

## Provincial Chambers Target Trade Barriers

**TORONTO** - Fédération des chambres de commerce du Québec and the Ontario Chamber of Commerce have entered into an agreement of cooperation in order to facilitate improved interprovincial trade and business relations.

The Quebec-Ontario Corridor is the principal economic corridor in Canada, comprising more than 62% of the population and supplying 61% of the GDP.

“As the U.S. economy experiences a significant slowdown, the Quebec-Ontario corridor becomes more important than ever for the growth of our economy,” explains Francoise Bertrand, President of the Fédération des chambres de commerce du Québec. “We’ve seen significant benefits from this same kind of approach on the Quebec-New York Corridor and expect to achieve similarly positive results through this collaboration.”

In November 2007 the governments of Ontario and Quebec entered into an agreement to eliminate trade barriers and improve labour mobility between the provinces. In order to enhance the political accord, the Chamber partnership will begin by identifying some of the most common trade impediments between the two provinces and will provide concrete solutions towards their elimination.

“Our members confront trade obstacles every day in their efforts to do business right here at home, increasing the cost of doing business, harming their productivity and ultimately hampering their efforts to become global leaders in their industries,” adds Len Crispino, President & CEO of the Ontario Chamber of Commerce. “As the key conduits to private sector employers in Ontario and Quebec, we look forward to working with our local chamber network to provide that critical link to business in the support of efforts on the political level.”

In 2002, business between Quebec and Ontario amounted to \$35.8 billion. Ontario is Quebec’s largest trading partner ahead of New York State, while Quebec is Ontario’s second-largest trading partner after Michigan.