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*****MEDIA ADVISORY*****

Young Political Leaders from Northern Ireland to Visit Washington, D.C.

First ACYPL Delegation Since Restoration of Local Governance in N. Ireland

WASHINGTON – Seven young political leaders from Northern Ireland will visit Washington, D.C., on Tuesday, June 26, 2007, sponsored by the American Council of Young Political Leaders (ACYPL), a bi-partisan, not-for-profit international exchange organization supported in part by the U.S. Department of State. This is the first ACYPL delegation from Northern Ireland to visit the United States since the reconstitution of the Northern Ireland Assembly and the restoration of local governance in Northern Ireland in May 2007. The delegates will be in Washington until June 30, when they will continue their 12-day political exchange program in Arkansas and Pennsylvania.

While in D.C., the delegates will meet with the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives, the White House Domestic Policy Council, the Democratic National Committee, the National Republican Congressional Committee, the government of the District of Columbia and the International Economic Development Council. The visit coincides with the Northern Ireland exhibit of this year's Smithsonian Folk Life Festival, where the delegates will attend the opening ceremony.

ACYPL first began exchanging delegations with Northern Ireland in 1999, a year after the ratification of the Good Friday Agreement that ended decades of religious and political conflict over Northern Ireland's identity. With this exchange program, ACYPL furthers its forty-plus year mission of increasing cross-cultural understanding, bringing together young political leaders from places that have experienced bitter conflict, and opening lines of communication between young U.S. political leaders and their counterparts in countries around the world.

The delegates, from across the political spectrum in Northern Ireland, are:

- Judith E. Cochrane (Alliance Party) - Member, Castlereagh Borough Council
- Mark Cosgrove (Ulster Unionist Party) - Director of Ireland, Redhead Holdings Ltd.
- Richard W. Cushnie (Non-Affiliated) - First Secretary, British Embassy Dublin
- Michelle McIlveen, MLA (Democratic Unionist Party) - Member for Strangford, Northern Ireland Assembly
- Martin Reilly (Social Democratic & Labour Party) - Member, Derry City Council
- Desmond M. Ward (Sinn Féin) - Member, Banbridge District Council
- Hugh Widdis (Non-Affiliated) - Legal Advisor, Northern Ireland Assembly

NOTE TO MEDIA: Interviews with the Northern Ireland delegates can be arranged at the Folk Life Festival or before. To schedule an interview, please contact Mike Garretson at the contact information listed above.

About The American Council of Young Political Leaders (ACYPL)

Recognized by the U.S. Congress as a pre-eminent catalyst for introducing rising political leaders and policy makers to international affairs and to each other, ACYPL has conducted programs and exchanges with more than 90 nations since its founding in 1966, producing a global network of several thousand alumni/ae. Former ACYPL participants include 38 sitting members of the U.S. Congress, six sitting U.S. governors and ambassadors, cabinet ministers and members of parliament around the globe. ACYPL has been recognized by the U.S. Congress as a pre-eminent catalyst for introducing rising political leaders and policy makers to international affairs and to each other. For more information on ACYPL, please visit <http://www.acypl.org>.