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NEW PUERTO RICO CONVENTION CENTER GETS “FINISHING TOUCHES” BEFORE NOVEMBER OPENING

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico, September 15, 2005 – “Finishing touches” are the name of the game for the final construction of the new Puerto Rico Convention Center (PRCC), scheduled to open in November 2005. With more than 91 percent of substantial construction complete, the final elements will come together in the coming weeks for a Grand Opening celebration scheduled for Friday, November 18, 2005.

“We are eagerly counting down the last days before we open the new Puerto Rico Convention Center and begin a new era redefining Puerto Rico’s tourism marketplace,” stated Ana María Viscasillas, president & CEO, Puerto Rico Convention Bureau, the official sales and marketing organization for the Convention Center. “We’re very excited about the opportunities that the new Center will afford Puerto Rico in hosting larger groups that will help realize our mission in becoming the Preferred Meeting Destination of the Americas.”

The new Puerto Rico Convention Center will be the largest single meeting space in the Caribbean. The 580,000-sq. ft. (53,882 sq. m.) PRCC will feature a 152,700 sq. ft. (14,186 sq. m.) exhibition hall dividable into three individual exposition spaces, as well as a 39,500 sq. ft. (3,670 sq. m.) Grand Ballroom, the largest in the Caribbean. The Center will also feature 36,400 sq. ft. of meeting space, to include 15 separate meeting rooms on two levels, which can be divided into 28 breakout rooms.

In the Exhibition Hall, painting, drywall, lighting/electrical and restrooms are more than 95 percent complete. In the Ballroom, the operable partitions are 85 percent complete, with painting nearly complete. The installation of the Ballroom chandelier, the largest in the world, is 95 percent completed. In the meeting and breakout rooms, electrical devices and operational partitions are more than 90 percent complete, with painting 85 percent complete.

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The Center's dominant architectural feature is a sweeping roof form that recalls waves in their complex geometry, color and translucency. As construction of the new Convention Center nears completion, the dramatic steel wave has been finished, with 95 percent of the steel panels used for the roof in place. In addition, a 13-story glass curtain wall, inset from the roof and facing towards Puerto Rico's Condado beach and hotel district is 99 percent

As the most-technologically advanced convention center in the Caribbean and Latin America, full fiber optic broadband and wireless Internet access will be available throughout the new Puerto Rico Convention Center and video-conferencing, simultaneous language translation can be made available as well. Other technological highlights include controllable lighting, electrical and utility connections readily accessible through state-of-the-art floor boxes in the Exhibition Hall; a production control balcony with sound and lighting controls in the Ballroom, as well as an integrated audio system with the capability for remote recording of programs and programmable lighting controls in the Ballroom and meeting rooms.

The new Puerto Rico Convention Center will be the centerpiece of the Puerto Rico Convention Center District, a \$415-million (U.S. dollars) destination that is the largest waterfront development project in the history of the U.S. and its territories. The District, currently 65 percent complete, was conceived as a dynamic, multi-use urban center, combining business and entertainment in one 113-acre (46 hectáres) complex to include retail shops, restaurants, office space, movie theaters, as well as residential units. Infrastructure for the District is well underway, with roads 95 percent complete, fountains 70 percent complete and walkways and landscaping well underway.

"The Puerto Rico Convention Center and surrounding District will offer meeting attendees a dynamic hub of activity," stated Manuel Sánchez Biscombe, executive director, Convention Center District Authority. "The District's convention, entertainment, dining, office and residential features will bring together visitors and

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the people of Puerto Rico and generate an estimated \$300 million annually to Puerto Rico's local economy.”

The Puerto Rico Convention Center, near Old San Juan and the Luis Muñoz Marín International Airport is easily accessible from many major U.S. and international destinations with more than 600 non-stop flight arrivals each week. For more information or to inquire about booking the Puerto Rico Convention Center, call 1-800-875-4765 or visit: www.prconvention.com.

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Editor's Note:

The Puerto Rico Convention Bureau is the official marketing and sales agent for the Puerto Rico Convention Center at the Puerto Rico Convention Center District opening November 2005. The non-profit organization is responsible for promoting and developing group and convention business to Puerto Rico through an integrated marketing strategy for more than 40 years. Based in San Juan, with offices in Chicago, Miami, New York, and Washington D.C., the Puerto Rico Convention Bureau provides sales consultation services to meeting planners in the corporate, incentive and association markets. The Bureau contributes approximately \$92 million annually to the Island's economy. For more information, visit the Bureau's Internet page at www.meetpuertorico.com or send a message at info@prcb.org. The Puerto Rico Convention Bureau, representing the capital city of San Juan, is a member of BestCities a global alliance of Bureaus that represent the highest standards of service in the meetings and convention industry. For more information, visit www.bestcities.net.



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