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Ethics Commission welcomes delegation from Zambia

The Miami-Dade Commission on Ethics and Public Trust will host a contingent of public and private sector leaders from Zambia who are in the United States to learn more about the role of a free press in a vibrant democracy. The eight English-speaking participants, who are in the process of drafting legislation related to media regulation and access to information, will hear Executive Director Joe Centorino discuss Florida's Sunshine Law and the news media's role in ensuring transparency in government. The meeting – which is open to news coverage – will take place from 2 to 3 p.m. on Wednesday, March 7, 2012 in the Ethics Commission Conference Room, 19 West Flagler St. Miami, Suite 820.

The visit to South Florida is part of a two-week educational trip arranged by the U.S. Department of State's International Visitor Leadership Program and locally coordinated by the Miami Council for International Visitors. In addition to the meeting at the Ethics Commission, the Zambians are scheduled to stop at The Miami Herald, meet with local and state law enforcement organizations and take part in a class at the University of Miami.

The visitors include Zambian government representatives and researchers, officials of the state-controlled newspaper and national television, and advocates for media reform. During the tour, they hope to learn more about freedom of the press and freedom of information. Topics include media access to public information, state legislation on open government, and the evolution of American media with new technology, ownership changes and reduced revenue.

For more information on the Zambian visit and on the Miami Council for International Visitors, please call Executive Director Annette Alvarez at 305-421-6344.

The Ethics Commission was created in 1996 as an independent agency with advisory and quasi-judicial powers. It is composed of five members, serving staggered terms of four years each. Through a program of education, outreach and enforcement, the Commission seeks to empower the community and bolster public trust.

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