Indiana University hosted our first IU International Forum on Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C., on October 18. Titled Economic, Political and Military Security in Central and Eastern Europe: Where Do U.S. Concerns Lie?, the half-day Forum was co-sponsored by Sen. Richard Lugar and Rep. Lee Hamilton. Sen. Dan Coats was also present. Zbigniew Brzezinski, former national security advisor to President Jimmy Carter, was the keynote speaker.

Brzezinski's insightful and informative remarks on the United States' role in Europe served as the basis for three panel discussions highlighting the economic, geopolitical, and security aspects of that most volatile part of the world. The panel discussions were led by John Brademas, chair of the board of the National Endowment for Democracy, former Indiana Congressman and former president of New York University; John Whitehead, chair of the International Rescue Committee and former deputy Secretary of State; and Rozanne Ridgeway, co-chair of the Atlantic Council of the United States, former Indiana Congresswoman and former president of New York University; John Whitehead, chair of the International Rescue Committee and former deputy Secretary of State. The panels and the audience included IU faculty from several campuses, Wells Scholars, and national and international leaders with expertise in Central and Eastern Europe.

We have inaugurated this biennial forum series as a first step in our long-range goal of expanding IU’s international programs, and I believe Indiana University's reputation and visibility were significantly enhanced. Equally important, the presence of so many individuals with the knowledge, influence, and major responsibilities in Eastern European affairs reflects the stature that IU already has in international education, service, and research.

The Forum drew a standing-room-only audience that included representatives from the British, Czech, Hungarian, Russian Federation embassies, among others; The U.S. Information Agency, the World Bank, and the Department of Education; numerous alumni and major friends and supporters of the University; and more than two dozen national and foreign media personnel.

The Forum concluded with a dinner at the Polish Embassy, co-hosted by the Embassy and the University. This dinner was in itself a significant event. The fact that it was initiated by the Polish Ambassador, Jerzy Kozminski, reflects two decades of close ties between Indiana University and Poland. For example, we have an exchange program with Warsaw University that began about 20 years ago. Guests who had come from afar included Janusz Onyszkiewicz, former Polish Defense Minister and leader in the Solidarity movement, who had flown in from Poland especially for the Forum.

This is a crucial time in the social, political, and economic development of countries in Central and Eastern Europe. I am pleased that, through the Forum, Indiana University was able to contribute to the important policy debate.

Thanks in large measure to the leadership of Rep. Hamilton and Sen. Lugar, the Forum was indeed a great success. Great credit goes also to the organizers, most especially Patrick O'Meara, dean for International Programs; Christopher Simpson, special counsel to the president; Owen Johnson of the School of Journalism, Paul Marer of the School of Business, Dina Spechler of Political Science, and Timothy Wiles, director of the Polish Studies Center at IU Bloomington. My thanks and appreciation to them for their hard work, to many others who dealt with endless details, and to all who participated.

— Myles Brand
President, Indiana University

Forum Video Available
A four-hour videotape of the International Forum is available upon request from the Office of International Programs, IU Bloomington; tel. (812) 855-5021 or fax (812) 855-6884.

IU Bloomington's Russian and East European Institute is one of the oldest and most renowned U.S. centers for the study of the former Soviet Union and its eastern European neighbors. The university's Department of Central Eurasian Studies is a unique and equally distinguished resource. The state of Indiana has among its congressional leaders two of the most prominent experts in U.S. foreign policy, Sen. Richard Lugar (R-Ind.) and Rep. Lee Hamilton (D-Ind.). These three facts were ideally meshed in IU's inaugural International Forum focusing on Central and Eastern Europe. The Forum is expected to be held biennially in Washington D.C. This new forum series illustrates IU's capacity to act as a catalyst in bringing together IU world area experts, national foreign policy specialists, and international diplomats to discuss issues critical to the United States in its role as a world leader. "The people of Indiana have a great investment in Indiana University," says Lugar, "Its schools of international studies [on] Eastern Europe and Russia have been recognized around the world. Students who are studying there are going to make a large difference in our world."

In October, Congress was scheduled to begin debates on foreign aid and national security. The IU forum helped draw congressional attention to the issues involved. Keynote speaker Zbigniew Brzezinski warned against isolationist or "minimalist" tendencies in the United States, arguing for a larger U.S. role in helping these fledgling free-market democracies and encouraging integration: "If NATO is to become the security framework for a continued Atlantic-American relationship, and simultaneously a larger Europe, American leadership in that process is absolutely essential."

Brzezinski's speech was followed by three lively panel discussions featuring prominent government officials, foreign diplomats, and IU academic experts. In the evening at the dinner held at the Polish Embassy, Ambassador Jerzy Kozminski toasted IU's long-standing exchange affiliation with Warsaw University. The forum's timeliness and success was expressed by Janusz Onyszkiewicz: "Politicians like Lugar, Hamilton, Brzezinski—just look at the hall—it's packed with very important people in the right circles of opinion who influence decisions one way or another."
Issues in Central and Eastern Europe

Panel 2: “Military Security: Should NATO be Expanded?” (left to right) Rozanne Ridgeway, Owen Johnson, Janusz Onyszkiewicz, and Dina Spechler.

Keynote speaker Zbigniew Brzezinski, former Carter administration national security advisor, is a professor of American foreign policy at Johns Hopkins University.


Panel 1: “Can U.S. Style Democracy Work in the Central & East European Republics?” John Brademas (left) and Congressman Lee Hamilton of Indiana.

Richard G. Lugar, senior senator from Indiana.