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For more information contact:

Jennifer Martinez

(312) 894-3441

jen@g8natohostcommittee.com

**CHICAGO HOST COMMITTEE UNVEILS PROGRAMMING TO ENGAGE RESIDENTS
LEADING UP TO THE G8 AND NATO SUMMITS
Madeleine Albright named co-chair of the Host Committee**

Chicago – Today the Chicago Host Committee unveiled a series of exciting new programs designed to engage and educate residents about the upcoming G8 and NATO Summits scheduled to take place in the city this May 2012.

These programs include: global-themed sports programs for teenagers; a video contest for Chicago Public School students; special summit-related offers at restaurants and theaters; as well as policy programs that will be open to the public.

“Today we have with us representatives from a number of organizations and institutions, who will be outlining their plans to take advantage of the unique opportunity presented to us by hosting the G8 and NATO Summits,” said Lori Healey, Executive Director for the Chicago Host Committee during a press briefing at the Chicago Cultural Center.

In addition to the new programs, the Host Committee also was pleased to announce that former U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright has agreed to serve as a Co-Chair of the Chicago G8 and NATO Host Committee. “Although Secretary Albright is indeed a citizen of the world, she once lived and worked here in Chicago. We are honored that she has agreed to serve as our Co-Chair,” added Healey.

During the press briefing, the Host Committee also unveiled its new logo – “CHICAGO 2012 – the Global Crossroads.”

Joining the Host Committee at the briefing were city officials who encouraged residents to use Notify Chicago as a tool to stay informed during the summits. Notify Chicago is a free instant messaging system that provides up to the minute telephone messages, text messages and/or email alerts regarding street closures, bus reroute and more. To sign up for Notify Chicago, visit www.alertchicago.org

The Chicago G8 and NATO Host Committee is the umbrella organization responsible for coordinating with local, state and federal partners to ensure well run, successful summits that promote Chicago’s interests. For more information on the Chicago G8 NATO Host Committee contact info@g8natohostcommittee.com or visit www.chicagog8nato.org

CROSSROADS PROGRAMMING

CULINARY PROGRAMMING

The Illinois Restaurant Association is pleased to announce a citywide dine-around program that will be implemented in May to both celebrate the summits and place a spotlight on Chicago's diverse, world-class restaurant industry. A committee of chefs and restaurateurs are creating a special menu program in which local restaurants will feature the cuisines of the G8 and NATO countries through distinct tasting and pairings.

In addition, the Illinois Restaurant Association is proud to partner with Chicago Public Schools on culinary programming designed to increase student's global knowledge. Chefs will guest lecture at ProStart culinary classes and bring international flavor to the classroom through the study of global cuisines.

SPORTS PROGRAMMING

World Sport Chicago will be hosting a one-day soccer and basketball tournament that links community teams to countries that will be represented at the summits. Registered teams will be assigned one of the countries participating in the summits, and through the Chicago Counselor Corps we will learn more about the country they represent.

CHICAGO PUBLIC SCHOOLS PROGRAMMING

The Chicago Public Schools will host a video contest to encourage elementary and High School students to create original videos welcoming the G8 and NATO delegates to Chicago. The purpose is to showcase the talents of CPS students and encourage conversations centered on the countries and their history.

CULTURAL PROGRAMMING

In celebration of the G8 and NATO Summits, The League of Chicago Theatres is sponsoring a special promotion, ShowGo8!. Theatergoers who see 8 shows during the month of May will earn a free dinner courtesy of The League of Chicago Theatres.

Participants who attend eight productions in May should take their ticket stubs or proof of purchase to any Hot Tix outlet, located at 72 E. Randolph and 163 E. Pearson to receive a \$50 gift certificate for a Chicago restaurant. In addition, almost 100 productions will be running throughout Chicagoland, in May, with many of the theatres hosting special programs and promotions throughout the month. Details and additional information for both ShowGo8 and the special offers and programs at all theatres will begin to be posted on chicagoplays.com on March 1, 2012.

EDUCATIONAL AND PUBLIC POLICY PROGRAMMING

The Chicago Council on Global Affairs--an independent, nonpartisan, public education organization--has planned a range of activities to engage Chicagoans in learning about the G8 and NATO summits. The Chicago Council has organized a three speaker series, with events open to the public, to take place throughout the spring. The first will focus on the future of the transatlantic alliance, the second will examine American leadership in the 21st Century, and the third will give Chicagoans an opportunity to hear from visiting G8 and NATO leaders.

The Council is also working with the Community Media Workshop at Columbia College to create a website that will provide visiting international journalists with a local resource to explore Chicago's history, life, culture, ethnic communities, and institutions.

TOURISM

Chicago is currently ranked the 10th most popular U.S. city for overseas visitors -- behind New York City, Miami, Orlando, Las Vegas and others. Chicago should be ranked among the top five most visited destinations. Working in partnership with the Host Committee and various countries, we will implement a purposeful media relations strategy aimed at key media outlets to help leverage our assets and grow our piece of this lucrative market share.

Specifically, we will host travel writers from key feeder countries, including Canada, United Kingdom, Mexico, Germany, Japan, China and Brazil for familiarization tours prior to and after the Summits. Travel writers from these markets will be invited to join us for two to three days to learn about Chicago's unmatched assets and ultimately deliver compelling news stories that will encourage travel to Chicago.

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