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**SPEECH TO BE GIVEN BY
QUÉBEC PREMIER PAULINE MAROIS
TO THE
CANADA - UNITED KINGDOM CHAMBER OF COMMERCE**

London, January 20, 2014

Mister President of the Chamber,
Monsieur le Délégué general,
Monsieur le Haut-Commissaire du Canada
Distinguished guests,
Ladies and gentlemen,

It is a pleasure and an honour to be here, in London, at the Canada - United Kingdom Chamber of commerce.

I welcome your presence here today, as I believe it indicates a strong interest in Québec and its economy.

This interest is mutual

As your economic partner in North America, I invite you to explore the expanding opportunities for trade and commerce between Québec and the United Kingdom.

Indeed, our two societies already have a great deal in common.

While our culture is French-speaking, many facets of Québec's identity have been shaped by British influence.

Our legal system and political institutions are the first to come to mind.

British architecture is another. We see flavors of London in the architecture of Québec's largest city, Montreal.

(SOURIRE) In fact, North American film producers, wanting to recreate British scenes, have been known to substitute the Montreal city scape.

Investors from the British Isles have also influenced the Québec economy in various ways.

I believe that we are positioned to share even more in the future.

At the core of our respective identities is a character trait that is essential to all nations seeking to excel...the spirit of innovation.

London, for example, has successfully juxtaposed old world splendor with futuristic architecture, to create one of the world's most compelling cities and an influential financial and cultural hub.

In Québec, innovation was born through the necessity to survive in a vast territory and a harsh climate.

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Thru out its history, Québec has stood out as a nation intent on forging its own future.

This has been especially true since the 1960s, and a turning point we call the Quiet Revolution.

The outcome was a firmly established collective identity, an improved social safety net and the foundations of our present-day economy.

Québec's independence movement, which forms my party's political policies, also emerged from this period.

Yes, we still want to see Québec become an independent nation.

This decision will be the result of a democratic choice by Quebecers, enacted with due respect for our neighbours and the international agreements currently in force.

We believe in a Québec that is open to the world and participates in the global community.

We greatly value our place in this world.

Québec now has a network of 28 government offices globally.

Moreover, we recently celebrated the 50-ETH anniversary of the opening of Québec Government Office in London, one of the largest offices in our small, but dynamic, diplomatic network.

Over the years, the Québec Government Office in London has opened its doors to numerous researchers, students, businesspeople, and artists.

At current count, some 150 British firms are now established in Québec.

Similarly, over one hundred Québec businesses, including Bombardier, CGI and the National Bank of Canada, are here in Britain.

This number grows with each passing year, with additions such as Genivar, which acquired WSP, security firm Genetech and Acquisio, web-based advertising specialists.

Québec's economy imports 3.2 billion US dollars in goods from the United Kingdom and returns 1.1 billion in exports.

However, we can do even more.

The adoption of the *Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement*, what you call *CETA*, affords us an opportunity to build new partnerships between Canada and the European Union.

Foremost among these opportunities is the aeronautics sector, which is clearly where our economies complement each other to the greatest extent.

Prime Minister Cameron recently attended the inauguration in Belfast of the new Bombardier plant, which is currently manufacturing the wings of the new CSeries jet being assembled north of Montréal.

The development of this new jet, which is greener and quieter than its competitors, has required enormous investments.

You all know Bombardier. It is clearly our best-known stakeholder in the sector. But it is far from the only one. There are many others, such as Héroux-Devtek, CAE, Bell Helicopter, Pratt & Whitney and Rolls-Royce.

Altogether, the Québec aeronautics industrial cluster encompasses over 200 firms, roughly 42 thousand (42 000) workers and \$12 billion in sales.

Since 1947, the International Civil Aviation Organization has headquartered in Montréal, which is one of the world's leading aerospace centres.

It is one of only three locations in the world where aircraft manufacturing spans all processes, from the drawing board to the flight line.

To what do we owe this success?

First, there is the Québec economic model, which has created certain favorable conditions in Québec.

We benefit from considerable creative assets, a skilled workforce, trained in our institutions of higher learning, and government support programs.

Not only are companies that develop such products eligible for attractive tax credits, but access to venture capital is promoted in a number of ways.

A few minutes ago, I announced a new partnership between my government and White Star Capital. This will open up new avenues of commerce between London, Montréal and New York, in the venture capital industry.

Québec also has government corporations as *Investissement Québec*, which naturally seeks a return on its investments, but extends its mandate to include economic development as well.

I would like to introduce the new President and Chief Executive Officer of *Investissement Québec*, Mr. Mario Albert, who is here with me today. We will be attending the World Economic Forum in Davos this week.

Québec has many government corporations to support business activities. However, its strongest asset is still its people.

When you choose Québec, you will find a pool of skilled, creative and multilingual workers.

Montréal companies can bank on the expertise produced by its five universities and numerous elite specialized institutions.

From this same academic wellspring has arisen Montréal's renowned expertise in the field of life sciences.

Pharmaceutical is another industrial sector in which fruitful collaboration has been established between Québec and the U K.

Nine out of ten of the world's largest pharmaceutical firms operate in Québec.

Over the past six years, biopharmaceutical companies have invested nearly \$5 billion in R & D, infrastructure and partnerships.

GlaxoSmithKline, to give an example, has recently added two production lines to its plant in our capital city.

London is recognized world-wide as a creative hub. Quebec is also.

Its economy has expanded into several niches in information and communications technologies such as video gaming, web services, mobile applications and special effects.

In fact, Québec ranks with California and Japan as one of the world's biggest interactive game centres.

This stems from a bold policy introduced by Québec in the 1990s.

We offer tax incentives to attract and maintain investments in this sector.

Once again, we owe this success to our excellent educational institutions and the creativity of our young Québec workforce.

In a related field, last year I announced that the British firm, Framestore, would set up operations in Montréal.

The firm produced the special effects for the film *War Horse* and the most recent James Bond film.

200 workers are already working in Framestore's new studios in Montreal.

Moreover, later today, I will be announcing a new partnership with another great British visual effects studio

As I address you so close to the City, I can hardly ignore an opportunity to speak about Québec's expertise in financial services.

Québec City, our capital, is Canada's second largest insurance centre.

It is home to the head offices of ten companies that generate a total of \$6.7 billion in sales and provide thousands high-value jobs.

I am glad to have with us today the CEO of Desjardins, Madame Monique Leroux. Desjardins, for those of you who don't know it yet, is one of the biggest financial credit unions in the world... and one of the most solid also!

I cannot come to London, home of the London Metal Exchange, without talking about mining

Our territory is vast, about 7 times the size of the UK.

Our north also abounds in mineral resources.

Nickel, cobalt, platinum, zinc, mineral ore, titanium and gold are all mined from Québec soils.

There is a lot of potential for the mining of diamonds, uranium, lithium and vanadium as well.

Our territory is also rich in rare earths, the strategic metals used in numerous fields related to energy, transportation and high technology.

Our development plan is called, "North for All."

We are determined to protect our territory for future generations and maximize spinoff for the benefit of Quebecers and northern communities.

In this spirit, we have established the *Secrétariat au développement nordique*, an organization to orchestrate our northern strategies.

We have revised the mining royalties regime.

Just before Christmas, a new *Mining Act* was adopted in the National Assembly, effecting a much-needed update to our 135-year-old mining legislation.

It will allow the government to take an active partnership role with mining companies, who will benefit from a stable and predictable business environment.

Despite the decrease in resource prices, our government moved forward with substantial investments in northern infrastructure last fall.

In short, we are acting now to prepare for a recovery in the mining sector. We have plenty of opportunities for major investors willing to partner with us.

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These initiatives are part of the Québec government's new *Economic Policy: Putting Jobs First*.

Announced last October, the policy is intended both to support short-term growth and ensure long-term economic development.

It comprises four sections:

- *an industrial policy;*
- *a research and innovation policy;*
- *an International Trade Development Plan,*
- *a Transportation Electrification Strategy, which I deem to be a very promising project.*

Government-owned Hydro Québec is one of the largest hydroelectricity producers in the world.

It is source of abundant green energy you can depend on.

This abundance, coupled with low prices, has permitted Québec to become the third largest aluminum producer in the world, surpassed only by Russia and China.

Last week, I had the pleasure of inaugurating the new smelter at Rio Tinto – Alcan, with the new AP60 technology.

We all know that times have been better for the aluminum sector. But this investment proves that Québec is a good place to do business.

And Québec still has immense surpluses of electricity.

We recently announced that we were prepared to offer such surpluses at highly competitive rates to firms wishing to invest in megaprojects in Québec.

We have pinpointed four priority sectors:

- natural resource processing;
- the manufacture of components related to renewable energies and green technologies;
- the information technologies sector, for example, server farms that store computer data;
- and electric transportation.

Through our *Transportation Electrification Strategy*, we are seeking to position Québec as a world leader in this emerging sector.

We will thus create high-value jobs and generate wealth, while achieving our greenhouse gas reduction targets.

Québec already possesses extensive know-how in the field of electricity.

Hydro Québec's *Institut de recherche électrique* is recognized as a world leader in battery research as it relates to production modes, transportation and electricity storage.

Mention should also be made of the Québec's assembly facilities for electric subway cars, hybrid cars and small-series low-speed electric vehicles.

Our government has adopted targets to increase the number of electric vehicles on our roads.

The objectives include private, corporate and municipal vehicles, taxis, and even the government vehicle fleet.

Substantial funding is also available to finance the projects of Québec and foreign firms that wish to invest in this sector.

I am certain that a number of British firms will take advantage of it.

In all, nearly a half a billion dollars have been ear-marked for the strategy.

Every year, two university researchers are awarded the *Prix du Québec* by the Québec Government Office in London, in collaboration with the British Association of Canadian Studies.

I wish to announce that one of the awards will, this year, be given to a student specializing in research on the electrification of transportation.

I am aware that this policy is ambitious.

However, it is this very boldness that has enabled Quebecers to excel and develop other sectors of innovation.

I believe that all of the conditions are in place to make Québec your ideal partner in North America.

This is especially true since the *CETA* will soon facilitate investment.

The Québec government enthusiastically welcomed the signing of the agreement in principle between Canada and the European Union last October.

From the outset of the negotiations, Québec vigorously promoted the new agreement.

For us, the European market is very important.

CETA is the biggest free trade agreement that we have joined since the adoption of the North American Free Trade Agreement, or *NAFTA*.

The new agreement will permit the abolition of most EU customs tariffs which will lead to broader business opportunities.

Like *NAFTA*, it protects foreign investments with a clearly defined recourse mechanism.

The agreement will afford British firms special access to our market.

British investors that wish to establish places of business in Québec can take advantage of the free trade agreement between Canada, the United States and Mexico.

I would also point out that the falling Canadian dollar, combined with the rising pound, means that Québec products are becoming even more competitive, which is, by no means, insignificant.

I believe that the stage is set to broaden trade between the United Kingdom and Québec in the foreseeable future.

We share a lengthy history that has forged bridges between our institutions and our citizens.

We have outstanding firms that seek stimulating environments in which to excel.

We have wealth to share, whether from the standpoint of our natural resources, or our creative assets.

A new agreement will, in the near future, facilitate trade.

Distinguished guests, all of the conditions are in place.

Québec is positioned to become the United Kingdom's key partner in North America.

Thank you.