


# QUÉBEC'S INTERNATIONAL POLICY

WORKING IN CONCERT



SUMMARY

Québec 

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WORKING IN CONCERT

SUMMARY

Produced by:

**Ministère des Relations internationales**

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JEAN CHAREST  
PREMIER OF QUÉBEC

**E**vents over the past few years have unfolded, from a historical perspective, at an accelerated pace. Countries referred to as third-world have joined the ranks of the global economic powers. The means for transporting goods, merchandise, and people have changed radically. The technological revolution has transformed the way we interact with information, and images now travel as quickly as capital.

The Cold War has been replaced by a growing number of regional conflicts and terrorism has crossed the ocean. We live under the constant threat of pandemics. Yet at the same time, measures to protect the environment and initiatives to devise a more equitable form of globalization have given rise to new ties of solidarity.

In our rapidly evolving world, the power of nation-states has been diffused due to market expansion. The advent of a global village has brought with it unprecedented challenges that call for international and multilateral solutions. As an integral part of the North American landscape, Québec must make a place for itself in this new world context by asserting its identity, prospering economically, and preserving its values.

Our International Policy aims to provide Québec with timely strategies that will enable it to meet these challenges and benefit from the potential afforded by a changing world. I have already taken concrete action in this regard. In 2005, I led one of the largest Québec delegations ever to China. Similarly, early this year, I led Québec's first delegation to India.

The aim of our policy is to strengthen Québec's international influence. It reaffirms Québec's prerogative to

vigorously and independently pursue international initiatives wherever appropriate: whatever falls under Québec's jurisdiction at home falls under its jurisdiction everywhere.

In keeping with Canadian foreign policy, the enhancement of Québec's diplomatic initiatives will be achieved mainly through a redeployment of our network of representatives abroad. We will also increase our participation in Canadian initiatives.

Our International Policy marks a turning point. Indeed, it aligns our initiatives with a Canadian position that is more representative of Québec's interests. As a result, Québec's international voice will have added resonance in the 21st century.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jean Charest". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the left.



MONIQUE GAGNON-TREMBLAY  
MINISTER OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS  
AND MINISTER RESPONSIBLE FOR LA FRANCOPHONIE

**F**or over one hundred years, Québec has played a key international role as the only North American society with a Francophone majority.

Québec takes pride in its identity and is an active participant within the Canadian context. It is a knowledge-based society with an advanced economy fully integrated within the North American market and an abundance of natural resources.

In a new world order characterized by the rise of emerging economies, Québec is asserting its desire to pursue vigorous collaborative and multilateral international initiatives in accordance with its needs.

To accomplish this, the government must first ensure that the expertise and initiatives of its departments and agencies are focused on specific objectives and shared international priorities. It must then work more closely with metropolitan areas and major public institutions, particularly universities and civic groups already active on the international scene, to ensure that their initiatives are mutually complementary.

The Government of Québec also intends to work collaboratively with the federal government, reflecting the firm belief that it can contribute effectively to Canada's worldwide influence. It also believes that the Canadian government's support of Québec's international initiatives will mean a stronger Québec. However, the Government of Québec has no intention of withdrawing from the international partnerships it has developed over the past forty years; rather, it will work to strengthen its bilateral relations.

The belief that Québec will be stronger and more influential in the international arena by rallying other partners and working more closely with them is the underlying premise of this policy.

Nonetheless, our efforts will surely depend on the degree of openness, tolerance, and hospitality demonstrated by Québec society – our greatest guarantee of success. During the drafting of this policy, I met with many young people who described their vision of Québec and their hopes for the future. They also spoke about their activities and the networks in which they participate. They are not limited by borders. Seeing them so focused on the world yet so deeply rooted in Québec, regardless of their place of origin, I firmly believe that Québec is capable of succeeding and taking its rightful place in the world.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be 'Philippe Couillard', written in a cursive style.

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## PREFACE

**Q**uébec's decision to take on an international role dates back a number of years. The scope of its governmental jurisdiction, together with its unique identity within Canada and North America, contributed to this decision. Québec's need to assert itself on the international stage has become even more acute in light of the changing global environment and the enormous challenges Québec will face in the coming years.

Today, deep geopolitical changes are modifying the existing world order. Technological advances are transforming the international economy into an increasingly competitive environment. The phenomenon of globalization must be reconciled with the existence of multiple identities among the world's peoples. The dynamics of North American integration include the regional dimensions of issues such as security, energy and the environment. International trade negotiations are defining the future of agricultural policies as international organizations seek to establish a public policy framework. In this context, Québec intends to step up its international initiatives and to take part in the deliberations and meetings of forums and organizations whose work has a bearing on its responsibilities and interests. The Government of Québec strongly believes that federated political entities can play a key role in building a more prosperous and secure world in which solidarity is a central principle.

Québec is pursuing these efforts to assert itself within the Canadian federation and on the international scene, while cooperating closely on complementary initiatives with the federal government.

The Government of Québec will conduct its international policy in accordance with the values that forge Québec's identity. It will also ensure that decisions made by others do not constrain Quebecers' right to live and develop on the basis of their own choices.

# QUÉBEC'S INTERNATIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES

**Q**uébec is a federated state invested with the political responsibilities that are in some cases exclusive, such as natural resource management, health care, education, culture, municipal institutions and private law. It manages its own fiscal system and levies its own taxes. It oversees the administration of the courts and most services relating to public security on its territory, and is responsible for selecting immigrants to Québec. Moreover, the Government of Québec carries out certain responsibilities, in conjunction with the federal government, in matters pertaining to such sectors as agriculture and transportation.

Over the years, it has put into place judicial and institutional instruments that allow it to assume the international scope of its responsibilities. It has mandated the Ministère des Relations internationales to direct the government's international initiatives, coordinate the activities of government departments and agencies in this regard, manage a network of representatives abroad, as well as negotiate and enforce international agreements.

Over the past forty years, each successive government has acted with remarkable consistency. Québec now has nearly thirty foreign delegations, offices, and local agents. More than 300 bilateral agreements are in effect with national governments and federated states in nearly 80 countries. The Government of Québec is a participating member of La Francophonie and carefully monitors the work of international organizations in matters involving its jurisdiction and interests. It ensures the implementation of a number of international agreements within its boundaries.

The Government of Québec intends to continue and intensify its international activities. It hopes to do so by consolidating its partnership with the federal government, for Québec believes that an accurate image of Canada abroad should not eclipse its federal nature, i.e. the existence of two orders of government working in their respective spheres.

## BACKGROUND

**S**ince the end of the Cold War, the world has witnessed a fundamental restructuring of international relations. This has come about in an environment of ever-increasing globalization. It is to the resulting changes that one must look in order to understand the trends that will affect Québec's medium and long-term development. Among these trends, some have more far-reaching consequences for Québec:

- **Emergence of new economic powers**

Emerging economies are now competing with developed economies. This has resulted in a restructuring and shift in production capabilities. These adjustments have not only disrupted the traditional consumer goods sector but are likewise affecting the hi-tech and services sectors, which are no longer concentrated exclusively in developed economies. The changes have a direct impact on Québec since they affect its businesses and labour force in addition to weakening its ability to compete, in the United States, its primary market.

- **Ever-increasing integration of international trade**

Today, trade and investments are closely linked. Consequently, more and more exports from a given country include components imported from other countries. Québec is no exception to the rule. An estimated 37% of its exported commodities include materials from outside its territory. Investment abroad is now part and parcel of the strategy of a growing number of Québec's companies.

- **Strategic role of education and research**

In an environment where capital, technology, and even labour move more freely than before, the scope of international economic relations now encompass a complex multitude of interrelated factors. Therefore, human capital development, research and innovation capabilities, together with quality education systems, have become essential elements for sharpening the competitive edge of Québec's economy.

- **Prevalence of security issues**

The wave of attacks that rocked several regions around the world at the turn of the century has made the fight against terrorism a primary concern for the international community. Two other points must be considered within the scope of security: fighting traditional forms of transnational crime and dealing with the risks associated with pandemics and a deteriorating environment. Preventing and managing these new threats requires collaboration among national governments but also direct involvement by different orders of government. Moreover, the distinction between internal and external security is more difficult to draw.

- **Rising concerns over sustainable development**

The deterioration of the environment has considerable political and economic impacts on societies, countries and governments. Major shifts appear inevitable if the environment and ecosystems are to survive. Their preservation has both economic and social dimensions.

- **Growing role of international organizations**

International organizations deal with problems whose solutions require cooperation among governments. The resulting standards tend to be incorporated into internal domestic policy. The nature of these issues is encouraging new entities such as private enterprises, civil institutions, humanitarian organizations, and local administrations to become more directly involved in international relations. Given their executive powers and the legitimacy conferred upon them as democratically elected entities, the governments of federated states come atop this list of new actors which participate in the international order.

- **Globalization's consequences for identity and cultural issues**

Information technologies and new means of communication facilitate the exchange of ideas and dissemination of knowledge. Nevertheless, this provokes a clash of values, which causes fears about long-term social and cultural prospects. In turn this gives rise to concerns for preserving both the diversity of cultural expressions and the government's capacity to inter-

vene effectively on these issues. The vulnerability of status of the French language and of the distinct features of Québec's identity remains a major driver of the government's international initiatives.

■ **Imbalance in the global distribution of wealth**

In 2000, rich countries recognized for the first time that, where world progress is concerned, fighting the war on poverty is of the utmost urgency. To halt and eventually reverse the deterioration of the social and economic fabric of troubled countries, everyone agrees that fighting poverty and building governance capacity are the two priorities that define aid to development in this new century.

Taking into account global changes and its own growth, Québec will also need to conduct its international initiatives in accordance with the unique challenges it faces, namely:

- Increasing the level of business productivity.
- Planning the availability of skilled workers.
- Increasing immigration levels.
- Including colleges and universities in the mainstream of international exchanges.
- Attracting foreign students and researchers, and ensuring the international mobility of its students.
- Sharpening the competitiveness of its cities and regions.
- Protecting and nurturing the French language as well as Québec's culture.
- Maintaining a balance between economic development and social development, while providing sound fiscal management.

## OBJECTIVES AND PRIORITIES

**I**n view of the issues resulting from global changes and in light of upcoming challenges, Québec will focus its international initiatives on five objectives:

**STRENGTHENING QUÉBEC'S CAPACITY FOR ACTION AND INFLUENCE**

**FOSTERING QUÉBEC'S GROWTH AND PROSPERITY**

**CONTRIBUTING TO THE SECURITY OF QUÉBEC AND THE NORTH AMERICAN CONTINENT**

**PROMOTING THE IDENTITY AND CULTURE OF QUÉBEC**

**CONTRIBUTING TO THE CAUSE OF INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY**

For each of these objectives, the International Policy identifies what is at stake and outlines the priorities that will serve as a guide for the initiatives to be undertaken. These priorities translate into a Government Action Plan that will call upon the Ministère des Relations internationales, but also other government departments and agencies.

## OBJECTIVE

### **STRENGTHENING QUÉBEC'S CAPACITY FOR ACTION AND INFLUENCE**

Increasing numbers of norms and standards resulting from international conventions and agreements have a direct impact on the responsibilities of the Government of Québec. Its ability to make collective decisions, enact legislation, and adopt regulations is now influenced by these international norms. The government can either be subjected to these changes or strive to influence events in a direction favourable to its interests and the values of Québec's society. Québec has opted for the second alternative. In order to achieve this, it must be able to join the networks responsible for setting the norms, have access to foreign decision-makers, and avail itself of every possible means in order to have a real influence in the international arena.

#### **Two priorities will serve as guides for its initiatives over the coming years:**

Increase Québec's presence and participation in international organizations as well as in negotiations and discussions dealing with Québec's interests

Intensify relations with political and economic decision-makers of countries, federated states and regions having shared interests with Québec

## PRIORITY

**Increase Québec's presence and participation in international organizations as well as in negotiations and discussions dealing with Québec's interests:**

## KEY INITIATIVES

- Presence in international organizations.
  - Negotiate the establishment of a stable and predictable framework with the federal government to facilitate Québec's participation in the proceedings of international organizations and forums.

- Name a permanent representative of the Government of Québec within the permanent Delegation of Canada to UNESCO.
  - Implement a plan of action aimed at supporting the ratification of the Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions by as many countries as possible.
  - Step up Québec’s presence in Washington in order to stay abreast of the work of the Organization of American States (OAS) and the World Bank.
  - Ensure the participation of experts from Québec in task forces created by international organizations.
  - Increase the number of interns from Québec in international organizations.
- Participation in negotiations and proceedings concerning its interests:
    - Participate more directly with Canadian negotiation teams at the WTO.
    - Participate in establishing the Security and Prosperity Partnership of North America between Canada, the United States, and Mexico.
    - Participate directly in negotiations on a draft of the Trade and Investment Enhancement Agreement between Canada and the European Union.

## PRIORITY

**Intensify relations with political and economic decision-makers of countries, federated states and regions having shared interests with Québec:**

## KEY INITIATIVES

- Redeploy Québec’s network of delegations and offices abroad to strengthen its presence in certain priority areas.
- Develop relations with federated states and large regions:
  - Reinforce ties with American and Mexican states.
  - Ensure representation at regional proceedings in Europe such as the Assembly of European Regions (AER) and the Conference of Presidents of Regions with Legislative Powers (REGLEG).



- Participate in the Conference of Heads of Government of Partner Regions to promote educational, environmental, scientific, and technological exchanges.
- Work more closely with public institutions, especially large urban areas and institutions of higher learning, as well as with representatives of the civil society.

## OBJECTIVE

### **FOSTERING QUÉBEC'S GROWTH AND PROSPERITY**

International trade plays a vital role in the development of Québec's economy. On the one hand, exports represent over 50% of its GDP and account for 30% of jobs. On the other, 24,6 % of private investments are made by foreign companies. Over the past few years, Québec has witnessed a decline of its exports on several markets. It therefore needs to work toward consolidating the progress it has made in the United States and Europe and ensuring the diversification of its economic partners. Moreover, to maintain its place among the advanced and emerging nations investing in R&D, the Government of Québec has established the goal of attaining an R&D rate equivalent to 3% of GDP. To achieve this objective, Québec will need to enhance its international research partnerships, attract investments by offering researchers an appealing environment, and facilitate obtaining world research mandates.

Lastly, although attracting foreign investments and market development are fundamental to the vitality of Québec's trade, they will not have lasting effects unless Québec has an upcoming generation of entrepreneurs and a skilled labour force capable of working in an increasingly international environment. This labour force challenge will be at the forefront over the coming years. In order to stay in the race, Québec will therefore need to take steps with regard to immigration, training, knowledge, and innovation.

**To achieve this goal, the Québec Government will centre its initiatives on three priorities:**

Strengthen and increase economic exchanges with the United States and Europe, and diversify trade by branching out to certain expanding markets

Make knowledge, innovation, and education core elements of international initiatives

Attract more qualified immigrants and facilitate their integration into economic life

#### **PRIORITY**

**Strengthen and increase economic exchanges with the United States and Europe, and diversify trade by branching out to certain expanding markets:**

#### **KEY INITIATIVES**

- In the United States, Québec will concentrate its efforts on four sectors in particular: trade, security, energy, and the environment. It will especially strive to work with Eastern Seaboard and Mid-West states to develop cross-border partnerships and identify normative and regulatory obstacles that impede trade. Additionally, Québec will increase its economic presence in Washington and Atlanta.
- In Europe, Québec will seek to develop business opportunities in five high potential sectors in Western European countries (aerospace technology, construction, life sciences, information and communication technologies, and the environment). It will take advantage of the new opportunities afforded by European expansion and support businesses in adapting their products to European standards.

- To diversify its export markets, Québec will concentrate its efforts on five expanding markets where it will step up its presence and target its initiatives: Mexico, Japan, China, India and Brazil. To increase the likelihood that businesses succeed in these markets, support will focus particularly on facilitating project start-ups and mergers.
- New initiatives will also aid export businesses and attract investments:
  - Support for exporting Québec’s expertise and know-how by collaborating with the École nationale d’administration publique (ÉNAP) to create a centre for the international promotion of Québec expertise.
  - A new strategy for promoting and prospecting foreign investments.
  - Measures for helping Québec’s companies set up operations abroad with the aim of increasing sales and developing business partnerships.
  - Support for regions that have adopted an integrated international action plan, particularly for developing their niches of excellence.

## PRIORITY

### **Make knowledge, innovation, and education core elements of international initiatives:**

#### KEY INITIATIVES

- Increase funding allotted to international research partnership development and attracting foreign researchers.
- Intensify and better coordinate the international promotion of Québec’s educational opportunities, in collaboration with universities.
- Restructure tuition exemption scholarship programs for foreign students to attract more candidates to university postgraduate programs and a greater number of students to college-level technical programs.

- Develop an integrated public offering with regard to educational services in order to support reforms and the development of education systems, with special emphasis on the needs of emerging economies.
- Expand international internship opportunities for young people and increase support for youth entrepreneurship projects abroad.

## PRIORITY

### **Attract more qualified immigrants and facilitate their integration into economic life:**

## KEY INITIATIVES

- Improve the recognition of foreign academic degrees and qualification by concerted actions between Québec government, professional orders and institutions of higher learning.
- Target promotional and recruitment efforts abroad based on Québec's identified labour needs, with special emphasis on the priority areas of Latin America, and Eastern and Western Europe.
- Increase the number of prospective business immigrants invited for an exploratory visit to Québec.
- Increase the number of foreign partners in French language education to enable immigration candidates to begin their linguistic training before arriving in Québec.

## OBJECTIVE

### **CONTRIBUTING TO THE SECURITY OF QUÉBEC AND THE NORTH AMERICAN CONTINENT**

Distinctions that existed between external and internal security are disappearing. Now more than ever, this new reality calls for global, regional, and local collaboration on the part of all stakeholders. Within the Canadian federation, security is not the exclusive purview of any one level of government. Several provincial jurisdictions are directly involved. The powers exercised by Québec regarding the administration of law and health care, the role it plays on environmental and agricultural issues, its responsibilities with respect to public safety, and the impact of new security issues on its economy are indications that it cannot remain oblivious of international security concerns. Québec can best contribute to international security objectives by first and foremost protecting citizens within its territory, working to preserve the flow of trade, making its strategic infrastructures more secure, and ensuring that it does not become a source of threats to its partners.

#### **Two priorities will guide Québec's initiatives:**

**Ensure rapid and reliable access to strategic information and participate in the work of regional and international bodies with respect to nonmilitary security matters**

**Facilitate the safe and efficient cross-border flow of people and goods. Enhance the security of Québec's strategic infrastructures**

## PRIORITY

**Ensure rapid and reliable access to strategic information and participate in the work of regional and international bodies with respect to nonmilitary security matters:**

### KEY INITIATIVES

- Establish a unit within the Ministère de la Sécurité publique in charge of integrated management of security related information.
- Intensify cooperation with the United States, notably with the states of U.S. Northeast, on security matters:
  - Step up Québec’s involvement in the Northeast Regional Homeland Security Directors Consortium.
  - Establish bilateral cooperation between the Attorney General of Québec and counterparts in bordering American states.
  - Strengthen ties between administrative and police organizations in Québec and in New York State.
  - Increase the number of security-related simulation exercises involving Québec and Northeastern American states.
  - Collaborate scientifically with the U.S. Center for Disease Control (CDC) and conclude technical collaboration agreements with states of the East Coast aimed at preventing the spread of infectious diseases and pandemics.
- Intensify regional and international collaboration in environmental security issues with special emphasis on improving air quality, reducing greenhouse gases, preserving the resources of the St. Lawrence River, fighting invasive species and preventing the risks associated with biotechnology products.
- Cooperate with France on civil protection issues and establish an international network of franco-phone police training facilities in collaboration with European countries.
- Participate in the work of international organizations and forums dealing with nonmilitary threats.

## PRIORITY

### **Facilitate the safe and efficient cross-border flow of people and goods and enhance the security of Québec's strategic infrastructures:**

#### KEY INITIATIVES

- Establish infrastructures that facilitate traffic flow, especially in FAST/Express lanes, at the following border crossings: Lacolle, Saint-Armand-de-Philipsburg, Stanstead, and Armstrong.
- Create training and financial support programs for increasing smart border business accreditation.
- Participate in the Canada-United States Cargo Security Project aimed at making intermodal containers secure.
- Complete the agri-foods tracking system.
- Secure electric energy infrastructures and Québec's fossil fuel supplies.
- Collaborate with the United States and certain European countries to ensure the security of public information technology systems and the protection of personal information.
- Enhance the reliability of Québec-issued identity documents to reflect new North American standards.
- Establish partnerships and enhance measures to control immigration-related crime.

## OBJECTIVE

### **PROMOTING THE IDENTITY AND CULTURE OF QUÉBEC**

The information and communication technologies revolution has led to an unprecedented flow of ideas and knowledge throughout the world. For Québec, this poses a challenge to the permanence of French as an international language and to the vitality of culture and arts. The vigour and growth of many artistic groups and cultural businesses are strongly dependent on their ability to remain active in foreign markets. After significant breakthroughs in the United States and Europe, access to markets has narrowed. New border regulations occasionally hamper the coordination of foreign travel and performances. Guidelines governing the issuance of visas and other permits are becoming stricter and budgetary constraints are mounting, adding new barriers that excellence and innovation cannot always easily overcome. Additionally, various aspects of culture are becoming the focus of an increasing number of international instruments.

**In the areas of identity and culture, two priorities will be given special attention:**

**Support the worldwide promotion and recognition of the French language**

**Develop planning and organizational expertise and instruments to better market Québec's cultural events and products abroad**

## PRIORITY

**Support the worldwide promotion and recognition of the French language:**

## KEY INITIATIVES

- Foster international recognition of Québec's linguistic expertise. Support the worldwide development of French language education.
- Take part in the workgroups put in place at the World Summit on the Information Society and in the new Internet Governance Forum, with the aim of monitoring questions related to linguistic diversity.



- Participate in the work of the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) regarding the use of French in information technologies.

## PRIORITY

### **Develop planning and organizational expertise and instruments to better market Québec's cultural events and products abroad:**

## KEY INITIATIVES

- Develop statistical indicators for the purpose of tracking trends in Québec's international cultural presence.
- In consultation with artistic and cultural communities, implement strategies for planning the deployment of Québec's cultural activities based on the world's most promising geo-cultural poles.
- Establish a system of international operators and mandataries, particularly in the performing arts, aimed at creating a higher profile for artistic and cultural organizations and businesses in leading international fairs, festivals and events.
- Financially support the development of international marketing expertise required to increase the circulation of artists, artistic groups, and cultural businesses outside Québec, particularly in the United States.
- Increase support for translation, particularly into English and Spanish.
- Establish a collaborative approach for hosting artists and cultural groups based on reciprocity.

## OBJECTIVE

### **CONTRIBUTING TO THE CAUSE OF INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY**

Québec is not among the large international fund providers in the area of international aid. Nonetheless, it contributes directly to solidarity efforts undertaken by La Francophonie and is actively involved in several developing countries. Providing this kind of support stems directly from the way Québec perceives its role on the international scene. One of the consequences of promoting and protecting its interests abroad is the obligation to assist international partners of the world community. In the coming years, Québec will face the challenge of targeting the areas in which it will bring added value to international efforts of solidarity.

**Québec's international solidarity initiatives will now be primarily aimed at the following:**

**Channel Québec's international aid contribution toward human resources development and governance capacity building**

#### KEY INITIATIVES

- Review international tuition fee agreements to ensure a better connection between the needs of countries and Québec's educational opportunities. Increase the number of foreign postgraduate students and involve educational institutions more closely in program management.
- Through the Association internationale des maires francophones, support cities in Québec that help developing countries.
- Support the development of African education systems.
- Make Québec's cultural expertise available, particularly with respect to public policies, statistics, and cultural industries with the aim of assisting the development of the cultural sector in developing countries.

- In collaboration with the Centre de valorisation internationale de l'expertise québécoise de l'École nationale d'administration publique (ÉNAP), establish collaboration with the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) in order to facilitate international access to Québec Government expertise.
- Create a coordination mechanism with civil society organizations wishing to broaden the scope of Québec's involvement in aid for development.
- Create a Red Cross emergency response unit in collaboration with experts from the Québec health care system to increase humanitarian emergency response capacities.
- Mandate the emergency measures committee of the Sécurité civile to coordinate, in collaboration with the Ministère des Relations internationales, Québec's involvement during humanitarian disasters.

## DEPLOYING QUÉBEC'S INTERNATIONAL INITIATIVES

**T**o be effective, this International Policy must put forth a clear vision of the geographical areas and locations where Québec expects to become involved on a priority basis, i.e. where it intends to strengthen alliances, exert influence, and cooperate in finding international solutions.

To identify where and with whom Québec should carry out its international involvement, it must first position itself as an international player and take its specific characteristics into account:

- **Its geographical location in North-Eastern America.**
- **Its cultural and linguistic identity, which is unique in America.**
- **Its economic structure which is strongly dependent on external markets.**
- **Its status as a federated state within Canada.**

Therefore, in taking into account its interests as well as its specific features, Québec's International Policy will first be deployed with regard to two strategic countries: the United States and France. Emphasis will subsequently be placed on what has already been achieved through Québec's active involvement within La Francophonie as well as its participation in the work of international organizations in cases where Québec's responsibilities come into play. The policy will also rely on priority relations in Europe including EU institutions. Lastly, the Policy will seek to develop trade with selected expanding markets in the Americas and in Asia.

In this context, the Ministère des Relations internationales has undertaken a review of its organization in Québec and drawn up a redeployment plan for its resources abroad. At its headquarters, it will strengthen its capacity to take action with international organizations as well as its capacity to analyze economic and security issues. Abroad, it will redeploy its resources in accordance with the priorities outlined in its Policy and in consultation with the departments and agencies that

maintain personnel within the network. This redeployment plan provides for adding resources in the United States (Washington, Atlanta, and Los Angeles) and Europe (Germany and Italy) as well as in China, India, and Brazil. Conversely, some adjustments will need to be made with regard to lower priority postings.

This new International Policy demonstrates that, today, few government sectors of activity can ignore the necessity to take international factors into consideration. The role of the Ministère des Relations internationales is to make sure that endeavours converge toward clearly defined common goals. It will therefore coordinate the implementation of the Government's Action Plan, track the plan's development, and make progress reports to the government, outlining results and recommended follow-ups.

By focusing on a limited number of priorities, the International Policy makes it possible to delineate the actions to be taken and facilitates an intersecting of priorities and resources. It serves as an additional instrument for the development of Québec.

# SUMMARY OF THE OBJECTIVES AND PRIORITIES OF QUÉBEC'S INTERNATIONAL POLICY

## STRENGTHENING QUÉBEC'S CAPACITY FOR ACTION AND INFLUENCE

1. Increase Québec's presence and participation in international organizations as well as in negotiations and discussions dealing with Québec's interests.
2. Intensify relations with political and economic decision-makers of countries, federated states and regions having shared interests with Québec.

## FOSTERING QUÉBEC'S GROWTH AND PROSPERITY

3. Strengthen and increase economic exchanges with the United States and Europe, and diversify trade by branching out to certain expanding markets.
4. Make knowledge, innovation, and education core elements of international initiatives.
5. Attract more qualified immigrants and facilitate their integration into economic life.

## CONTRIBUTING TO THE SECURITY OF QUÉBEC AND THE NORTH AMERICAN CONTINENT

6. Ensure rapid and reliable access to strategic information, and participate in the work of regional and international bodies with respect to nonmilitary security matters.
7. Facilitate the safe and efficient cross-border flow of people and goods. Enhance the security of Québec's strategic infrastructures.

## **PROMOTING THE IDENTITY AND CULTURE OF QUÉBEC**

8. Support the worldwide promotion and recognition of the French language.
9. Develop planning and organizational expertise and instruments to better market Québec's cultural events and products abroad.

## **CONTRIBUTING TO THE CAUSE OF INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY**

10. Channel Québec's international aid contribution toward human resources development and governance capacity-building.

