



## NEWS RELEASE

### **GLOBAL VOICES OFFERS HIGH-TECH APPROACH TO STRENGTHENING DEMOCRACIES WORLDWIDE**

#### ***- Organization Led Global Town Hall at World Economic Forum in Davos -***

WASHINGTON, DC—16 May 2005—AmericaSpeaks, Inc., a nonprofit that pioneered electronic town meetings to engage citizens in public decision-making, today announced that it will make its services available internationally under the Global Voices brand.

“The strength of democracies everywhere depends on the level of participation of its citizenry,” said Carolyn J. Lukensmeyer, founder and president of AmericaSpeaks and general manager of Global Voices. “Our model of deliberative democracy ensures that organizations and governments gain valuable input from citizens on such issues as budgeting, land use planning and policy development—input that leads to more transparency, accountability and better decision-making.”

In January 2005, the Global Voices methodology was used at the World Economic Forum in Davos, where more than 5,000 global leaders gathered to discuss the global agenda. At this event, Lukensmeyer and her team of trained facilitators provided support to these leaders during a Global Town Hall in which they discussed and prioritized world issues that most need their attention. These leaders agreed that poverty, equitable globalization, climate change, education, Middle East and global governance merit the most attention.

Global Voices brings together hundreds and even thousands of people during its 21<sup>st</sup> Century Town Meetings<sup>®</sup>. At these meetings, participants working in small groups with trained facilitators discuss issues at length, exchange ideas and use wireless keypads to register their opinions. Laptop computers are used to document key themes at every table and the results are instantly shared with participants, media and policy-makers and others in leadership positions.

Lukensmeyer said Global Voices will grow in scope over time as it forms partnerships with organizations around the world that share a commitment to citizen engagement and building stronger democracies.

For more information on Global Voices please visit [www.globalvoices.org](http://www.globalvoices.org).

About AmericaSpeaks

AmericaSpeaks, based in Washington, D.C., is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization that seeks to transform democracy by engaging citizens more directly in the public decisions that impact their lives. Since its founding in 1995, AmericaSpeaks has conducted its 21<sup>st</sup> Century Town Meetings<sup>®</sup> across the U.S. and internationally on such issues as policy development, budgeting, planning, and multinational collaboration. For more information, please visit: [www.AmericaSpeaks.org](http://www.AmericaSpeaks.org)

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