

ATTN: Law Enforcement, Politics, Crime, Firearms, Public Policy Reporters and Editors

For Immediate Release
October 25, 2010

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NATIONAL LAW ENFORCEMENT GROUPS LAUNCH HISTORIC PARTNERSHIP TO FIGHT GUN VIOLENCE

*Nation's top law enforcement organizations call for
organized and aggressive response to rise in firearm deaths*

ORLANDO, FL – A new initiative organized by ten national law enforcement leadership organizations is promising to focus on effective strategies to address gun violence, calling its current level a “crisis” and “unacceptable.”

The National Law Enforcement Partnership to Prevent Gun Violence was launched today at the annual conference of the International Association of Chiefs of Police in Orlando, Florida. Representatives of the founding organizations were on hand to speak to the devastating impact of firearms, which kill and injure 100,000 Americans each year.

The Partnership marks an unprecedented joint effort by law enforcement leaders to address gun violence in an era of shrinking law enforcement budgets and rising levels of officer deaths.

“Every day, gun violence threatens the safety and well-being of citizens and law enforcement officers throughout this country,” said Chief Michael J. Carroll, president of the International Association of Chiefs of Police. “Law enforcement understands and embraces our central role in combating illegal firearms and gun violence. That is why I am proud that the IACP, along with the leaders of our nation’s premier law enforcement organizations, have come together in this unprecedented manner to create this national Partnership.”

According to U.S. Secret Service Resident Agent in Charge Hector Hernandez, president of the Hispanic American Police Command Officers Association, law enforcement leaders “know firsthand how devastating crimes involving guns are to our communities and society as a whole. We’re honored to have the opportunity to have a role in fighting the cycle of gun violence.”

“In 2008, 34 officers were killed in the line of duty with firearms. So far this year, we’ve lost 43 officers to firearms,” said Chief Katherine Perez, president of the National Association of Women Law Enforcement Executives. “The trend is worsening, and we need to take immediate action.”

“Policymakers need to understand that law enforcement officers deal with gun violence as a daily reality, not an abstract theory,” said Hubert Williams, president of the Police Foundation. “Policy and resource decisions can put officers on the front lines at risk.”

“Reducing gun violence is absolutely essential. Far too many of our citizens live in fear and far too many of our officers have lost their lives,” said Chief Rob Davis, president of the Major Cities Chiefs Association. “This unprecedented partnership is about bringing a fresh, pragmatic perspective to the debate about how to enhance community and officer safety.”

“It’s troubling that, even with the homicide rate declining, we are seeing a higher percentage of crime committed using firearms. We need to use the amplified voice of this partnership to bring attention back to the basic problem of too many guns in the wrong hands,” remarked Assistant City Manager Patrick Melvin, president of the National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives.

“The multiple incidents of serious gun violence on college campuses just since classes resumed this fall has been tremendously distressing and absolutely senseless,” commented Chief Phillip Johnson, president of the International Association of Campus Law Enforcement Administrators.

“We need to engage with communities all across the country to support gun violence prevention efforts,” said Chief Lou Dekmar, chair of the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies.

“The economic downturn has forced law enforcement agencies across the country to compete for increasingly scarce resources. We’re delighted that we’ll be able to bring to bear the influence of the Partnership to advocate for the resources needed to combat gun violence and protect our citizens and officers,” said Sheriff B.J. Roberts, president of the National Sheriffs’ Association.

“This is a nationwide problem,” said Chuck Wexler, executive director of the Police Executive Research Forum, underscoring the significance of the announcement. “It’s not every day that you get ten diverse organizations united on anything. The Partnership gives us a platform to advocate collectively for the support we need to reduce gun crimes.”

More information on the Partnership, including its *Statement of Principles*, can be found at: <http://www.theiacp.org/gunviolencepartnership>

The National Law Enforcement Partnership to Prevent Gun Violence includes: the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies, Inc; Hispanic American Police Command Officers Association; International Association of Campus Law Enforcement Administrators; International Association of Chiefs of Police; Major Cities Chiefs Association; National Association of Women Law Enforcement Executives; National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives; National Sheriffs’ Association; Police Executive Research Forum; and Police Foundation.

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