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President of Ethiopia, Houston Business Leaders Discuss Tourism and Trade

Airline and Coffee Industries Targeted for Expanded Commerce

Last Update: 7:30 PM ET Mar 7, 2007

HOUSTON, Mar 07, 2007 (BUSINESS WIRE) -- While in Houston today to tour the Houston Museum of Natural Science (HMNS), future site of "Lucy's Legacy: The Hidden Treasures of Ethiopia," Girma Wolde-Giorgis, president of Ethiopia, also met with local business leaders, including airline and coffee industry representatives, to discuss tourism and trade between Houston and Ethiopia.

"Many opportunities await my country and Houston as we forge a partnership based on friendship and trust," said Wolde-Giorgis. "Ethiopia is a stable democracy with a rich history that offers many possibilities for expanded commerce."

Wolde-Giorgis' itinerary included a meeting with local coffee industry executives - James Hilton and Leo Vasquez of Maximus Coffee Group - to determine ways to strengthen Ethiopia's coffee trade. Houston boasts one of the top-ranked coffee exchange ports in the world and is home to approximately 50 coffee-related companies.

Additionally, the president met with airline officials to propose the establishment of a direct flight from Addis Abbaba to Houston via the country's official airline, Ethiopian Airlines.

"President Wolde-Giorgis' visit reinforces the Partnership's goal to position Houston as a gateway to global markets," said Jeff Moseley, president and CEO, Greater Houston Partnership. "We look forward to continuing a long and mutually beneficial relationship with the premiere of 'Lucy's Legacy' at HMNS at the end of August and beyond."

"Lucy's Legacy: The Hidden Treasures of Ethiopia" is scheduled to premiere at HMNS in August 2007. Lucy is thought to be one of mankind's earliest ancestors, dating back 3.2 million years, and her visit to Houston will mark the first time ever leaving the continent of Africa for exhibition purposes.

ABOUT THE GREATER HOUSTON PARTNERSHIP

The Greater Houston Partnership is the primary advocate of the Houston-area business community and is dedicated to building regional economic prosperity. It represents 10 counties: Austin, Brazoria, Chambers, Fort Bend, Galveston, Harris, Liberty, Montgomery, San Jacinto and Waller. With more than 2,000 member organizations, the Partnership represents approximately one fourth of the region's work force. Visit the Greater Houston Partnership on the World Wide Web at www.houston.org.

SOURCE: Greater Houston Partnership

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