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Tampa Hosts 18th Annual International Retailers of the Americas Conference *Opening today, host city is "Ideal Gateway to Commerce with the Americas"*

Tampa, FL, November 20, 2008 – Business representatives and leaders from throughout Latin America, as well as the U.S.-based Hispanic business community, announced the opening of the 18th Annual International Retailers of the Americas Conference today. The conference, being held for the first time on the mainland United States, entails an agenda that will address current global economic challenges and strategies to promote greater international trade throughout the Americas. Representatives from the Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico and the mainland United States all provided insights at the press conference on what the three day conference at the Tampa Convention Center will entail.

"Our current economic crisis here in the United States has had a global impact. To confront this challenge, it is important that leaders who can impact the economy have an open dialogue to identify solutions and strategies to promote commerce," stated Augustine Martinez, President and CEO of the United States Hispanic Chamber of Commerce (USHCC).

"The CACCTB is committed to the growth and development of the Tampa Bay region and Florida." stated Derek Lloyd, President of the Caribbean American Chamber of Commerce of Tampa Bay. "We are pleased to welcome our Caribbean, South and Central America neighbors to Tampa Bay and provide a favorable setting which encourages numerous opportunities to promote and expand their business successfully."

Tampa was selected because of its diverse Hispanic heritage and the opportunities that the region provides globally and locally for its cultural ties, airport facilities, port, industrial centers and distribution of goods. From a business perspective the Tampa Bay region provides more than just theme parks, it provides an industry that parallels the growth in global commerce and communication.

The 18th Annual Retailers of the Americas Conference, also known as XVIII Congreso del Comercio Detallista de las Americas, will host hundreds of business executives and dignitaries from across Latin America and the United States. The conference, expected to see an attendance of 3,000, will convene in Tampa between November 20 -22, 2008.

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About the Retailers of the Americas Conference

The mission of the 18th Annual Retailers of the Americas Conference is to integrate the commercial sectors in the western hemisphere in a collaboration effort to develop strategies and initiatives directed at fortifying technological know-how, economic development and the creation of jobs. Previous host countries include, Dominican Republic, Uruguay, Panama, Costa Rica, Brazil, Peru, Mexico, Chile, Puerto Rico and Argentina.

About the United States Hispanic Chamber of Commerce

Founded in 1979, the USHCC actively promotes the economic growth and development of Hispanic entrepreneurs and represents the interests of more than 2.5 million Hispanic-owned businesses in the United States that generate nearly \$400 billion annually. It also serves as the umbrella organization for 200 local Hispanic chambers in the United States, Puerto Rico, Canada, Mexico, Bolivia and Uruguay.