

News Release: 19/11/07

EQUAL RIGHTS CHIEF VISITS BRISTOL'S SLAVERY EXHIBITION

Trevor Phillips OBE, the Chief Executive of the newly formed Commission for Equalities and Human Rights will be visiting the British Empire & Commonwealth Museum's 'Breaking the Chains' exhibition tomorrow. He will be received by Exhibition Manager Anne Lineen, leading Bristol civil rights campaigner Paul Stephenson and a number of representatives from community groups and Bristol Black Archives Partnership, a project funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund and Bristol City Council.

Mr Phillips will tour the £1million Heritage Lottery funded exhibition to see first hand, the ways in which the city has worked together to commemorate the abolition of the slave trade 200 years ago. Campaigner Paul Stephenson, who has recently been nominated to receive Freedom of the City says: *"I am very grateful for Trevor Philips finding the time to visit the Museum and to talk to city leaders about 2007 and its legacy."*

Breaking the Chains was opened in April 2007 by HRH Princess Anne as the centrepiece to the city's commemoration programme. Comprised of six innovative galleries, the exhibition has been highly acclaimed and recently scooped a prestigious design award. Since opening, the exhibition's galleries have been fully booked with school visits from across the region, extending the Museum's mission to promote education and understanding of our past. Other recent, prominent visitors to Breaking the Chains include Tony Benn, Reverend Jesse Jackson, Paul Boateng and George Alagiah.

Exhibition Manager Anne Lineen is looking forward to the visit: *"It will be an honour to show Mr Phillips around our exhibition which was the result of a community consultation process. It presents many of the ongoing legacies of this history and invites visitors to leave a response to these issues. I believe it provides a platform for*

learning and moving forward from our past, and am looking forward to showing Mr Phillips how the people of Bristol respond to this challenge.”

The Breaking the Chains exhibition will remain open until late 2008. It is planned that parts of the display will later be incorporated into the new Museum of Bristol, leaving a permanent legacy of the year.

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For further information please contact the PR & Marketing Manager Lucy Edwards:
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Email. lucy.edwards@empiremuseum.co.uk

Press & Media Call: Please report to reception on arrival.

12.00pm – 12.45pm

Tuesday 20th November

To be held in Breaking the Chains

British Empire & Commonwealth Museum

Station Approach, Temple Meads, Bristol, BS1 6QH

Notes to Editors:

The British Empire & Commonwealth Museum

www.empiremuseum.co.uk

An independent, national museum and registered charity, the British Empire & Commonwealth Museum is committed to examining the evidence of Britain's colonial history and to exploring its present-day legacy. Since opening its permanent galleries in 2002 it has earned numerous awards including a nomination for 'European Museum of the Year'.

In 2007 a landmark exhibition commemorating the 200th anniversary of the abolition of the slave trade opened entitled 'Breaking the Chains'. Six themed galleries now occupy an entire floor of the British Empire & Commonwealth Museum using authentic artefacts, film, music, photography, video and personal testimonies to create a powerful and memorable experience. Breaking the Chains examines the legacies of the Transatlantic Slave Trade and highlights the continued existence of many forms of slavery in the 21st century. It was recently awarded the Silver Rose Award in the category of exhibition graphics, created by designers True North.

The Bristol Black Archives Partnership is collecting, preserving and making accessible Bristol's Black History for present and future generations. The partnership is a consortium of African-Caribbean organizations and individuals, the City's Museum's, Galleries & Archives Service, Libraries Service and Equalities Unit; the two local universities and former Lord Lieutenant. It came about after Paul Stephenson deposited his archives with Bristol Record Office and they teamed up others committed to protecting Black History and promoting positive role models. It aims to ensure a positive legacy for future generations.