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PUERTO RICO WELCOMES U.S. HISPANIC CHAMBER OF COMMERCE FOR ANNUAL CONVENTION AT THE PUERTO RICO CONVENTION CENTER

SAN JUAN, September 13, 2007 -- From September 19 – 22, the **U.S. Hispanic Chamber of Commerce** (USHCCC) will host its Annual National Convention at the Puerto Rico Convention Center. The organization has around 1,600 attendees registered at the hotels to participate in the convention representing the second time in over a decade that this influential group of Hispanic leaders is holding their annual meeting in Puerto Rico.

With a mission to advocate, promote and facilitate the success of Hispanic businesses, the U.S. Hispanic Chamber of Commerce's National Convention and Business Expo features hundreds of exhibitors from the United States and abroad. The convention is the country's largest networking venue for Hispanic businesses and Fortune 1000 corporations interested in the Hispanic market. Over four-days, the national convention affords Hispanic vendors and corporate buyers the opportunity to establish partnerships where business opportunities can flourish. In addition, the convention offers various sessions and discussions on business development, chamber training, innovative business trends and solutions, as well as a focus on current issues that impact the Hispanic entrepreneur.

"The theme of this year's U.S. Hispanic Chamber of Commerce Annual Convention is *"Bridging Commerce Among the Americas,"* and Puerto Rico represents the perfect location to discuss and explore the business synergies and opportunities that exist between the United States and Latin America, as well as the Caribbean," stated Ana María Viscasillas, president and CEO, Puerto Rico Convention Bureau, the organization credited for bringing this group to Puerto Rico. "Together with our tourism and other business partners, we are eager to demonstrate Puerto Rico's ability to succeed as world-class meetings destination."

The Caribe Hilton is serving as the headquarter hotel for the U.S. Hispanic Chamber of Commerce group, and together with the Condado Plaza and Normandie hotels estimate a total of 4,037 room nights. This represents an anticipated infusion into Puerto Rico's local economy of \$2.5 million.

Since the opening of the new Puerto Rico Convention Center in November 2005, Puerto Rico has become a highly sought-after convention destination for many Hispanic professional groups and associations. For instance, in May 2007, the Puerto Rico Convention

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Center was the site of the first-ever “*Feria de la Segunda*,” hosted by **AARP**. The organization hosted a completely sold-out schedule of events which welcomed people from Puerto Rico and the mainland for a two-day expo that attracted 14,000 visitors to the Center. Most recently, the Center was also recently host to the **National Guard of the United States (NGAUS)**, representing the largest “citywide” convention that brought more than 5,000 attendees along with their families to Puerto Rico. With delegates hosted by 13 hotels in the San Juan area, it is estimated that \$10 million was infused into the local economy in direct and indirect spending by the group.

“A major part of the idea behind the development of the Puerto Rico Convention Center was that it would enable us to welcome high-profile groups and leverage these gatherings as an opportunity to develop business partnerships for members of our own community,” stated Manuel Sánchez-Biscombe, executive director, Puerto Rico Convention Center District Authority. “We’re proud to offer this outstanding facility – one that celebrates our distinctive history and culture -- as we extend our hospitality to the U.S. Hispanic Chamber of Commerce and welcome these delegates to Puerto Rico.”

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Editor's Note:

The Puerto Rico Convention Bureau (PRCB) is a non-profit organization established in 1962 to drive meetings, conventions, trade shows and incentive groups to Puerto Rico. With offices in San Juan, Chicago, New York, Miami, and Washington DC, the Bureau strengthens Puerto Rico’s competitive position in the Americas and abroad by increasing awareness of the Island’s outstanding meeting facilities and services, and produces approximately \$125 million to the local economy. The PRCB is the official marketing and sales agent for the new Puerto Rico Convention Center (PRCC) opened November 2005. For more information on the new Convention Center visit www.prconvention.com. The Puerto Rico Convention Bureau, representing the capital city of San Juan, is a proud member of Best Cities Global Alliance, the first convention bureau alliance that represents the highest standards of service in the meetings and convention industry. For more information, visit www.bestcities.net. The Puerto Rico Convention Bureau has also been awarded accreditation from the Destination Marketing Association International as an elite destination marketing organization. DMAI is the world’s largest association of CVBs, representing more than 600 destination management organizations in more than 25 countries. The Bureau can be reached electronically through the Internet at info@prcb.org or at its website www.meetpuertorico.com.

