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For Immediate Release

According to the 2001 federal census, 239,000 New Brunswickers are of Scottish ancestry while more than 263,000 of Nova Scotians identify themselves as "Scots-Canadians". Add to that the third Maritime Province, Prince Edward Island, with a majority of its population being of Scots or Scots-Irish descent.

Historically, Scottish cultural groups across Canada have focused on their particular jurisdictions, and have not typically collaborated to promote cultural and heritage projects. That has changed here in the Maritime Provinces as Scottish cultural organizations have formed an advisory body to promote Scottish culture and the Gaelic language across the region. The new body, the United Council of Scots in Atlantic Canada, will represent the cultural interests of more than 500,000 Atlantic Scottish-Canadians.

As a result of a tele-conference that took place Tuesday evening between the executive officers of the Scottish cultural organizations of New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island, the Scottish communities of all three Maritime Provinces have entered into an agreement of cooperation. Fred MacLaine, President of the Caledonian Club of Prince Edward Island, acknowledged the PEI's entry into the United Council of Scots of Atlantic Canada.

The announcement today follows on the heels of a historic gathering of Atlantic Canadian Scots that was convened in Moncton by the New Brunswick Scottish Cultural Association (NBSCA) in Moncton on August 13. The roundtable meeting was designed to begin a dialogue amongst Scottish communities in Atlantic Canada.

"This meeting has been 20 years in the making," Dan Taylor, the President of the NBSCA said. "Each of our organizations must explore new ways to collaborate, exchange ideas, and provide mutual assistance in order to prepare for the future and to preserve our common Scottish heritage."

"I was very pleased to see so many faces at the meeting," states Jean Watson, the President of the Federation of Scottish Clans of Nova Scotia (FSCNS). "I know we are embarking on something very exciting and historic. We invite other Scottish

organizations to join with us so we may all work for a common cause - to keep alive Scottish culture, music, customs, and language."

According to the NBSCA's Dan Taylor, talks are progressing to bring Newfoundland and Labrador into the United Council of Scots. Initial contact has been established with the St. Andrew's Society in that province.

It was unanimously agreed that the United Council of Scots will meet annually in August. The 2007 meeting will coincide with the International Gathering of Scottish Clans in Nova Scotia. This international Scottish gathering, which will run from April 6 (Tartan Day) until late October 2007, is an opportunity for Scots from all over the world to come and explore Nova Scotia's heritage, culture, music, history, and scenery.

Background Information

Come to Where the Old World Meets the New...

International Gathering of the Clans in Nova Scotia website:

www.scotsns.chebucto.org

Tartan Day, April 6, 2007, is the 20th anniversary of the first Tartan Day observed in Nova Scotia. The idea for the celebration came from Jean Watson, the current President of the Federations of the Scottish Clans of Nova Scotia. Her idea has spread world-wide and Mrs. Watson, of Lower Sackville, N.S., is renowned amongst the Scots as the "Mother of Tartan Day".

The New Brunswick Scottish Cultural Association (www.nbscots.com) was founded in 1980, and represents that province's Scottish cultural communities and organizations, acting as both an information resource and promoter/defender of the Scots and their descendants who have contributed to New Brunswick's economic, social, political, and cultural development.

The Federation of Scottish Clans (www.scotsns.chebucto.org), which was founded in 1982, advocates the promotion of Scottish Culture and the Gaelic Language in Nova Scotia; represents the Scottish clan organizations in dealing with government and the general public, and coordinates major Scottish cultural events, such as the upcoming International Gathering of the Clans in Nova Scotia in 2007.

The Caledonian Club of Prince Edward Island facilitates PEI Highland Games held annually in August at Lord Selkirk Provincial Park, Eldon, PE. The Caledonian Club stages various Scottish heritage events in the community, and represents the Scottish community of the province.