



SAN JUAN
ALCA • 2005

PROPOSAL TO HOST
THE FTAA SECRETARIAT
SAN JUAN, PUERTO RICO



THE OPTION OF CONSENSUS, ACCESS AND GROWTH



CONTENTS

- I - WELCOME STATEMENT**
- II - WHY SAN JUAN?**
- III - PUERTO RICO AT A GLANCE**
- IV - BUSINESS CLIMATE**
- V - TRANSPORTATION**
- VI - LOCAL ENVIRONMENT**
- VII - GOVERNMENT / HOST CITY RESOURCES**
- VIII - STATEMENTS OF ENDORSEMENTS**



THE OPTION OF CONSENSUS, ACCESS AND GROWTH



Dear Ministers

On behalf of the People of Puerto Rico, we invite you to establish the Secretariat of the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA), in our Capital, San Juan.

This invitation is from the People, not from a Government, nor a Political Party, nor any special interest group. It is from the People who have lived through the oldest and continuous free trade agreement in this Hemisphere. It is an experience that we want to share.

We invite you to live our experience on free trade, while you are making the decisions that will change your country forever. We want you to feel, see, breath our free trade experience, how we expanded the good and how we ameliorated the downside of dislocation, while you are negotiating and administering this Free Trade Agreement of the Americas.

Hopefully, this experience will assist to eliminate and discard the mistakes while expanding the good, taking Free Trade to a higher level. Therefore, our slogan: "The Option of Consensus, Access and Growth".

As this invitation is from the People of Puerto Rico, all the political and governmental entities are supporting our invitation. In this presentation, you will observe that all the political sections of our society are endorsing our invitation. This guarantees that years from now the Secretariat will be as welcome in Puerto Rico as we welcome you today.

What we have to offer you is neutrality. We are the only people other than our brothers in the island of Cuba that are not directly represented in this Free Trade Agreement. Therefore, we can offer each of you a home field advantage, as this will be your home.

It is true that we have a special relationship with the United States of America and it is with them that we have shared a free trade agreement for decades. This free trade agreement has brought prosperity to all sectors of our society. As President Kennedy wrote in a letter dated July 24, 1962 to our Dear Governor Luis Muñoz Marín "Puerto Rico has furnished an example to the world of the benefits that can be achieved by close collaboration between a larger and a smaller community within the framework of freedom and mutual agreement".



During this process, we have kept our own culture, traditions and deep Hispanic, North American, South American, Central American, African, European and Caribbean roots. There is no other society in this hemisphere that is more neutral than ours in the past, in the present and most probably in the future.

Why is neutrality so important? Because for free trade to succeed equality must be achieved. Our free trade agreement prospered because we achieved equality with our free trade partner the United States by common citizenship. You will find and define your own means to acquire your equality. What we want to offer this hemisphere is a neutral stadium where the people of this Hemisphere can play and compete under the rules and regulations of a fair playing field. San Juan can offer that, as we are the only jurisdiction, which actively practices on a daily basis the two main Judicial Codes of this Hemisphere. The Spanish Judicial Code and The Common Law tradition both systems co-exist in San Juan; a fundamental element to preserve a fair and even playing field.

All the cities that are candidates to host the Secretariat have much to offer. They are all great cities. However, only one can offer what we firmly believe is the most important need for the hometown of the Secretariat –NEUTRALITY- this city has a name and it is SAN JUAN, PUERTO RICO

Your decision to locate the Secretariat of the FTAA in San Juan would be a milestone in our History. This great honor would forever positively impact our economy, our culture and our political development. The People of Puerto Rico will be forever grateful for this great honor.

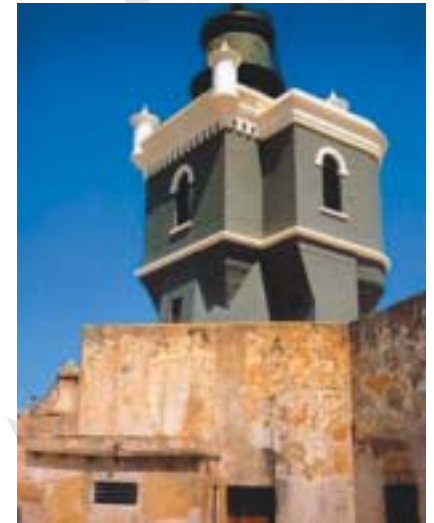
Thank you,

Mr. José González Freyre
President San Juan ALCA 2005



Certainly, the competition among all eleven cities bidding for the permanent FTAA Secretariat is very close; many possess similar attributes and have shown their many qualifications to carry out such an important endeavour. However, we strongly believe that only San Juan holds **key and unique** elements that are highly valuable for the Secretariat:

- **Free Trade Experience** -Home of the first and oldest common market of the Americas in modern history. We know and understand the language, requirements and processes. We are eager to share that expertise with other nations.
- **Neutrality**- Not having direct representation at the FTAA, we can keep a neutral stance and not favor any particular interest in this process.
- **Bilingualism**- English and Spanish are both official languages for education, business and government.
- **Judicial system**- The two legal systems used through-out the hemisphere; The Spanish Civil Code and the Common Law Tradition, are widely used in our society. As we use the Spanish Civil Code in our local courts and the Common Law Traditions in our Federal courts.
- **Our roots**- Our 500 year history combines the Spanish, African, Indigenous, European, Latin and Anglo American cultures. We understand and share the history and culture of all 34 nations in this agreement.





- **A 113-acre special district available to accommodate the Secretariat** – Right in the center of the city and next to a 500,000 sq.ft. Convention Center, the Secretariat will be located in the center of it all, where business meetings from all over the world will be taking place.

As if all of these attributes were not enough, San Juan also offers additional features:

- **Easy access to the central government** – All major dependencies within three (3) miles of the Secretariat location.
- **Security** - Our island setting provides for it because everyone must pass along a strict airport or seaport check points.
- **Two international airports** – Within less than five (5) miles from the Secretariat.
- **Ten passenger ship terminals** – Within less than three (3) miles from the Secretariat.
- **Affordable housing** – Thirty year mortgages available at less than 6% yearly interest rates for individuals.
- **State-of-the-art telecommunications technology**- Wireless, fiber optics, satellite, cellular, cable, roaming services.
- **International banking services** – Many major banks from around the world have representation and branches in Puerto Rico.
- **History of a stable and democratic government**- Puerto Rico is a Commonwealth of the USA. With its own Constitution since 1952 and with elections every four years.





Passport Information: Puerto Rico is a Commonwealth of the United States and USA citizens do not need passports or a visa to visit the Island. For non-USA citizens, entry requirements are the same as anywhere else in the USA. In line with customs regulations, upon departure, luggage must be inspected by the USA Agriculture Department.

Currency: USA dollar. Major credit cards are accepted in most establishments and most of the major international banks have branches throughout the island offering an extensive network of 24-hour automated teller machines.

Language: Spanish and English are the official languages.

Time of day: San Juan, Puerto Rico is GMT -04 all year round.

Mail: USA Postal Service rates and services. All major couriers/express delivery companies service Puerto Rico.

Excellent Medical Care: San Juan, Puerto Rico boasts one of the finest medical facilities in the Caribbean and Latin America and provides excellent coverage throughout the Island. All major health insurance policies are honored.

Electricity: Voltage is 110-220 volts, 60 Hz.

Telephones: The Area Codes for Puerto Rico are (787) and (939). Local phone calls placed within the San Juan metropolitan area now require ten-digit dialing.

Driving: Driving is on the right hand side of the road. Distance markers are posted in kilometers (1.6 km = 1 mile) but speed limits are designated in miles per hour.





Taxes: The same tax deductions are applicable for business meetings held in San Juan as those held in major cities around the Hemisphere. There is no sales tax in San Juan except on jewelry purchases.

Geography: Over 160 km (100 miles) long about 56 km (35 miles) wide, Puerto Rico is the easternmost of the Greater Antilles in the Caribbean Sea, about 2,500 km (1,550 miles) south of New York, 1,689 km (1,047 miles) southeast of Miami, and 884 km (548 miles) north of Caracas, Venezuela.

Population: 3.9 million people.

Climate: Tropical, annual temperatures average 82° F (28° C) with constant mild, easterly trade winds.

Topography: The Island terrain is dramatically varied. The interior is mountainous with peaks reaching 4,390 feet. The southern region is semi-arid. The northern area, or coastal plain, is fertile and densely populated.

Approximately 8% of the land is suitable for agriculture, while about 66% of the countryside is covered with forest or woodlands, including a tropical rain forest.

Puerto Rico has more than 252 miles of white sand-beaches along both the Atlantic Ocean and the Caribbean Sea.

Government: Puerto Rico is a Commonwealth of the United States with its own Constitution that allows for self-governing on local issues within the United States constitutional system. Our government consists of the executive, legislative and judicial branches.

General elections are held every four years. There are 78 municipalities on the island, each with a locally elected mayor and assembly.



Society: San Juan, Puerto Rico has a modern society with a strong Latin American, Caribbean and North American historical and cultural heritage.

The island became associated with the United States as a result of the Spanish-American War of 1898. Puerto Ricans are USA citizens by birth.

Economy: A major producer and exporter of goods, high technology equipment and pharmaceutical, manufacturing generated 41% of Puerto Rico's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) during Fiscal year 2001, the service sector 46%, government utilities 11% and construction over 2%. Puerto Rican workers are consistently listed among the most productive in the world.

Education: The Island has a high level of education with approximately 750,000 students enrolled in public and private schools and 176,000 college students. Puerto Rico has achieved one of the highest university education rates in the world with approximately 56% of its college-age students attending institutions of higher learning.

Transportation: San Juan, Puerto Rico is the transportation hub of the Caribbean region. San Juan Luis Muñoz Marín International Airport ranks internationally among the top four in passengers movement as well as third in cargo in Latin America. In addition to the Luis Muñoz Marín Airport, the Island has 11 regional airports. By air, San Juan, Puerto Rico is just over three hours from New York, four hours from Mexico City, seven hours from Buenos Aires, eight hours from the U. S. west coast and most major cities in Western Europe. San Juan serves as the seaport to more than two-dozen cruise-ship lines and over a million passengers visit annually. There are nine additional ports on the island and twenty marinas for pleasure craft. Puerto Rico has 14,018 miles of paved roads.





1. Economy

San Juan has had a stable and continuous economic growth without the volatility many economies have shown in the last decade. According to the Puerto Rico Chamber of Commerce and the Puerto Rico Government Planning Board, we can expect to see real GNP growth from 2.5% to 2.7% for next Fiscal Year.



Puerto Rico sustains over 2,300 diversified industrial plants that manufacture everything from apparel and computer motherboards to pharmaceuticals and medical devices.

San Juan is the perfect city for International business executives to conduct business. In fact, in 2000, the renowned British magazine, “The Economist”, named San Juan and San José, Costa Rica the best cities in Latin America for business expatriates to live in.

Highlights:

- Puerto Rico is, in fact, the world’s largest pharmaceutical exporter, ranks number 10th for exports in medical instruments and 18th in largest computer parts.
- Puerto Rico ranks 15th in the world in terms of export per capita and exports as a share of the GDP. Companies such as Johnson & Johnson, Eli Lilly, Pfizer Pharmaceuticals, Merck, Sharpe & Dohme, Bristol- Myers Squibb, Astra-Zeneca, Abbott, Baxter Sales and Distributors, and Wyeth Pharmaceuticals, to name a few, have a strong presence on the Island.
- All of these firms benefit from the Island’s wealth of facilities, favorable business climate and a well-educated, bilingual workforce that is capable of maintaining demanding high quality standards.



- The range of industries that have made Puerto Rico part of their operations include: Biotechnology, pharmaceutical, medical instruments, electronics and software, manufacturing, tele-communications systems, contract manufacturing, plastics, textiles and services.
- Locally owned businesses employ more than 10% of total jobholders and 15% of all private-sector workers.
- Puerto Rico is home to more than 164 regional offices of Fortune 500 companies. In addition, Puerto Rico boast the most advanced technologically wired business center in the Caribbean.
- High technology manufacturing makes a major contribution to Puerto Rico's overall economy, accounting for a large share of total economic growth.
- High technology exports accounted for nearly \$37 billion in 2002 or close to 79% of all exports from Puerto Rico.
- The pharmaceutical sector makes and ship 36 of the top 200 selling drugs worldwide, and its total exports are growing twice as fast as the average growth rate for manufacturing overall.
- Latin American executives find Puerto Rico especially appealing not only for the fact that we share the Spanish language and heritage, but because our capital city of San Juan is renowned as the financial, transportation, communications and shopping hub of the Caribbean.
- The cost of fuel (gasoline) in San Juan is below the average cost for Latin America both for super and diesel.
- San Juan offers easy access to financiers, attorneys, engineers, marketing experts and communications specialists.



2. Financial Institutions

Following decades of investment by multinational firms, San Juan has an exceptionally capable financial and professional services sector accustomed to delivering work at global standards. A sophisticated financial sector labor force gives San Juan a comparative advantage.



San Juan's banking sector has a highly developed technological infrastructure that helps reduce costs and an investment management services that is rapidly growing with estimated \$30 billion in Puerto Rican assets that can be invested.

On average, San Juan's banks outperform USA banks across a range of performance indicators.

In recent years, San Juan's banks have grown assets aggressively. Local firms have undertaken successful international expansions into North American and Caribbean markets.

Highlights:

- Among the highest concentrations of financial service professionals in the USA at average monthly wages lower than those in the USA and other world banking centers.
- Nearly 17,500 people currently employed in commercial banking sector – with a total of 47,000 in financial sectors overall.
- A banking sector that employs one-third more people than Miami and four times more than Panama.



- San Juan finance professionals have over 243,000 accumulated person-years of experience.
- Critical mass of Series 7, Certified Financial Analyst (CFA), and Securities Investment Management Analysts (SIMA) recipients.
- Only Hispanic-owned investment consultant firm in the USA.
- Puerto Rico has nearly 1,000 automated teller machines and 34,000 point-of-service machines in retail outlets.
- At the largest locally owned bank, Banco Popular, 76% of transactions are made by electronic means – up from only 24% in 1980.
- By November 2000, there were 12 million transactions totaling \$5.7 billion on teller machines and 424,000 automated debits per year.
- Total assets in the financial system reached \$137.8 billion in year 2002 – divided between the commercial banks, cooperatives, consumer loan services and brokers.
- Eleven commercial banks include eight local institutions and three money center banks, with combined assets of \$52.5 billion.
- International banking entities are subsidiaries that can capture and hold deposits to be reimbursed overseas.
- Brokerage accounts for 5% of assets – in contrast to 16% in Singapore.
- Insurance accounts for 4% or \$4.3 billion.



3. Judicial System

San Juan, Puerto Rico combines the experience of the interaction of the two major legal systems, which coexist in the Hemisphere. Our law professionals are trained in both "Civil Law", which comes from our Spanish heritage and "Common Law", which has developed due to our relationship with the USA.

There is no other city in the world with a better blend of the two most important legal systems in the world. San Juan legal and regulatory environment on intellectual property standards is one of the best in the world. Intellectual property protection is a key non-financial incentive for pharmaceutical production and computer hardware sectors.

Highlights:

- Software piracy rates are the lowest in Latin America and lower than Singapore, Korea, Spain or Italy.
- Recently, the government has taken certain measures to turn the legal cases management more efficient and to promote time and quality processing standards.
- The use of alternate methods to solve disputes such as the detour of cases from their jurisdiction environment.
- The creation of the Appeals Court, which transformed competence areas and increased the number of judges.
- The abolition of the Superior Court and the District Court and the creation of a First Instance Court to increase process speed and efficiency.
- The use of electronic technology and databases.



4. Telecommunications

San Juan, Puerto Rico's telecommunications market is clearly one of the most dynamic and advanced in the Hemisphere with high capacity submarine cable and Intel sat with high-speed data capability both for domestic and international connection.

According to the Internet society of Puerto Rico, there are over 1,000,000 (one million) e-mail addresses registered as "living in Puerto Rico". The penetration of Internet services on our island is the second highest in Latin America.



Highlights:

- Low-cost telecommunication connections to main customer markets in North America.
- Solid communication links to important global markets via high capacity undersea fiber optic cables and satellite connections to the USA, Europe and Latin America.
- Wide self-healing fiber optic network with 100% digital switching and fast speed voice, video and data for advanced IT work.
- Dense reliable telecom network supporting over 2,000,000 fixed phones, cellular lines and beepers, a strong backbone for call center and service center.
- San Juan's telecom infrastructure consists of 100% digital network.
- \$1 Billion invested between 1999 and 2003 in upgrading and expanding Puerto Rico Telephone's (PRT) network.



- PRT has over 4,600 Km of fiber optic cable, creating 12 self healing rings that cover the island.
- Centennial offers 800 Km of fiber optic cable.
- Asynchronous Transfer Mode (ATM) network that rivals or exceeds the quality of many networks in the USA.
- There are 92 available satellites.
- Six (6) major submarine cables (Americas, Arcos, Floricoll TCSI, Taino, Antillas and SAM USA).
- Wireless communications services have experienced extraordinary growth in recent years. Numbers of phone users have increased at annual rate of 33.5% between 1996 and 2003, today peaking at roughly 1.8 million.
- Another important element has been the prepaid service. Much like long distance cards allows the user to purchase minutes in “packages” and use them as needed but at a higher rate than the contracted-based offers. Represents 45% of the market.
- Mobile penetration is 40 subscribers per 100 people, Puerto Rico is ranked 5th in Latin America.
- Approximately monthly fares for cell phones are \$19.95 and \$0.06 the cost per minute.
- Local call per minute \$0.13; USA calls from P.R. per minute \$0.06; International calls per minute could vary from \$0.10 to \$1.06, nevertheless those rates are constantly decreasing due to competition and technological advances.



5. Diplomatic Missions and Translators Services

In San Juan there are a total of 40 consular offices including representation from 18 countries that are part of the FTAA negotiations.



FTAA Countries that have Consular Representation in San Juan

Chile	Colombia	Costa Rica	Dominican Republic
Ecuador	El Salvador	Haití	Canada
Mexico	Panama	Venezuela	Peru
Bolivia	Guatemala	Nicaragua	Paraguay
Uruguay	Belize		

Puerto Rico participates in multiple international organizations as an active member, associate member or as an observer.

The State Department of Puerto Rico will provide continuous technical assistance for the entry and exit formalities to FTAA Delegates.

Translators

There are around 21 companies in San Juan that provides the services of interpreters, legal, medical, financial, banking, pharmaceutical, commercial translation and simultaneous translation in languages such as English, French, Portuguese, German, Italian and Japanese. These companies have top of the line equipment for simultaneous translation to fill every exigencies for conferences and meetings. Depending on the services requested





by the Delegates of the FTAA Countries, they will prepare specialized quotes that fill all the needs.

There are more than 100 certified translators in the Island. Also the University of Puerto Rico has the only Masters Degree Program of Translation in the Caribbean that graduates approximately 300 students a year.



The State Department of Puerto Rico recently established a translator's register through the internet in order to publish their names and the services they provide.

6. Migration Issues

Visa Process

- Puerto Rico is a Commonwealth of the United States. U.S. citizens do not need a passport or visa to enter our Island. For non-U.S. citizens, entry requirements are the same as for the U.S.
- The Puerto Rico State Department and the Puerto Rico Convention Bureau serves as facilitators of the corresponding information for the expedition of visas.
- In general, the required documents to solicit a visa in the U.S. embassy are the following:



1. Formal invitation to the event from the host organization with the following information:
 - Specific information about the event (description, past history, etc.)
 - Dates
 - Purpose of the event
 - Meeting agenda
 - The invitation must be an original, printed on the host organization's letterhead

2. Proof of economic stability
 - Evidence of housing (evidence of rent or mortgage payment, etc.)
 - Good credit standing (proof of payment for day to day bills such as: rent, water, loans, etc.)

3. Endorsement letters
 - Proof of employment and employer's consent for employee to attend the event.
 - Document that shows that the employee belongs to a social committee or association. A document that demonstrates some kind of social involvement in the solicitant's respective country.



1. Air Transportation

Due to its geographical position San Juan is the airline gateway to many Caribbean, Latin American and North American destinations.



San Juan's airport is clean, modern and efficient and the government of Puerto Rico is working together with the Puerto Rico Tourism Company, the Puerto Rico Hotel and Tourism Association, the Puerto Rico Convention Bureau and the firm INTERVISTAS of international consultants to expand over air access and integrate tourism development and transportation strategies.

San Juan is a favored destination for many of the World's major airlines. Because of the large amount of passengers, fares are very reasonable and packages are available with your choice of many fine hotels. In August 2002, the Puerto Rico Tourism Company launched a comprehensive Air Access Program with one priority, to increase the number of destinations, flights, and seat capacity for passengers flying to/from Puerto Rico. New air services have been initiated or announced since the Access Program was introduced, with a significant economic impact estimated around \$128.3 million.

San Juan is a hub for air travel in the Caribbean, from the United States, as well as Europe. American Airlines uses San Juan as one of their most important hubs.



Cities / Countries	Weekly Non-stop Flights	Weekly One-stop Connections	Time of Flight	Price
Bridgetown, Barbados	10	28	2hr 30	\$474
Bogotá, Colombia	0	49	8hr 37	\$700
Kingstown, St. Vincent	0	14	3hr 30	\$400
Castries, St. Lucia	28	35	2hr 10	\$402
Antigua & Barbuda	23	56	1hr 30	\$300
Port of Spain, Tr & Tobago	7	35	3hr	\$500
Nassau, Bahamas	0	83	4hr 49	\$401
St. Domingo, Dom. Rep.	49	7	1hr 20	\$220
Port Au Prince, Haïti	0	3	4hr 25	\$400
Belize City, Belize	0	7	7hr 12	\$1,448
Tegucigalpa, Honduras	0	13	7hr 17	\$511
Saint George, Grenada	7	28	2hr 29	\$466
Guatemala City, Guatemala	0	42	7hr 17	\$650
Managua, Nicaragua	0	28	7hr 27	\$680
San Salvador, El Salvador	0	42	8hr 25	\$940
San José, Costa Rica	6	42	5hr 13	\$720
Panama City, Panama	13	42	2hr 50	\$720
Caracas, Venezuela	7	43	1hr 38	\$792
Basseterre, St. Kitts & Nevis	35	70	1hr 22	\$248
Mexico City, Mexico	0	111	7hr 6	\$982
Quito, Ecuador	0	39	8hr	\$1,050
La Paz, Bolivia	0	7	13hr 8	\$1,918
Montevideo, Uruguay	0	19	11hr 50	\$1,874



Cities / Countries	Weekly Non-stop Flights	Weekly One-stop Connections	Time of Flight	Price
Marigot, Dominica	7	21	1hr 50	\$328
Georgetown, Guyana	0	14	6hr 18	\$730
Lima, Peru	0	55	7hr 6	\$1,160
Panamaribo, Suriname	0	3	7hr 20	\$997
Asuncion, Paraguay	0	7	16hr 36	\$2,198
Sao Paulo, Brasil	0	56	9hr 54	\$1,051
Santiago, Chile	0	42	11hr 20	\$1,998
Buenos Aires, Argentina	0	22	11hr 21	\$1,998
Washington, DC	20	53	3hr 35	\$1,144
Kingston, Jamaica	0	24	4hr 43	\$790
Toronto, Canada	4	124	4hr 15	\$1,280

There are substantial discounts when booking three (3), seven (7), fifteen (15), or thirty (30) days in advance

Highlights:

- San Juan’s Airport ranks among the top 40 airports in the U.S. for passengers and top 30 for Cargo.
- San Juan holds 44% market share of all flights to the Caribbean.
- Major airlines within the U.S. offer over 500 weekly non-stop direct flights from major cities in the US to San Juan and over 350 weekly connecting flights.
- There are 33 weekly direct flights from Central and South America to San Juan, 5 non-stop flights and 20 direct flights from Europe. Puerto Rico has direct access to 56 air destinations.





2. Ground Transportation

San Juan holds many ways to travel comfortably throughout our island. It has a variety of regular taxis that charge metered rates, plus the new tourist taxis, whose drivers have received special training to serve the tourist areas. San Juan and the rest of the island definitely have the best quality highway infrastructure in the Caribbean, with an expanding network.

Recently the Public Service Commission (PSC) determined flat rates to various points of tourist interest from the Airport.

All cabs authorized by the Public Service Commission use meters to charge fares, except in charter trips outside usual taxi zones.

Taxis are \$20.00 an hour, prices made by the PSC.

From the Pier to Isla Verde	(15-20 min.)	\$16.00
Old San Juan to the Secretariat	(10 min.)	\$6.00 to \$10.00
Isla Verde to Airport	(5 min.)	\$8.00
Secretariat to Airport	(10-15 min.)	\$13.00
Secretariat to Plaza Las Americas	(10 min.)	\$15.00
Isla Verde to Plaza Las Americas	(10-15 min.)	\$10.00
Pier to Plaza Las Americas	(10-15 min.)	\$10.00

Zones Priced by the PSC.

Any fares outside of zones are metered starting with \$1.00.



The Urban Train

One area in which San Juan has gained a great deal of momentum is via the construction of the Urban Train or *Tren Urbano*.

The premise for its development is to create a state-of-the-art transit system that will connect three municipalities and five urban centers of the San Juan metropolitan area and, in the future, extend service to the Luis Muñoz Marín International Airport and Old San Juan.

Acclaimed to be the one most cost-effective transportation systems ever to be built in the Americas, and certainly one to revolutionize mass transportation in Puerto Rico, the new urban train will link all major areas of activity within metropolitan San Juan, including principal business districts, government buildings, shopping centers, and medical complexes.

It will operate twenty hours a day at maximum frequencies reaching four-minute intervals during morning and afternoon rush hours.

The train is scheduled to begin operations this year and is expected to transport up to 115,000 passengers daily.



3. Seaport Access

Today the port of San Juan annually accommodates nearly 1.4 million passengers in cruise ship alone, making it the busiest cruise ship port in the world.



Similarly, San Juan is the fourth largest container port in the western hemisphere, servicing 40 shipping lines and providing regular transport service to over 80 seaports around the globe.



The average sailing time from San Juan to New York City is as little as 2.5 days, 3 to 4 days to other North Atlantic and Gulf Ports, and 10 days to the U. S. West Coast.

Because shipments to the United States are considered domestic, no special documentation is required. A major change is on the horizon for the cruise industry in San Juan. A series of exciting renovations and expansions are currently underway that will extend cruise service beyond the traditional port of Old San Juan. New Pier Facilities will include the elegant Pan American Pier in Isla Grande, managed by Royal Caribbean International, and a completely renovated Pier 4, managed by Carnival Cruise Line.

San Juan is served by the major cruise lines in the world: Carnival Cruise Line, Celebrity Cruises, Costa Cruise Lines, Cunard Line, Holland America Line, Norwegian Cruise Line, P&O Cruises, Princess Cruises, Radisson Seven Seas Cruises, Royal Caribbean International, Seabourn Cruise Line, Silversea Cruises.

Port of the Americas

The port will constitute a major new container terminal that will serve the needs of the regional transshipment and container relay markets as well as the domestic Puerto Rico Economy.



The port will be located on land presently occupied by the Port of Ponce and other adjacent land. Ponce is the second largest city in Puerto Rico and the economic center of the southern portion of the Island. It is located within one hour drive from the Secretariat.

In addition to providing efficient and very high deepwater-capacity container handling facilities, the Port is expected to act as a catalyst for the economic development of the



Island as a major regional industrial center. The Port will provide a major opportunity for stable project development within a highly dynamic world region.

The government has committed US\$17.4 million so far to preliminary studies, project management and the conceptual development of the Port, and considerable technical, environmental, financial, economic and market analysis and planning has already been undertaken.

An additional US\$32 million has already been committed by the Commonwealth for dredging activities, approximately US\$40 million will be invested by the Commonwealth in the Port of Ponce and US\$38.7 million has been initially

earmarked by the Commonwealth for the Construction and expansion of connecting infrastructure to support the Port's development.

The rapid completion of the Port of the Americas is an objective of the Government's economic development program.

It is planned to initiate container handling at the newly constructed facilities of the Port of Americas by the fourth quarter of 2006, at the latest.



1. World Class Accommodations

With its natural beauty and rich cultural heritage, San Juan, Puerto Rico has much to offer visitors – but the city is especially appealing to meeting and conference planners, with a sophisticated infrastructure, with close to 12,000 hotel rooms, excellent transportation and far-reaching support services.



San Juan, Puerto Rico is the home to such prestigious and world known names such as Embassy Suites, Hampton Inn, Hilton International, Hyatt Hotels, Intercontinental, Marriott, Radisson, Ritz-Carlton, Wyndham, Westin, to name a few.

The government is also in preliminary discussions for future groundbreaking with other renowned international hotel groups such as Mandarin Oriental and Raffles International Hotels and Resorts.

San Juan is not only the most developed group-meeting destination, but also the premier world-class destination in the Caribbean that will be an ideal partner to enhance the Best Cities alliance.

San Juan, Puerto Rico boasts luxurious hotels and resorts offering the ultimate in accommodations and recreational facilities set in some of the most beautiful natural scenery in the world.

In what is projected to be a banner era for hotel development, several new properties, representing an investment of over \$950 million and 3,350 new rooms, will open in Puerto Rico over the next two years; bringing the number of hotel rooms on the island to over 16,000.



Average Daily Rate (Low Season)

Hotels

less than 80 rooms	\$80.21
81-200 rooms	\$92.88
201 or more rooms	\$138.36
Total	\$100.53

Average Daily Rate (High Season)

Hotels

less than 80 rooms	\$96.02
81-200 rooms	\$114.44
201 or more rooms	\$189.87
Total	\$127.05

Hotels within three miles of the FTAA Secretariat:

- Caribe Hilton
- Park Plaza Normandie
- Wyndham Old San Juan Hotel & Casino
- Hotel El Convento
- Wyndham Condado Plaza Hotel & Casino
- San Juan Marriot Resort & Stellaris Casino
- Radisson Ambassador Plaza
- Best Western Hotel Pierre
- Diamond Palace
- Regency Hotel
- The San Juan Beach Hotel
- The proposed hotel in the Convention Center District



2. Safety and Security

The issue of safety for our visitors and the 3.9 million residents of Puerto Rico is of paramount importance to us all. Law enforcement officials are a visible presence in main tourist areas and the San Juan Metropolitan area compares favorably to any large city in the United States in terms of the incidence of crime.

It is important to mention that San Juan is a very safe city. Our island has no record of political crimes, nor kidnapping for political motivations. We have never experienced in our history the sad reality that many of our Latin American brothers have suffered.

A visitor can feel as safe in San Juan as in any major urban destination. Visitors within the main tourist areas enjoy the benefits of additional police protection, generally by bilingual speaking policemen specially trained to deal with tourists and their needs. The City of San Juan has issued Codes of Public Order, which in essence have served to ensure the safety of all citizens.

The expectation from the Puerto Rico government is to exhort the adoption of Public Order Codes throughout the Island.

Highlights:

- Puerto Rico has the lowest violent crime rates in the last 20 years (excluding homicides), 5 times lower than the European average and 3 times lower than the USA average.
- Property crimes cases have also shown less-incidence in the last years as well domestic violence, which is currently below the last 10 years average. These improvements have been a result of important investments in public safety and an efficient and expanded judicial system.



- Average number of homicides from 1998 to 2000 per 100,000 inhabitants was 17 (70%-80% of homicides perpetrated with firearms are related to drugs).
- Puerto Rico violent crime rate (includes rape, robbery, and premeditated attacks) was dropped from 3,140 per 100,000 inhabitants in 1992 to 1,070 per 100,000 inhabitants in 2001 (70%-90% of violent crimes perpetrated with firearms are related to drugs).
- Puerto Rico currently has 711 police personnel per 100,000 inhabitants (compared to Ireland, which has 305, South Africa 298, Singapore 246, USA 244, Colombia 239, China 196 and Canada 182).

Emergency Plans

Puerto Rico is an island particularly blessed in terms of the frequency and the impact of natural disasters when we compare it to other islands in the Caribbean. In the city of San Juan there are two agencies in charge of the emergency plans one federal and one from the state. Both agencies have a very detailed plan, not only for the emergency itself but also for the education of our society.

As soon as the announcement of a possible impact of a hurricane, the emergency plans are implemented, reunions between the different agencies involved in actions such as water and electricity supply, price controls for first need items, telecommunications, etc. start taking place. Also it is defined as a top priority the reestablishment of basic services to the hospitals, tourism facilities and the commercial sections in the city.

3. Quality of Life

San Juan ranks as a location with high human development, having some of the best indexes on quality of life in Latin America and the Caribbean. While most countries in Latin America and the Caribbean are classified as “medium human develop” nations, Puerto



Rico ranks among the “high human develop” locations considering an aggregate of life expectancy, education attainment and standard of living. Poverty levels in San Juan have improved in the last decades being among the lowest in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Housing

Puerto Rico offers a wide variety of housing options, going from the luxury houses and condominiums with fantastic ocean view to the single family houses coming on every size and style.



One of the major advantages of San Juan is the financing availability, with only a 10% of down payment every single person could purchase a house, the other 90% could be financed up to 30 years with interest rates that at the present moment are below 6% per year.

This availability applies to the general public, but it is important to mention that individuals with a proven credit record could finance the complete transaction with no down payment and the financing is for the 100% of the transaction.



Our political stability also translates in a financial stability, there are no devaluations of our currency and there are no major financial fluctuations that could affect the interest rates in the medium and long term. This financial security is paramount for the inhabitants of San Juan but also for every single person who invest on our island.



Education and Professional Training

San Juan's accumulated human capital is among the strongest in Latin America and the Caribbean cities. Those Puerto Rican students who complete secondary education are more likely to go on to university compared to their European counterparts, who also continue technical and vocational studies.

Highlights:

- In relative terms, Puerto Rico invests more in education than most Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) countries, having a high level of education attainment.
- The average level of the population's educational attainment in Puerto Rico is comparable to G7 countries.
- Of the Government budget, education represents 35% of the social expenditure.
- 60% of the population 25 years old and over have secondary education (average among the G7 nations is 70%).
- 18% of the population 25 year old and over have tertiary (university) education (average among the G7 nations is 16%).
- Puerto Rico has more than 11,000 active lawyers, 10,500 professional engineers, 8,000 doctors, and 4,000 CPA's, mainly located in the San Juan area.
- Nearly three-quarters of the senior and middle managers at multinational companies are local residents – a cadre well versed in the standards needed to compete internationally.



- Among the largest concentrations of certified financial analysts and investment brokers in the Hemisphere is located in Puerto Rico.
- Puerto Rico ranks 9th in engineering graduates in the USA and the University of Puerto Rico ranks among the top twenty USA engineering schools.
- Puerto Rico's universities award 4,500 advanced degrees annually.
- 91.5% of the population 15 years of age and older are literate.
- Of the budgeted \$4,342 million and culture in 2003, \$1,227 million are for higher education and \$2,743 million for primary and secondary education.

Health Care

A wide array of health care services, combined with highly trained personnel, the latest equipment and procedures, amenities and conveniences, short waiting periods, and attractive and comfortable surroundings, make San Juan the optimal location to obtain medical treatment.

The health standards of San Juan residents have improved significantly in the last 50 years as reflected in the increase of life expectancy and sharp improvement in child mortality and other indicators. San Juan's life expectancy is 76 years (compared with 77.2 years average in OECD countries).

San Juan demonstrates levels of healthcare spending per capita at par with most developed countries reaching almost 14% of GDP. 40% of total spending goes to public health, different to the 75% average in other OECD countries.

Fifty years ago Puerto Rico had infectious diseases as number one cause of death. Nowadays, Puerto Rico has the epidemiological profile of first world countries, characterized by cardiovascular health problems, cancer, etc.



Environmental Quality

The environment quality has been recognized in the past decade as a fundamental issue for our socio economic development. Achieving sustainable development is a priority for every political leader in the Island, especially in translating the concept into working practices. There are many government agencies, Non-Government Organizations (NGO's) and private companies that actively participate in formulating public policy that can ensure our citizens of a clean and healthy environment. The Island has the financial resources and the technology to achieve our objectives.



Highlights:

- The climate, geography and biodiversity of Puerto Rico make it home to a range of important ecosystems.
- There are extensive legal and regulatory institutions to manage environmental quality.
- Puerto Rico is estimated to lie on the “clean path” of environmental development.
- There is an increasing public awareness and participation in environmental issues.
- Universities have a range of program to analyze environmental issues and promote innovative solutions. By some measures, environmental quality is improving, with increasing energy efficiency and cleanliness.

Water and Waste Infrastructure

Puerto Rico has the highest rate of access to running water and sanitation in Latin America and the Caribbean. 100% of the population has access to improved sanitation facilities in Puerto Rico.



One of our assets is that major spending on water infrastructure will support growing demand going forward. There has been major investment in recent years in water infrastructure. For example, there has been an investment of \$US145 million to increase reliability in the water filtration systems and an increase in the capacity of filtration plants around the Island. Also there has been a major investment of approximately US \$500 million to avoid service interruption during periods of natural disasters, such as hurricanes, or drought and also improve reliability.

Highlights:

- Puerto Rico has excellent aquifers.
- There are extensive legal regulatory institutions to manage water and waste issues, such as the Safe Drinking Water Act that ensures that public water supplies meet national standards that protect consumers from harmful contaminants in drinking water and the Water Quality Standard Regulation that prohibits water pollution generally as well as the point source discharge of water pollutants, among others.

Religion

We are proud to say that because of our Constitutional framework and our tolerance and respect, each religion has their own place for worship. Religious services in the city of San Juan are suitable to all delegates from every FTAA country. There are more than 19 religious denominations around the island, with more than 600 places for worship and schools and community services that range from Protestants and Catholics, Evangelists, Episcopalians, Jews, Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists, among others.



History, Culture and Traditions

San Juan has over 500 years of Spanish heritage and over 100 years with special relations with USA. These relationships are masterfully intertwined with a unique blend of Indian and African cultures. San Juan, Puerto Rico holds a charm that is incomparable to any other hemispheric destinations.

In Old San Juan you can walk the famous blue cobblestone streets that wind through our city and lead to so many historical buildings, fortresses and shops; sample our superb Puerto Rican cuisine and enjoy the warm tropical breezes.

Highlights:

- San Juan is considered World Cultural Heritage designated by the UNESCO.
- Old San Juan and other heritage town centers rank among the Hemisphere most recognized cultural landmarks. Historical sites and colonial architecture in San Juan has few parallels in the world.
- San Juan features world-class exhibition galleries, theaters and museums and the finest cultural activities.
- San Juan offers the most vibrant nightlife in the Caribbean, with over 92 bars and nightclubs.
- San Juan has developed and exported to the world some forms of unique cultural expressions in its genre such as “salsa” and “tropical jazz” music and dance.
- The cultural world in San Juan is increasing its offer, quality and geographic coverage due to the strengthening and consolidation of its cultural institutions.





- San Juan possesses a series of inherent strengths to film production when compared to other locations; its tropical climate allows filming in exterior throughout the whole year.

Tourism

San Juan in itself is a blend of Old World European charm with an American flavor. Along with a variety of attractions that celebrate and honor our Hispanic heritage, which dates back to the colonial era and beyond, the city also offers many fun filled ways to absorb the beauty of nature ranging from towering mountain peaks and a lush rain forest to beautiful country meadows and pristine beaches. San Juan provides a comfortable lifestyle with all the modern comforts of major international locations.



You will find many of the same department stores, upscale boutiques, excellent restaurants, and nightclubs as in the biggest cities in the world competing alongside home grown commercial and service enterprises.

Highlights:

- Cultural activities abound and include world-class events and performances by renowned stars. San Juan holds the world's renowned symphonic orchestra festival "Pablo Casals", the "Heineken Jazz Festival" and the "Salsa Festival", just to name a few.
- San Juan is cosmopolitan in nature and its environs are within easy reach. Visitors will find San Juan completely within their reach with a warm and welcoming people to guide them.



- The classic colonial charms of historic Old San Juan takes visitors back in time with its cobblestone streets and 18th century Spanish architecture. At the same time the old city is thriving with boutique shops familiar such as Coach, Dooney & Bourke, Polo, Speedo and more. On the first Tuesday of every month San Juan celebrates “Noches de Galerías”, where everyone can enjoy and visit the different galleries and museums at night. A casual stroll through this European influenced city will take visitors to unique attractions such as:

La Fortaleza – The oldest Governor’s mansion in the Western hemisphere, built in 1540.

Fuerte San Cristóbal – This large complex of military bastions and massive walls stand guard to what was once the eastern gate entrance to the Old City. Built in 1635, this 17th century fort was completed in 1678.



Fuerte San Felipe del Morro – Known as El Morro, this 15th century fortress rises 140 feet above sea level surrounded by the Atlantic Ocean and San Juan Bay. It proudly displays flags of the U.S., Puerto Rico and Spanish military.

Catedral de San Juan – Offering a rare example of medieval architecture in the New World, this cathedral was built in 1540 and houses the remains of Puerto Rico’s first governor, Juan Ponce de León.



Plazas and promenades - Plaza Colón (named for Christopher Columbus), Plaza de Hostos (named for the Puerto Rican scholar and educator), Plaza de Armas located in the center of the town square, and Paseo de La Princesa for a stroll along the marina with fountains, benches, sculptures and street merchants.



Museo de Arte de Puerto Rico – Located a stroll away from the Condado tourist district; this museum features world-class exhibition galleries, a multipurpose theater, an interactive Family gallery, an education department, a fine dining restaurant and a five-acre garden with trails and a lake among other amenities.

Plaza Las Américas – Known as the largest shopping mall in Puerto Rico and the Caribbean, “Plaza” as it known by locals, has 800,000 sq. ft. of commercial space with over 300 stores that include well-known department store chains, 30 fast food eateries and restaurants, 21 movie theaters, multilevel parking areas and much more.

Parque de las Ciencias Luis A. Ferré – Located in Bayamón this 42-acre science park features museums, numerous playgrounds, a zoo and an observation deck.

- Deep Sea Fishing is popular in Puerto Rico, and the deep waters right off El Morro have long been thought to be the breeding ground for Blue Marlin. Tuna, Wahoo, Dolphin and Barracuda also make regular appearances. The Puerto Rico Billfish Tournament is the longest-running deep-sea tournament in the world.



- Tourism accounts for 6% of the GDP in Puerto Rico.
- San Juan and the rest of the Island have attracted 4.4 million visitors (3.2 million overnight visitors and 1.2 million Cruise ship passengers) in fiscal year 2003.
- Overnight visitors staying at hotels and Paradores increased 8% from 1.82 million in FY 2002 to 1.97 million in FY 2003.
- San Juan location in the Caribbean makes it a year round tourism destination near our Hemisphere and Europe.
- San Juan has a better overall infrastructure and endowment of attractions when compared to the rest of the Caribbean.
- San Juan enjoys a stable mix of visitors, with a strong business segment lowering vulnerability to market shifts.
- Greatest share of overnight visitors in the Caribbean, with 3.2 million visitors and \$2.7 billion in total visitor expenditures in 2003.
- The Port of San Juan is the fourth largest in the Caribbean, (measured by passenger volume) it is both a major homeport for the southern Caribbean cruise market and a popular port-of-call for cruises originating in Florida— 1.2 million embarked/disembarked cruise passengers in 2003.
- Local occupancy rates have remained fairly steady over the past five years, fluctuating between 67% and 78%.



Recreational and Sports Activities: All our visitors have ample entertainment options in addition to the traditional “Caribbean Island” and “cultural and architectural richness”. Among these are equine events, basketball, volleyball, aquatic sports, golf, baseball, boxing, soccer, cock fighting, horse cavalcades, extreme sports, and others.

There is no doubt that the good climate allows for outdoor recreational activities throughout the year. Due to the limited dimensions of the island and the ample road system, Puerto Ricans have easy and quick access to different recreational activities that are being developed anywhere in the island.

Highlights:

- There are a great number of recreational facilities and NGO's dedicated to the promotion of sports and recreation on the island.
- The government budget for recreation and sports increased from \$30.1 million in 2001 to \$56.5 million in 2002-2003, an 88% increase.

The San Juan Coliseum

Sports and concertgoers alike await the grand opening of the magnificent San Juan's Coliseum in the central downtown district of Hato Rey in metropolitan San Juan.

With an ample 20,000-person seating capacity, the San Juan Coliseum promises to raise the bar on the level of sporting events and live entertainment to be held in Puerto Rico.



This new, multi-purpose facility boasts state of the art sound, lighting, acoustics, and theatrical systems. It has an international-sized ice surface configure to NHL standards and the capabilities to accommodate any traveling show in the entertainment industry.

The Coliseum also configured to NBA standards and is designed to facilitate multiple events during single evening with a 3 to 4 hour turnaround between events. Its versatile design can be swiftly adapted to a variety of moods, ranging all the way from intimate theater to center stage concerts and basketball games.

For pre-and post-activities, the Coliseum is graciously equipped with 22 corporate suites, 4 party suites, 2 VIP Lounges, separate retail space, and over thirty concession areas.



1. Fiscal Autonomy

Puerto Rico offers a unique value proposition to entrepreneurs and established companies. In Puerto Rico you can enjoy the benefits and protections of operating within a U.S. jurisdiction with the added tax benefits of operating as a foreign corporation. US federal taxes do not apply in Puerto Rico.

The unusual combination of cash grants, financial incentives and credits, and venture capital initiatives together with Puerto Rico's tax laws offer a wealth of incentives that promote corporate growth, underscoring the Government's commitment to providing a pro-business environment. The effective corporate income tax rate for manufacturing companies is 7.5%.

2. Special Legislation Initiatives

The establishment of the Permanent Secretariat of the Free Trade Area of the Americas is Public Policy of the Legislative Assembly, approved on February 5th of 2004, in a Joint Resolution which has been supported by the Governor of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico as a joint effort between the private and the public sector.

The amendment of the enacting law creating the Convention Center District to specifically includes the location of the permanent secretariat as one of its functions and include the President of the Puerto Rico Export Council, Inc. and the President of San Juan ALCA 2005 as members of its Board of Directors.

San Juan-FTAA Convention Center District

This world-class trade and convention center district will be of the highest quality available throughout the world. The District will be a vibrant urban place with mix of uses that can transform a collection of buildings into an experience not to be forgotten by anyone who visits there.



The Government of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico has committed \$416 million to develop this new and unique project. The total investment between the public and private sector is approximately \$1.3 billion.



This ideal location for the Permanent Secretariat of the FTAA is designed and focused on world trade.

The New San Juan-FTAA Convention Center is the centerpiece of the Convention Center District, one of the largest waterfront development projects in the history of the Hemisphere.

By far the biggest and most magnificent development in the Caribbean, the new San Juan-FTAA Convention Center offers sophisticated infrastructure seamlessly blended with the vibrant energy of the island.

The San Juan-FTAA Convention Center District has been designed as a dynamic urban center, enabling attendees to experience the distinctiveness of San Juan, in which business and entertainment are combined in one extraordinary complex on 113 acres.

The San Juan-FTAA Convention Center will be a business and tourism facility centrally located in a new vibrant area of the San Juan metropolis with attractions and activities for conventioners, tourists and residents of Puerto Rico. In its architectural expression, the design is meant to echo the sights and ambiance of San Juan. For example, large sweeping roof forms bring to mind ocean waves – their complex geometry, color and translucency. The contemporary design was created with polished stone, concrete stucco, glass-stained and traditional curtain wall on the exterior and island motif doors, wall hangings and tiles adorn the interior.



The San Juan-FTAA Convention Center District will surround itself within a unique village of hotels and an entertainment complex with shops, restaurants, movie theaters, offices and residences thereby enabling visitors to experience the distinctiveness, vibrancy and uniqueness of San Juan.



Two contiguous expansions of the convention center are also planned for the near future. The San Juan-FTAA Convention Center District will be a destination within a destination; a master planned urban development covering 113 acres of prime real estate geared primarily to serve the needs of convention and trade show attendees.

Highlights:

- The San Juan-FTAA Convention Center will offer the following services:

The San Juan-FTAA Convention Center District is a Free Trade Zone area therefore no excise tax will be imposed on materials imported for conventions or for promotional purposes.

Audio-Visual and Computer Equipment: Provides some in-house services and also offers recommendations for additional non-exclusive audio-visual contractors.

Business Center: Provides photocopying, material production and express mail services for exhibitors and attendees.

Catering: Food and beverage services provided exclusively and supervised by the Convention Center's private Management Company.



- The Convention Center offers fine dining, concessions, portable dining facilities and exhibitor booth catering services.

Event Personnel: The Center has been developed as a right to work facility.

- Building security is provided exclusively by the Convention Center.
- Event staffing, such as event security, badge checkers, ticket takers, ushers, etc., available on an exclusive basis.

Production Rigging, Sound & Light: All rigging services for signs, banners and any theatrical equipment are mounted by the facility's structure.

- All sound and lighting systems are operated solely by Convention Center staff.
- Use and operation of outside sound and lighting systems must be coordinated with the Convention Center management prior to the event.

Parking: Parking services in adjacent parking areas will be managed by the Convention Center. Special arrangements should be made in advance if these areas are to be used for exhibits, staging, special parking or truck marshalling.

- The expansive truck marshalling yard allows for stress-free, well-organized installation and striking of events.
- The loading docks accommodate 22 truck bays on one level and six with automated lever.



Utility Services: All utility services, including telecommunication, electric, compressed air, water, and drainage services will be furnished by the Convention Center. These items are available in the exhibition hall utility floor boxes.

Telecommunication: Telecommunication services include voice, data, coaxial and fiber optic access from all areas of the Convention Center including the registration areas, show offices, pre-function spaces, ballroom, meeting rooms, and exhibition hall utility floor boxes.

Electrical: Electrical services are available in all registration areas, pre-function spaces, show offices, meeting rooms, and the ballroom.

High-powered electrical disconnects are also available in the ballroom and exhibit hall for concerts, theatrical productions and presentations.

Ease of Access: The Convention Center is equipped with multiple escalators and elevators throughout the complex allowing flow of easy access to and from event activities within 20 minutes time.

Other Initiatives

1. To grant an excise payment exemption to all equipment and materials acquired for the initial operation of the Secretariat.
2. To grant a tax exemption on the income generated by foreign personnel who directly work in the Secretariat.
3. To grant an exemption on hotel's room tax for all government personnel who visits the island to attend officials matters at the Secretariat.



4. To grant an exemption on excise tax and on registration payment on the purchase of official vehicles for the exclusive use of the Secretariat's personnel.
5. To grant a 50% payment exemption on the enrollment fees in the State University for the Secretariat's officers.
6. To establish primary, mid level and high school to provide a specific curriculum to attend the linguistic and cultural needs of the children of the foreign and local employees and officers of the Secretariat.
7. To assign a personal police escort for the highest ranking officers of the Secretariat.
8. To combine a special force of the Puerto Rico Police Department and personnel from the Puerto Rico Ports Authority to facilitate the entry and exit of officers, employees and visitors of the Secretariat.
9. To establish a permanent police precinct on the Secretariat premises with multilingual personnel and trained to guarantee the security of the people who work and visit the Secretariat.
10. To assign a Puerto Rico National Guard contingent to work with the Emergency and Disaster Management Agency in guaranteeing the security of the people who work and visit the Secretariat and to protect the property at the Secretariat's premises in the event of a natural disaster.
11. To establish the translators certification process through the Languages Planning Institute of Puerto Rico and its registration through the Department of State of Puerto Rico.



3. Liaison Office

To create a position in the State Department of Puerto Rico to serve as liaison between the state and federal agencies with the Secretariat, before and after the establishment of the permanent Secretariat.

This person will be responsible of attending, without exception, any and all matters of need of the FTAA Secretariat.



Government

- Hon. Sila María Calderón, Governor, Commonwealth of Puerto Rico
- Hon. Antonio Fas Alzamora, Senate's President, Commonwealth of Puerto Rico
- Hon. Carlos Vizcarrondo, President, House of Representatives, Commonwealth of Puerto Rico
- Hon. Anibal Acevedo Vilá, Resident Commissioner, US Congress
- Hon. José Izquierdo Mora, Secretary of State, Commonwealth of Puerto Rico
- Hon. Milton Segarra, Secretary, Department of Economic Development & Commerce, Commonwealth of Puerto Rico
- Hon. Roberto Prats, Senator, Commonwealth of Puerto Rico
- Hon. José Ortiz Daliot, Senator, Commonwealth of Puerto Rico
- Hon. Kenneth McKlintock, Senator, Commonwealth of Puerto Rico
- Hon. Ferdinand Pérez, Vice-President, House of Representatives, Commonwealth of Puerto Rico
- José M. Suárez, Executive Director, Puerto Rico Tourism Company

Private Sector

- Eduardo Bhatia Gautier, Candidate for Mayor for the City of San Juan
- William Riefkohl, Executive Vice President, Puerto Rico Manufacturers' Association
- Federico González Denton, Executive Director, ALCA Committee
- Salvador Vassallo, President, Puerto Rico Export Council
- Felipe Hernández, President, Puerto Rico Products Association
- Enid Toro de Báez, President & Chairwoman, United Retailers Association
- Richard Valdés, President, Association of Sales & Marketing Executives SME
- Hilda Maldonado, Executive Director, Aspira Inc. of Puerto Rico
- Raúl Bustamante, President, Puerto Rico Convention Bureau

Acknowledgments



I want to tell you that the participation of Puerto Rico in the economic development of the Americas is significant to all of us. I support the private and legislative efforts to obtain the Secretariat of the Free Trade Area of the Americas.”

Sila M. Calderón
Governor of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico

State Address to the Congress of Puerto Rico
February 25, 2004

ESTADO LIBRE ASOCIADO DE PUERTO RICO SENADO



ANTONIO J. FAS ALZAMORA
PRESIDENTE

Presidentes de República, Parlamentarios, Funcionarios y Empresarios de América

Hermanos de las Américas:

Los puertorriqueños estamos deseosos de abrir nuestras puertas; de aportar nuestra localización geográfica; de compartir nuestra hospitalidad y nuestras profundas raíces democráticas; de brindar el profesionalismo de nuestra gente, la capacidad tecnológica, nuestra infraestructura, nuestra cultura latinoamericana y caribeña de más de 500 años y la experiencia de más de 50 años de relación permanente con los Estados Unidos de América como Estado Libre Asociado para que sea una realidad el Área de Libre Comercio de las Américas.

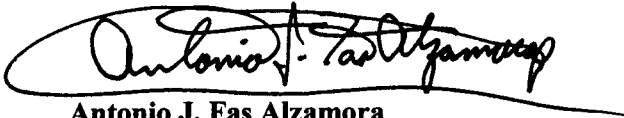
Todos nuestros países necesitan que se liberen estas fronteras económicas; las futuras generaciones lo merecen porque es tiempo ya de que el desarrollo sustentable de los pueblos deje de ser retórica y se convierta en acción afirmativa de cara a este siglo 21 que vivimos. Puerto Rico quiere ser parte vital de esta importante gesta histórica en la que se han embarcado los países de este hemisferio desde Canadá, en el norte, hasta la Argentina, en el sur. Les aseguro que tenemos la capacidad, la voluntad y el compromiso para así hacerlo.

Como Presidente del Senado, he seguido de cerca el desarrollo de esta importante transacción entre los países de América. Entre mis gestiones, he conseguido que se reconozca la participación de Puerto Rico, con voz y voto, en la Confederación Parlamentaria de las Américas (COPA), de la que soy vicepresidente en representación del Caribe. En los últimos años he logrado que Puerto Rico sea aceptado en el Parlamento Centroamericano (PARLACEN) y en el Parlamento Latinoamericano (PARLATINO). Esa es la carta de presentación que expongo ante ustedes para evidenciar que esta Solicitud de Sede Permanente de la Secretaría del ALCA; no es un hecho aislado y caprichoso; sino nuestro interés genuino por lograr la integración y el bienestar social que soñaron los próceres y patriotas a lo largo de la historia de las naciones del hemisferio y nuestro compromiso con la presente y futuras generaciones.

Con ese entusiasmo, con esa alegría y con esa esperanza, le extendemos una invitación para que nos visiten y conozcan, de primera mano, nuestro compromiso con la Sede Permanente de la Secretaría del Área de Libre Comercio de las Américas, porque estamos convencidos de que será la posibilidad real de progreso, de desarrollo económico, de fortaleza política y de justicia social para nuestra gente.

A nombre del pueblo de Puerto Rico, les extiendo un abrazo fraternal desde nuestra querida Isla del Encanto.

Respetuosamente,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Antonio J. Fas Alzamora". The signature is written in a cursive style and is underlined with a single horizontal line.

Antonio J. Fas Alzamora



Estado Libre Asociado de Puerto Rico
Cámara de Representantes

Honorable
Carlos Vizcarrondo Irizarry
Presidente

Ciudadanos de América

Un saludo caribeño a todos nuestros hermanos de América. Los puertorriqueños estamos entusiasmados y comprometidos con abrir nuestra casa, Puerto Rico, a todas las naciones del hemisferio para las discusiones sobre el Área de Libre Comercio de las Américas (ALCA). Es por ello que, con mucho orgullo y esperanza, hemos solicitado unidos, el Gobierno y la empresa privada, la Secretaría Permanente del ALCA.

Puerto Rico ofrece a este importante evento su infraestructura, su fácil acceso por mar y aire, su red de comunicaciones, el alto nivel de escolaridad y preparación universitaria de su gente, su hospitalidad, una localización geográfica privilegiada, su relación permanente con los Estados Unidos de América y sus estrechos lazos fraternales y culturales con el resto de las naciones de este hemisferio.

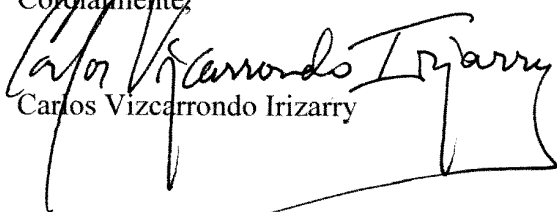
Como Presidente de la Cámara de Representantes, me comprometo a adelantar la legislación local que sea necesaria para que esta Sede sea un hecho y todos nuestros pueblos se puedan beneficiar.

Espero que todos ustedes tengan la oportunidad de visitarnos para compartir nuestros atractivos turísticos y para que puedan evidenciar nuestro entusiasmo, pero sobre todo, nuestro compromiso con el éxito de este acuerdo que, estoy seguro, resultará en una amplia gama de oportunidades de desarrollo social, político y económico para cada una de nuestras naciones.

La presente generación tiene el reto de construir un mundo más digno para las futuras generaciones. Con esa agenda tan importante, se hace urgente lograr la integración de nuestras naciones para combatir unidos nuestros problemas más apremiantes. Esa es la agenda de futuro que tiene el ALCA y Puerto Rico quiere ser parte de ella, aportando lo mejor de nosotros.

Espero, en una pronta visita, poder estrechar sus manos.

Cordialmente,


Carlos Vizcarrondo Irizarry

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-5401



February 27, 2004

The Honorable Peter F. Allgeier
Ambassador

The Honorable Adhemar G. Bahadian
Ambassador
Free Trade Area of the Americas Trade Negotiations Committee

Dear Ambassadors Allgeier and Bahadian:

As the sole representative of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico in the United States Congress I am supporting with great enthusiasm the candidacy of Puerto Rico to host the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) Permanent Secretariat.

I would like to convey you the warm response and support from the Puerto Rican community for the possibility of hosting the FTAA Permanent Secretariat. Puerto Rico's historical links to the United States and Latin America, unique business environment, world-class hotels, tropical weather and cultural flavor make the Island the ideal place to become the center of economic integration of the Americas.

Given that the Island has the most sophisticated services industry due to its long free trade experience with the United States, Puerto Rico stands to reap greater benefits if it is finally selected as host of the secretariat. It is important for us as leaders of our community to work hand in hand to ensure that the Island plays an important role in the economic and social relations of the different governments that conforms the FTAA.

I invite you to consider us favorably and look forward to work closely with you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Anibal Acevedo-Vilá".

Anibal Acevedo-Vilá

Member of Congress



Commonwealth of Puerto Rico
The Secretary of State
San Juan, Puerto Rico

February 26, 2004

His Excellency Peter F. Allgeier
Co-Chairman
Negotiation Committee
Free Trade Area of the Americas
New York, New York

Excellency:

As Secretary of State of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, I would like you to strongly consider our Island as the venue for the Permanent Secretariat of the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA).

San Juan has the infrastructure, geographical proximity, economic capability and cultural diversity that make our Capital City an excellent venue of choice for the FTAA Permanent Secretariat. Puerto Rico is a true world-class business destination and a dynamic setting for international entrepreneur networking.

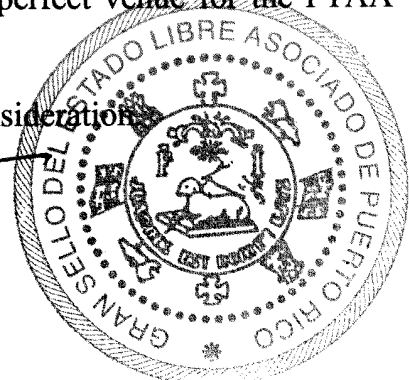
Today, Puerto Rico's tourism industry attracts billions of dollars a year as a result of its unique blend of U.S. stateside convenience and its Latin American allure.

We are currently working in the construction of the Puerto Rico Convention Center. This billionaire investment project, scheduled to open in April of 2005, will enable us to host premier meetings and conventions and will position Puerto Rico among top-notch contenders in the market. Therefore, it is considered the perfect venue for the FTAA Permanent Secretariat.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

The Secretary of State,

José Miguel Izquierdo-Encarnación



PO Box 9823271 San Juan, Puerto Rico 00902-3271



*Commonwealth of Puerto Rico
The Secretary of State
San Juan, Puerto Rico*

February 26, 2004

His Excellency Adhemar G. Bahadian
Co-Chairman
Negotiation Committee
Free Trade Area of the Americas
New York, New York

Excellency:

As Secretary of State of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, I would like you to strongly consider our Island as the venue for the Permanent Secretariat of the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA).

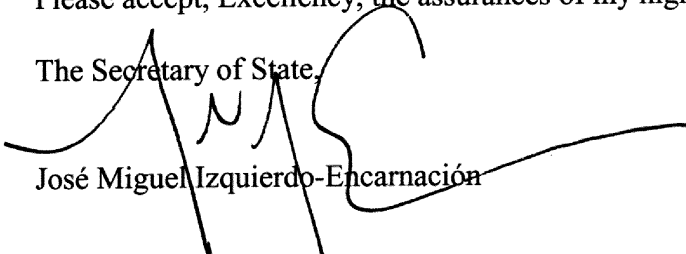
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Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

The Secretary of State.


José Miguel Izquierdo-Encarnación



PO Box 9023271 San Juan, Puerto Rico 00902-3271



COMMONWEALTH OF PUERTO RICO
DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND COMMERCE

PO BOX 362350 • San Juan, PR 00936-2350
Phone (787) 765-2900 • Fax (787) 753-4094

Milton Segarra
Secretary

February 26, 2004

The Honorable Peter F. Allgeier
Ambassador
tnc-cnc@ustr.gov

The Honorable Adhemar G. Bahadian
Ambassador
cnc-tnc@mre.gov.br

Dear Ambassadors Allgeier and Bahadian:

As Secretary of the Department of Economic Development and Commerce, it is with great pleasure that I strongly support the candidacy of Puerto Rico to host the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) Permanent Secretariat.

Puerto Rico is ever increasing its potential as the ideal business destination for entities of your stature. I am most satisfied with the exceptional effort our economic development agencies have put into recent events when we had the opportunity to be the site of series of national and international conventions for entities such as the Inter-American Development Bank, The Academy of International Business, and the International Council for Small Business. The latter chose Puerto Rico as host for their 47th World Conference, the first to be held in a Spanish speaking country in the Caribbean or Latin America. Also, we host the Second Round of Negotiations for the Free Trade Agreement between the United States and the Dominican Republic.

The FTAA Permanent Secretariat will be no exception. It is customary for Puerto Rico to exceed its expectations, not only in our role as sponsors but also, as logistics facilitators of large forums. With the resources the Island has available and in the works, this will be the most productive environment for networking yet.

Puerto Rico's state of the art infrastructure, transportation, utilities, telecommunications and financial systems, coupled with a high skilled workforce, are geared towards facilitating continued corporate growth. In addition, the proximity and accessibility of the Island not only to the U.S. mainland, but also Latin America and the Caribbean, makes it an ideal strategic location for any business operation.

Commerce Development
Administration

Cooperative Development
Administration

Land Administration

Horse Racing
Administration

Industrial Development
Company

Tourism Company

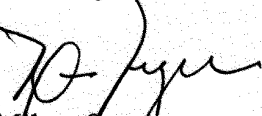
Film Commission

Export Development
Corporation

Projects such as the Puerto Rico Convention Center District, the Port of the Americas and the Redevelopment of Naval Station Roosevelt Roads will enhance our competitiveness, taking Puerto Rico a step ahead in the international community. These projects are an added value to any business operation in the Island.

We welcome you to explore the wide array of commercial opportunities Puerto Rico has to offer, as you allow us to host the FTAA Permanent Secretariat.

Sincerely,



Milton Segarra



COMMONWEALTH OF PUERTO RICO

ROBERTO L. PRATS PALERM
SENATOR

February 27, 2004

The Honorable Peter F. Allgeier
Ambassador
tnc-cnc@ustr.gov

The Honorable Adhemar G. Bahadian
Ambassador
cnc-tncmre.gov.br

Dear Ambassadors Allgeier and Bahadian:

As a member of the Senate of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico and candidate to be the sole representative of Puerto Rico in the United States Congress, I strongly support the candidacy of Puerto Rico to host the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) Permanent Secretariat.

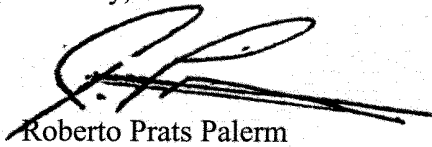
San Juan is a true world class business destination and a dynamic setting for all human activities. I can assure you that the investment climate is as inviting as our weather, making our island a tropical paradise for tourist, business and investors alike.

Over \$427 million in new development projects, such as new hotels, small inns, condo-hotels and especially a new convention center are now under construction across Puerto Rico. The majority of these projects will be completed by the end of year 2004, increasing our room inventory by nearly 15% to 14,661. This growth is the direct result of many tax incentives provided by the Tourism Development Act, as well as many other legislative measures that have recently opened the door to new investors.

San Juan offers no match to be the host for the FTAA, their advantages are unparalleled. We certainly have the infrastructure, accessibility, the economic capacity and the cultural diversity that makes our city as the top venue for the secretariat.

I welcome you to come to Puerto Rico and have a first-hand experience of what the Island and its people have to offer. The Puerto Rican people set out on a momentous project of economic and social modernization. Let us be the bridge, the open door to the different countries of the FTAA.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of stylized initials 'RP' followed by a long horizontal flourish.

Roberto Prats Palerm



Commonwealth of Puerto Rico
Senate

José A. Ortiz - Daliot

Chairman

International and Federal Affairs Committee

Joint Committee for Congressional Internships

Co - Chairman

Special Committee for the Development of the Capital City

February 26, 2004

Honorable Peter F. Allgeier
Ambassador
Deputy US Trade Representative
Co-Chair
FTAA – Trade Negotiations Committee

Honorable Adhemar G. Bahadian
Ambassador
Head of the Brazilian Delegation
Co-Chair
FTAA – Trade Negotiations Committee

RE: PERMANENT SITE OF THE FTAA SECRETARIAT

Dear Ambassadors:

As you know, the Free Trade of the Americas Agreement (FTAA) is currently being negotiated by thirty-four (34) countries, which include North, Central, South America and the Caribbean countries of the hemisphere of the Americas. On November 20 2003, at the Eighth Ministerial Meeting of the FTAA held in Miami, the Ministers Responsible for Trade in the Hemisphere agreed the decision of the site for the FTAA Permanent Secretariat would be made during the meeting schedule for Brazil, in the summer of 2004.

Presently, there are ten (10) cities,¹ which are competing for the permanent site of the FTAA Secretariat. As Senator of San Juan I am fully committed to the candidacy of San Juan, Puerto Rico to host said Secretariat.

Please let me outline, with all due respect, some of the benefits the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico and San Juan has to offer as host of the Secretariat. The Commonwealth of Puerto Rico the perfect link between the Anglo, Afro and Latin cultures of our hemisphere. In addition, the city of San Juan is equipped with the most modern infrastructure system in terms of safety and security, transportation, and communications.

Furthermore, the Convention Center presently been constructed, is the perfect location to host the permanent Secretariat. The Center, a 600,000 square-foot locality, the centerpiece of Phase I of a three-phase plan, will sit on a 110-acre site, centrally located in San Juan on the tip of Isla Grande and convenient to Old San Juan, Condado and Miramar, as well as the Luis Munoz Marin International Airport.

The center will be part of an ambitious Convention District Center, with a unique waterfront setting that will be the largest waterfront development project in Puerto Rico, and among the largest in the United States. The District, conceived as a dynamic urban center, will enable visitors to experience the distinctiveness of Puerto Rico, in what will be a gathering place for shopping, education, recreation and entertainment, to include restaurants, museums, hotels, movie theatres, and the permanent site of the FTAA Secretariat.

I am certain, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico is prepared to face the challenge of taking its place as the natural link between the Americas, by accepting the crucial role of bringing the Americas closer, by hosting the FTAA secretariat

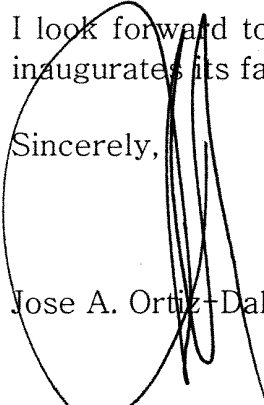
I am confident, you will share my opinion: San Juan has the unique physical characteristics to make it the perfect site for the Secretariat. This combined with the nobility of our people - make it the undisputed choice to host the Secretariat.

¹ Atlanta, USA; Cancun, Mexico; Chicago, USA; Colorado Springs, USA; Galveston, USA; Houston, USA; Panama City, Panama; Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago; Puebla, Mexico; and San Juan of Puerto Rico, USA.

Hon. Peter F. Allgeier
Hon. Adhemar G. Bahadian
February 26, 2004
Page 3

I look forward to greeting you in San Juan in 2005, when the Secretariat inaugurates its facilities in San Juan. Thank you.

Sincerely,



Jose A. Ortiz-Dalio



Senador

Kenneth McClintock Hernández

Portavoz del Partido Nuevo Progresista

1 de marzo de 2004

Estimados señores ministros:

Es con gran entusiasmo que unimos nuestra voz de apoyo a la amplia coalición multi-sectorial que impulsa la candidatura de San Juan de Puerto Rico como sede permanente del Secretariado del Acuerdo de Libre Comercio de las Américas.

Como una jurisdicción bicultural y bilingüe, Puerto Rico puede servir de anfitrión no tan solo para nuestros hermanos hemisférico, hispanoparlantes y angloparlantes sino también a nuestros vecinos francoparlantes al igual que a los hermanos de habla portuguesa. Nuestra condición bilingüe y bicultural no se limita a una ciudad o condado de nuestra jurisdicción, toda vez que el español e inglés son nuestros idiomas oficiales en todos los confines de Puerto Rico. A su vez, como sede de importantes conferencias regionales, hemisféricas e internacionales, hemos demostrado la capacidad de proveer apoyo logístico a nuestros visitantes de habla portuguesa y francesa.

La propuesta ubicación del Secretariado en el Distrito circundante al centro de convenciones más grande del Caribe, a ser inaugurado en el 2005, permite incorporar elementos de seguridad incomparables, un factor importante ante las múltiples manifestaciones públicas que ocasionalmente generan reuniones sobre comercio internacional.

Gozaamos de la estabilidad política, social y económica característica de toda ciudad estadounidense pero llevamos sangre latina en nuestras venas.

Nuestra infraestructura vial, turística, comercial, de comunicaciones y de transporte aéreo, unida a nuestra privilegiada localización geográfica en la frontera entre las Antillas Mayores y las Antillas Menores, al igual que entre las fronteras entre la América del Norte desarrollada y la América del Sur en desarrollo, nos colocan en una posición ideal para la ubicación del Secretariado.

Aunque en raras ocasiones, como líder de la oposición, coincido con el actual partido de gobierno, con respecto a este asunto todos los puertorriqueños estamos unidos, por encima de preferencias políticas, en respaldo absoluto a la candidatura y a poder expresarle a los ministros, diplomáticos, empresarios y otros miembros de la comunidad del ALCA:
¡Bienvenidos, Bienvenue, Welcome, Boas-vindas!

Cordialmente,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kenneth McClintock Hernández".

Kenneth McClintock Hernández
Portavoz de la Oposición
Senado de Puerto Rico



ESTADO LIBRE ASOCIADO DE PUERTO RICO
Cámara de Representantes
El Capitolio
Ferdinand Pérez Román
Representante por Acumulación
Vicepresidente de la Cámara de Representantes
Presidente de la Comisión de Desarrollo Socioeconómico y Planificación

February 26, 2004

The Honorable Peter F. Allgeier
Ambassador
tnc-cnc@ustr.gov

The Honorable Adhemar G. Bahadian
Ambassador
Cnc-tnc@mre.gov.br

Dear Ambassador Allgeier and Bahadian:

As a member and Vice president of the House of Representatives, I proudly support the candidacy of Puerto Rico to host the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) Permanent Secretariat. I can assure you that this will have a positive impact on our Island and will help create hundreds of job opportunities, one of the government priorities. We are willing to commit and coordinate resources to make this dream come true.

In Puerto Rico, you can find a unique combination of exotic Caribbean settings and U. S. infrastructure and commodities. Our strong infrastructure provides high tech facilities in technology, communications and transportation. This unique combination makes the island the perfect place for any meeting destination.

We want to encourage the FTAA to choose Puerto Rico as their destination for their 2005 Permanent Secretariat. I am sure that you will be enchanted with what Puerto Rico has to offer.

My warmest greetings and hopeful to seeing you soon!

Ferdinand Pérez
Vice President

Apartado 9022228, San Juan, P.R. 00902-2228
Tels. 787-722-4290 / 723-0109 • Fax: 787-724-7295
TTY: 787-721-1109, 787-725-3644
e-mail: ferdinandp@legislatura.gov.pr



February 27, 2004

The Honorable Peter F. Allgeier
Ambassador
tnc-cnc@ustr.gov

The Honorable Adhemar G. Bahadian
Ambassador
cnc-tnc@mre.gov.br

Dear Ambassadors Allgeier and Bahadian:

It is with great enthusiasm that I strongly support the candidacy of Puerto Rico to host the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) Permanent Secretariat.

Puerto Rico is a unique and distinctive destination with numerous fascinating sites, natural wonders, historical landmarks and places of interest. Add to these a perfect climate all-year round, vivid people and contagious rhythms and you will get the perfect mix for an accessible and unparalleled meeting experience.

We invite you to explore our pristine beaches, rain forest, stunning caves, golf courses, exciting night life, fantastic shopping and more than 500 years of history. You can also enjoy culinary delicacies in any of our first class restaurants or the Mesones Gastronómicos around the Island.

At this moment we are working with the construction of the Puerto Rico Convention Center, which is scheduled to open in April of 2005. This convention center will position Puerto Rico among world-class contenders in the market for premier meetings and conventions and would be the perfect place to have the FTAA Permanent Secretariat.

After you experience all that we have to offer, you'll know why we say: "You're not dreaming, you're in Puerto Rico". Looking forward to hear from you soon.

Sincerely,

José M. Suárez
Executive Director

Eduardo Bhatia
Candidato a Alcalde de San Juan, Puerto Rico
P.O. Box 360643
San Juan, Puerto Rico 00936-0643

Febrero de 2004

Ministros de Países de América

Estimados Señores Ministros de Países que componen el ALCA:

Como candidato a la Alcaldía de la Ciudad de San Juan, Puerto Rico, quiero expresar mi total apoyo a todas las gestiones para lograr que San Juan sea la sede permanente de la Secretaría del Acuerdo de Libre Comercio de las Américas. De San Juan convertirse en sede, la administración municipal que espero dirigir brindará los recursos necesarios para lograr el mejor funcionamiento al acuerdo comercial entre todos los países del hemisferio.

La Ciudad de San Juan es un puente donde convergen el norte y el sur de América. En aspectos culturales, económicos, sociales y políticos, San Juan es una ciudad cosmopolita que puede ser hogar natural de todos los representantes de los diversos países de nuestro hemisferio. De hecho, ya viven en nuestra ciudad miles de personas provenientes de prácticamente todos los países de América. San Juan está lista para ser ciudad anfitriona del ALCA.

Espero y confío tener la oportunidad de darles la bienvenida a la Ciudad de San Juan.

Atentamente,

Eduardo Bhatia



March 1, 2004

The Honorable Peter F. Allgeier
Ambassador
tnc-cnc@ustr.gov

The Honorable Adhemar G. Bahadian
Ambassador
cnc-tnc@mre.gov.br

Dear Ambassadors Allgeier and Bahadian:

As President of the Board of Directors of the Puerto Rico Exports Council (PREC), it is with great pride that we support the candidacy of Puerto Rico, to host the Permanent Secretariat of the Free Trade Area of the Americas.

We are proud of the role the PREC plays to help small and medium size companies to succeed in the international arena.

Puerto Rico's system of communication, technology and infrastructure are first rate and we are working diligently to maintain competitive business standards. For decades Puerto Rico has been recognized as the hub of global investment in the Caribbean, its financial success hailed by economists as a case story in economic renewal.

This is a perfect example of the growth and the potential of Puerto Rico. That is why we strongly support, with great enthusiasm, the candidacy of Puerto Rico to host the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) Permanent Secretariat.

We have joined the private sector, the government and the economic associations to obtain this honor.

I wish to express to you the assurances of my consideration.

Salvador Vassallo
President



Manuel Cidre
Presidente

William Riefkohl
Vicepresidente Ejecutivo

ASOCIACIÓN DE INDUSTRIALES DE PUERTO RICO

PO Box 195477, San Juan, PR 00919-5477 / Ave. Ponce de León #420, Piso 10, Edif. Midtown, Hato Rey, Puerto Rico
Tel. 787-759-9445 / Fax 787-756-7670

February 25, 2004

The Honorable Peter F. Allgeier
Ambassador

Dear Ambassadors Allgeier:

It is with great pride that our Association supports the candidacy of the city of San Juan to host the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) Permanent Secretariat.

As Puerto Rico's strongest, and one of the largest, private sector organizations, we form the core of our island's economic vitality and future success. We strongly believe that Puerto Rico's ties with the Caribbean and the Latin American community, provide us with a unique position in our continent, especially because we have the privilege of being the only completely Hispanic entity under the American flag.

We have had experience in the coordination of major events and we can assure you that San Juan will meet or exceed your expectations and objectives.

Our Association is proud of the role we play in the local economy, and we are firmly committed to expanding our contribution by applying the best global practices and capitalizing in the fantastic opportunities that Puerto Rico is providing us.

We gladly join efforts with the government and the rest of the private sector, and more importantly with the people of Puerto Rico, in order to obtain this prestigious honor for our capital city.

Sincerely,

William Riefkohl
Executive Vice-President

/barc



February 23, 2004

The Honorable Peter F. Allgeier
Ambassador
tnc-cnc@ustr.gov

The Honorable Adhemar G. Bahadian
Ambassador
cnc-tnc@mre.gov.br

Dear Ambassadors Allgeier and Bahadian:

In our relationship with the United States of America, we maintain the longer lasting free trade agreement in this hemisphere. We have been able to prosper while keeping intact our roots, culture and traditions. Come to our island and you will see we are a perfect combination of the American, African, European and Caribbean history and culture. None of the other competing cities is more balanced and neutral than Puerto Rico.

The private citizens and entrepreneurs of Puerto Rico have taken upon themselves the initiative of bidding for the FTAA Secretariat with the full support of all political parties and government agencies of the Island, guaranteeing the permanency and continuity of this effort regardless of who wins the local elections from now on. There are no special interests or political disputes about this in Puerto Rico; we just want to share with you all our experience, capabilities and competencies.

Like San Juan, all cities bidding for the FTAA Secretariat are great cities and have much to offer; however, the expertise and neutrality are only found here in Puerto Rico. We are certain that after reviewing the enclosed document you will agree with us that San Juan provide the perfect setting for such a crucial mission.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Federico González-Denton", is written over a large, stylized signature graphic that resembles a compass rose or a stylized letter 'F'.

Federico González-Denton
Executive Director



ASOCIACION PRODUCTOS DE PUERTO RICO

CALLE CAPITAN ESPADA #406, ESQ. PADRE LAS CASAS, URB. EL VEDADO, HATO REY, PR 00918 - PO BOX 363631, SAN JUAN, P.R. 00936-3631
Teléfono. (787) 753-8484 - Fax (787) 753-0855 /www.hechoenpr.com



The President's E Certificate of Service for an outstanding contribution to the Export Expansion Program of the United States of America.

February 23, 2004

The Honorable Peter F. Allgeier
Ambassador
tnc-cnc@ustr.gov

The Honorable Adhemar G. Bahadian
Ambassador
cnc-tnc@mre.gov.br

Dear Ambassadors Allgeier and Bahadian:

It is with great pride that association, the Puerto Rico Products Association, endorses the candidacy of Puerto Rico to host the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) Permanent Secretariat.

As one of Puerto Rico's top local associations, we form the core of our island's economic vitality and future success. We strongly believe that Puerto Rico's history ties with the Caribbean and the Latin American community provide us with a unique position in our continent especially because we have the privilege of being the only complete Hispanic entity under the American flag.

As one of Puerto Rico's trade associations, we have aid in the coordination of major events in our cities. We can assure you that San Juan meets and exceeds your expectations and objectives.

Our organization is proud of the role we have in the local economy. We are firmly committed to expanding our contribution by applying the best global practices and capitalizing in the fantastic opportunities that Puerto Rico provides.

We gladly join efforts with the government, the private sector, and the trade associations and also, with the people of Puerto Rico, in order to obtain this prestigious honor for our Island.

Cordially,

Felipe Hernández, Esq.
President



February 26, 2004

The Honorable Peter F. Allgeier

Ambassador
tnc-cnc@ustr.gov

The Honorable Adhemar G. Bahadian

Ambassador
cnc-tnc@mre.gov.br

Dear Ambassadors Allgeier and Bahadian:

It is with great pride that our company, the United Retailers Association of Puerto Rico (URA) support the candidacy of Puerto Rico to host the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) Permanent Secretariat.

As the island biggest entrepreneurial institution of Puerto Rico with approximately 20,000 members, we formed the core of our island's economic vitality and future success. We strongly believe that Puerto Rico ties with the Caribbean and the Latin American community provide us with a unique position in our continent especially because we have the privilege of being the only complete Hispanic entity under the American flag.

We had coordinated major events in our sites and we can assure you that San Juan will meet or exceed your expectations and objectives.

Our association is proud of the role we play in the local economy and we are firmly committed to expanding our contribution by applying the best global practices and capitalizing in the fantastic opportunities that Puerto Rico is providing us.

We will be gladly joining efforts with the government, the private sector, and the economic associations and more importantly with the people of Puerto Rico, in order to obtain this prestigious honor for our city.

Sincerely,

Enid Toro de Báez
President and Chairwoman



February 20, 2004

The Honorable Peter F. Allgeier
Ambassador
tnc-cnc@ustr.gov

The Honorable Adhemar G. Bahadian
Ambassador
cnc-tnc@mre.gov.br

Dear Ambassadors Allgeier and Bahadian:

It is with great pride that our Association supports the candidacy of Puerto Rico to host the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) Permanent Secretariat.

As one of Puerto Rico top local associations, we formed the core of our island's economic vitality and future success. We strongly believe that Puerto Rico ties with the Caribbean and the Latin American community provide us with a unique position in our continent especially because we have the privilege of being the only complete Hispanic entity under the American flag.

As one of Puerto Rico's professional organizations, we had coordinated major events in our sites and we can assure you that San Juan will meet or exceed your expectations and objectives.

Our Association is proud of the role we play in the local economy and we are firmly committed to expanding our contribution by applying the best global practices and capitalizing in the fantastic opportunities that Puerto Rico is providing us.

We will be gladly joining efforts with the government, the private sector, and the economic associations and more importantly with the people of Puerto Rico, in order to obtain this prestigious honor for our city.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Richard Valdés', written in a cursive style.

Richard Valdés
President

ASPIRA Inc. de Puerto Rico

PO BOX 28132 SAN JUAN PUERTO RICO 00928-0132
TELE. (787) 641-1343 / 641-1333 / 641-2293 • FAX: (787) 287-0726



Neige M. Ursprung
Presidenta Junta de Directores

Hilda V. Maldonado
Directora Ejecutiva

February 26, 2004

Honorable Peter F. Allgeier
Ambassador
tnc-cnc@ustr.gov

Honorable Adhemar G. Behadian
Ambassador
cnc-tnc@mre.gov.br

Dear Ambassadors Allgeier and Behadian:

ASPIRA Inc. de Puerto Rico, a member of the Aspira Association, would like to express its support to the candidacy of Puerto Rico to host the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) Permanent Secretariat. The ASPIRA Association is the largest nonprofit Latino organization in the U.S.A. and the only national nonprofit organization devoted solely to the education and leadership development of Puerto Rican and other Latino youth.

The ASPIRA Institute for International Business at Aspira de Puerto Rico is a response of the civil society to the challenges and opportunities presented by that FTAA, by providing businesses and citizens of Puerto Rico and Latin America an opportunity to develop the human capital in specialized technical fields required for the successful insertion of the local economies into this treaty. The Institute is a premium provider of corporate learning in the specialist skills of hemispheric trade. Our mission is to support the advancement of Puerto Rico's and the Latin American economies through the development of human capital capable of managing the strategic expansion of international trade, and in maintaining international relationships.

The Institute will design and/or implement existing educational programs aimed at corporate and individual needs geared to the development required technical skills for their successful participation in the hemispheric commerce, as promoted by the FTAA.

We strongly believe that Puerto Rico has all the characteristics cultural, educational, economic, communications and transportation infrastructure to host the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) Permanent Secretariat, and ASPIRA Inc. de Puerto Rico is committed to support this important effort with state-of-the-art educational opportunities for all FTAA members.

Sincerely,

Hilda Maldonado
Executive Director

Asociados a Aspira Association, Inc.



February 25, 2004

The Honorable Peter F. Allgeier
Ambassador
tnc-cnc@ustr.gov

The Honorable Adhemar G. Bahadian
Ambassador
cnc-tnc@mre.gov.br

Dear Ambassadors Allgeier and Bahadian:

Greetings from the Puerto Rico Convention Bureau! It is an honor to affirm our enthusiastic support of Puerto Rico's candidacy to host the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) Permanent Secretariat.

The Puerto Rico Convention Bureau is the official entity entrusted with marketing the Island as a meetings and convention destination. We strongly believe that Puerto Rico's ties with the Caribbean and the Latin American community provide us with a unique position within the hemisphere, due in part to our unique condition of being the only predominantly Hispanic entity under the American flag.

The Bureau is proud of the role it plays in the local economy, and we are firmly committed to expanding our contribution by applying the best global practices and capitalizing on the unique opportunities that Puerto Rico provides.

We are certain that the same guiding principles we have applied in reaching a prominent position as a meetings and conventions destination will be applied to receiving FTAA's leadership and support staff as they set up quarters in San Juan. Our capital city, through the auspices of the PRCB, has obtained entry into BestCities.net, an alliance of eight cities around the world that represent the highest standards in products and services to meetings and congress organizers. This achievement, based upon our unique set of attributes relative to history, culture, access, attractions, and the overall visitor experience, bodes well for a successful and permanent secretariat for the Free Trade Area of the Americas.

Hence, we gladly join efforts with the government, the private sector, associations, and more importantly, with the people of Puerto Rico, in supporting your selection of San Juan.

Sincerely,

Jorge Pesquera
President and CEO



March 1, 2004

In addition to the people that presented letters of endorsement, I want to express my gratitude to the following people that worked in preparing this request.

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Sincerely,

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