



**For Immediate Release
October 3, 2008**

**PREMIERS OF QUEBEC AND ONTARIO SHARE COLLECTIVE VISION
AT ONTARIO ECONOMIC SUMMIT**

Niagara-on-the-Lake: In an historic meeting Premier Dalton McGuinty and Premier Jean Charest spoke to delegates of the Ontario Economic Summit about their ambition to create a stronger economic partnership in Central Canada.

As the final segment of the 5th annual Ontario Economic Summit, an initiative of the Ontario Chamber of Commerce, the Premiers were led in conversation by veteran journalist Allan Gregg.

Amid a backdrop of economic uncertainty, the summit brought together 250 leaders of business, labour, academia, the non-profit sector, and government to identify opportunities for Ontario to build a stronger, more resilient economy.

The Premiers emphasized the need to work collaboratively on major infrastructure projects including the rapid rail link from Quebec City to Windsor.

"A little dose of ambition for Canada would not be a bad thing," emphasized Charest.

Later when speaking with reporters, Premier McGuinty, explained that the rail link would be more than symbolic; it would help to facilitate stronger ties between businesses in the provinces, one weapon in the fight to break down commercial and regulatory barriers.

New trade opportunities for Central Canada with the European Union were also identified by the Premiers as important steps towards economic renewal. This was a common theme during the summit's three days of deliberations. "An increased global profile for Ontario and Canada was repeatedly identified by delegates as an opportunity for future development," explains Len Crispino, President & CEO of the Ontario Chamber of Commerce.

"In spite of the clear transformation we're facing in the Ontario economy," added Crispino, "and the obvious hardships this is creating for communities throughout Ontario, discussions at the summit uncovered many areas of exciting opportunity for the province including trade with non-traditional trading partners like the developing countries in Africa, new and emerging environmental technology and the innovations being developed by Ontario companies, the untapped potential of internationally experienced workers, and similarly the underutilized resource of our aboriginal workforce here in Canada."

On the subject of fair federal transfer payments, an issue raised by the Ontario Chamber of Commerce in its Act Now for Ontario campaign, and echoed in Premier Dalton McGuinty's fairness struggle, Premier Charest didn't oppose Ontario's efforts, despite the fact that Quebec is a recipient of equalization.

"It's not the province of Quebec who's going to fault anyone for defending their province," said Premier Charest. "I happen to do it too."

The Ontario Economic Summit also benefited from the participation of twenty-two Ontario cabinet ministers as well as distinguished speakers including:

- John Tory, Leader of the PC Party of Ontario;
- Robert Shiller, Yale Economics Professor and Author of "Irrational Exuberance" and "The Subprime Solution";
- Stephen Lewis, Advocate on Social Justice;
- Thomas Homer-Dixon, Global Affairs Expert and bestselling author of "The Upside of Down" and "The Ingenuity Gap";
- Tom Jenkins, Executive Chairman and Chief Strategy Officer, Open Text Corporation; and,
- Alexandra Dagg, Executive Vice-President and Canadian Co-Director, UNITE HERE.

The summit took place in Niagara-on-the-Lake from September 30 to October 2, 2008.

For more information, visit www.occ-oes.com.

- 30 -

For more information:

Amy Terrill

(416) 605-8205 (cell), amyterrill@occ.on.ca