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ONE THOUSAND IMMIGRANTS TO BECOME AMERICAN CITIZENS AT CONVENTION CENTER CEREMONY

While much of Raleigh will celebrate the grand opening of Raleigh's new convention center this weekend, 1,000 immigrants will use the occasion to celebrate becoming American citizens. A naturalization ceremony will be the first event held in the new convention center, beginning at 1 p.m. today.

The hour-long naturalization ceremony will also be the opening event of the International Festival being held at the convention center today and Saturday. This will be the largest group of immigrants to be naturalized in the 23 years of the International Festival. Administering the oath will be U.S. District Court Judge Earl Britt. North Carolina Secretary of State Elaine Marshall will lead the group in the Pledge of Allegiance, and Mayor Charles Meeker will make remarks.

The naturalization ceremony will be open to the public.