

Employer group supports France - Québec Labour agreement

Toronto ON, October 27, 2008. The Canadian Employee Relocation Council (CERC) - Canada's only organization devoted to advancing the interests and issues for workforce mobility - today expressed its support for the recent agreement reached between France and the Province of Québec.

This landmark agreement will remove obstacles in attracting workers who practice regulated professions or trades. It will also provide for the recognition of professional qualifications for individuals.

CERC President Stephen Cryne said, "We are very pleased to see that President Sarkozy and Premier Charest have signed this agreement. It paves the way for a much wider negotiation between Canada and the European Union. If Quebec and France can reach an international agreement of this scope, let's hope that Canada's provincial premiers can use this as a model for an intra-provincial agreement when they meet early in 2009."

The agreement applies to all regulated professions and trades, estimated at over one hundred between Québec and France. It will require each jurisdiction to adopt a common procedure to facilitate and accelerate the recognition of professional qualifications. The agreement will initially cover some thirty trades and professions. The first part of the agreement covering those thirty specific occupations will be signed by December 31, 2009. This will be followed by a broader agreement for all other trades and professions expected to be signed by December 31, 2010.

At the centre of the agreement are mutual recognition arrangements (MRAs) that set out the applicable criteria. Within the next few months it's expected that MRAs will be in place for doctors, bricklayers, engineers, carpenters, pharmacists, heavy equipment operators and veterinarians.

The Canadian Employee Relocation Council (CERC) represents the interests of leading organizations across Canada that relocate their employees for employment purposes.

MEDIA CONTACTS: CERC: Leah Sangster 416 593 9812