



CARIBBEAN  
HOTEL  
ASSOCIATION

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Contacts: Lorraine Ortiz-Valcárcel, [lortiz@caribbeanhotelassociation.com](mailto:lortiz@caribbeanhotelassociation.com)  
Melissa A. Rivera, [mriviera@caribbeanhotelassociation.com](mailto:mriviera@caribbeanhotelassociation.com)  
Tel 787 725 9139/Fax 787 725 9108

**SPANISH HOTEL INVESTORS COME TO THE TABLE  
WITH CARIBBEAN TOURISM INDUSTRY**

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico (September 10, 2007) – The Caribbean has shown to have tremendous investment potential for Spanish hotel interests, which have steadily expanded their presence beyond their successful ventures in Mexico, the Dominican Republic, and Cuba, and are growing throughout the region from the Bahamas in the north to Aruba in the south. In recognizing the role of Spanish investors in the sustainable development of Caribbean tourism, Peter J. Odle, President of the Caribbean Hotel Association (CHA), and Senator the Hon. Allen Chastanet, chairman of the Caribbean Tourism Organization (CTO), are heading a delegation from the Caribbean hotel and tourism sectors to meet September 14<sup>th</sup> with senior executives of the main Spanish hotel chains operating in the Caribbean. The meeting, to be held at Palma de Mallorca, in Spain's Balearic Islands, was brought to fruition through the good offices of Dominican lawyer and hotelier Enrique De Marchena, President-Elect of CHA.

The meeting's agenda reveals an ambitious range of issues for discussion, such as global competitiveness, Spanish investment, the United States passport requirement, and global warming, among others. "We expect this to be the first step in a long-term collaborative effort that can be equally beneficial for the indigenous Caribbean tourism industry, foreign hotel interests, and ultimately, the Caribbean people," said the CHA President.

Some 30 of Spain's most powerful hotel investors have confirmed their attendance, including Gabriel Escarrer, president of Sol Meliá; Miguel Fluxá, president of Grupo Iberostar; Abel Matutes, president of the Fiesta Hotel Group; Simón Pedro Barceló, co-chairman of Barceló Enterprises; and Pablo Piñero, president of Grupo Piñero.

Meanwhile, the Caribbean's delegation will also include former CHA President Simón Suárez, chief development representative for Latin America and the Caribbean of Hilton Hotels Corporation; Grenadian hotelier Sir Royston Hopkin KCMG, chairman of the Caribbean Alliance for Sustainable Tourism; David Jessop, executive director of the London-based Caribbean Council; and Alec Sanguinetti and Tanya Lazarus, director general & chief executive officer and director of membership development, respectively, of CHA; among others.

The logistics of the high-level meeting were spearheaded by CHA and Spain's Grupo Preferente, with the support of Sol Meliá and Bancaja, parent company of the sixth largest financial group in Spain and renowned for its commitment to corporate social responsibility.

**About the Caribbean Hotel Association** – [www.caribbeanhotelassociation.com](http://www.caribbeanhotelassociation.com)

CHA aims to optimize the full potential of the Caribbean hotel & tourism industry by serving member needs & building partnerships. The members of CHA represent the entire spectrum of the hospitality industry's private sector. Some 849 member hotels in 36 national hotel associations represent approximately 125,476 rooms in the Caribbean, from the small guest houses to the mega-resorts. The allied members: airlines, tour wholesalers and travel agents, trade and consumer press, advertising and public relations agencies, and hotel and restaurants suppliers, among many, account for more than 536 members. Altogether, they are the hospitality industry of the Caribbean, and CHA is their voice.

