



## Quebec Minister Encourages Australian Business Partnerships

08:09 02/27 (CEP News) Sydney - Corporations in Australia have been urged to develop partnerships with Quebec, following a visit to Sydney by the province's Minister for International Relations, Madame Monique Gagnon-Tremblay. In an exclusive interview with CEP News in Sydney, the Minister identified key areas of opportunity.

"Quebec's economy is very strong in many sectors," she said. "Firstly in information and communication technologies, the life science sector and also transportation equipment, especially in aerospace and mass transit equipment."

Earlier, addressing 100 invited guests of the Canadian Australian Chamber of Commerce, the Minister described Quebec as a vibrant centre of industry, creative arts and innovation with trade between the province and Australia valued at almost CA\$1 billion each year.

Some companies, such as Bombardier Transportation, already with headquarters in both Montreal and Australia, see the value in applying global work practices and partnerships to their corporations, Gagnon-Tremblay said. Québec's automotive and ground transportation industry employs more than 35,000 people and generates \$7.2 billion in sales. Each week, thousands of Australians travel in trains built by Bombardier.

The company's Australian marketing director, Andrew Spink, said the local market is integral to Bombardier's global position. "It's been identified as a strategic country for Bombardier, and we have a five year plan in which we are looking at a whole series of opportunities, in particular around Sydney and Melbourne," Spink said.

During her presentation, the Minister made mention of CAE, a global leader in the field of flight simulation and modelling technologies, also holding offices Montreal and Australia. The company recently signed a flight simulator sales contract with Qantas for the airline's Melbourne pilot training centre. That sale was announced just a few weeks after CAE won a major contract from the Australian Defence Force for a helicopter training system.

CAE's managing director in Australia, Alan Johnson, said the company has benefitted from applying their world class services and technologies developed in Quebec and Australia to both civil and military markets in the region. "Notably, CAE has recently secured contracts in Australia for B787, B737, B777, A380 and A320 full flight simulators," he said, adding "we see continued growth opportunities across the simulation equipment, training and professional services sectors."

Ninety per cent of CAE's more than \$1 billion annual revenues are derived from worldwide exports, he added.

Minister Gagnon-Tremblay's trip to Australia was primarily focused on developing partnerships directly between Australia and Quebec, but she said she believes the benefits of doing so extend beyond merely doing business with the province.

"Quebec can be considered as a stepping stone not only to Canada but also to the North American and even European markets," she said. "Montreal is a vibrant cultural crossroads, a fertile ground for innovation."

Each year, around a third of Australia's exports to Canada clear customs in Quebec, with Australia exporting about \$100 million more in products to the province than Quebec exports to Australia.

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