technical support for oil and gas development to the governments of the Central Asia Republics or CAR (Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan) until September 1998. The Consortium includes about 30 organizations. University of Houston faculty, staff and students will work on a range of research issues, assist with the development of training materials and programs and possibly help to host visits to the U.S. by government and industry officials from the CAR. The primary involvement at UH is through the College of Business Administration and the Law Center. The UH Law Center is known for a major undertaking conducted during 1991-1992 to assist the Russian government in its establishment of petroleum legislation. Most of the faculty at the Law Center and College of Business Administration involved in the CAR Consortium have had experience in the former Soviet Union and understand the complexities of the region.

"We are really excited to have this opportunity to gain insight into one of the most interesting world regions for oil and gas," says Dr. Michelle Michot Foss, director of the Energy Institute and coordinator of the project. "The CAR will easily be one of the most dynamic and challenging for the industry for the next 20 years." The CAR countries have extensive oil and gas resources but face serious difficulties with



both exploration and production and pipeline transportation. All of the countries must attract foreign direct investment but the investment climate is risky. The geopolitical issues surrounding the development of pipelines are extremely sensitive. Finally, the CAR will become increasingly important as a major provider of resources to rapidly growing Asian economies and compete with traditional Middle East supplies.

Hagler Bailly Consulting is an international research and advisory group based in Arlington, Virginia with extensive experience managing U.S. AID, World Bank and other development programs. The CAR Consortium is part of the firm's overall technical support program for the U.S. AID Energy Sector Institutional Reform (ESIR) project, a 5-year, \$50 million project with Hagler Bailly Consulting as the prime contractor. The ESIR project involves energy sector reform in 10 former USSR republics. More than 100 people work full time on the project.

Hagler Bailly is a corporate sponsor of the Energy Institute. The University of Houston is also a member of a Hagler Bailly Consortium for Georgia.