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"Operation Babylift – Homeward Bound" to Return Former Orphans For Visit to Their Homeland in June

PEACHTREE CITY, Ga. (April 1, 2005) – World Airways is commemorating its historic "Operation Babylift" airlift of 57 Vietnamese orphans from Saigon 30 years ago with a special flight that will return 20 former orphans for a visit to their homeland. The commemorative flight, "Operation Babylift – Homeward Bound," will depart from Atlanta on June 12, 2005, stopping at the company's former headquarters city, Oakland, Calif., before heading on for a two-day visit in Ho Chi Minh City. The guests will tour the city and will be honored at a special banquet in the Unification Palace. "The historic World Airways flight from Tan Son Nhut Air Base on April 2, 1975, epitomized the courage and determination of the company's employees and its leadership," said Randy Martinez, World's president and chief executive officer. "Despite the obstacles, World pilots Ken Healy and Bill Keating followed the orders of Ed Daly, the company's dynamic president at that time, and lifted off the unlit runway late at night in a DC-8 cargo aircraft, carrying those 57 children over the Pacific Ocean to new lives in America."

That flight to California led to an even larger Operation Babylift effort by the U.S. government throughout the month of April 1975, rescuing approximately 4,000 children. World Airways contacted 20 of those children, now adults, who were adopted by U.S. families 30 years ago, and invited them for this special trip aboard one of World's modern MD-11 wide-body passenger aircraft, specially painted with the company's former red and white design and logo from 1975. Some of the invited adoptees were on that historic World flight April 2, or were on one of two additional voluntary flights World operated that month.

"Thirty years ago, World Airways opened a door that led me to a new life in the United States," said Jeff Thanh Gahr, one of the young passengers on that daring flight April 2. Gahr is now an engineer for The Boeing Company, and will be one of the participants in Operation Babylift – Homeward Bound. Martinez and several invited guests will travel with the group on the flight. Healy, Keating, other members of the original crew and several ground support employees who participated in Operation Babylift also have been invited on the special flight. They will be joined by **Ross Meador, who placed the 57 children on the 1975**

flight from an orphanage he managed for Friends of the Children of Vietnam (FCVN), and Shirley Peck-Barnes, author of "The War Cradle" who has kept in touch with many of the adopted children and their families over the past 30 years.

"Many of the 20 former orphans have never had the opportunity to return to Vietnam and see their homeland," Martinez said. "We expect this to be a very emotional and fulfilling voyage for the adoptees, their family members and our own employees. That dramatic effort epitomized the humanitarian culture World Airways has continued to foster over the years."

World Airways, a wholly owned subsidiary of World Air Holdings, Inc. (NASDAQ:WLDA), is a U.S.-certificated air carrier providing customized transportation services for major international cargo and passenger carriers, the United States military, and international leisure tour operators. Founded in 1948, World operates a fleet of 16 wide-body aircraft to meet the specialized needs of its customers.

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