



For Immediate Release
May 1, 2008

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**Guatemalan President Colom Visits Washington, DC;
Encourages U.S. Retail Executives to Attend Apparel Sourcing Show**

(Washington, DC) On April 28 and 29, 2008, President Alvaro Colom of the Republic of Guatemala made his first official state visit to Washington, DC. On Monday, April 28th U.S. President George W. Bush welcomed President Colom to the White House. The two leaders spoke about a range of issues, from immigration, anti-narcotic efforts, trade and their strong support of the U.S.-Central America and Dominican Republic Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA).

While in Washington, DC, President Colom and the First Lady also participated in a special roundtable discussion, *CAFTA: Strengthening the Western Hemisphere Apparel Supply Chain*. Sponsored by VESTEX, the breakfast meeting attracted participation from major U.S. retailers and apparel companies. Attendees included sourcing and compliance executives from Polo Ralph Lauren, Target Stores, Toys R Us, Ann Taylor, and Wal-Mart Stores, among others.

Once an apparel manufacturer in Guatemala and active as a Board Member of Guatemala's Quota Commission (the predecessor of today's VESTEX), President Colom spoke about his long-standing support for the textile and apparel industry. Colom also emphasized his personal commitment to the full and successful implementation of the CAFTA agreement. He encouraged the U.S. companies to attend the Apparel Sourcing Show scheduled from May 13 – 15, 2008 in Guatemala City.

The 2008 Apparel Sourcing Show, "DR-CAFTA apparel marketplace...closer than ever," is scheduled for Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, May 13-15, 2008 in Guatemala City.

Additional information is available at the Apparel Sourcing Show website:

<http://www.apparelexpo.com>

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