

SIGNING OF AN IMPORTANT AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE WORLD CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE FOR DESTINATIONS (CED) AND TOURISME CANTONS-DE-L'EST

QUEBEC, JUNE 3, 2008 – The World Centre of Excellence for Destinations (CED) announced today the signing of an important agreement with Tourisme Cantons-de-l'Est, with the goal of implementing its new System for Measuring Excellence in Destinations (SMED) in this tourist region of Quebec.

The announcement was made during the 2nd edition of the Rendez-vous Champlain sur le tourisme, a symposium on the theme of "Destinations et perspectives de recherche", which is currently underway until June 3 in Quebec City. This agreement was officially confirmed today by the president of Tourisme Cantons-de-l'Est, Ms. Jocelyna Dubuc, and the President of the CED, Mr. André Vallerand, in the presence of the Secretary-General of the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), Mr. Francesco Frangialli.

In implementing its system for measuring excellence in the Cantons-de-l'Est region, the CED aims to assist it in measuring international competition, as well as facilitate the attainment of its objectives in sustainable development. The System for Measuring Excellence in Destinations (SMED) also aims to improve the quality of the experience offered to tourists and to strengthen the geographical character of a region as a tourist destination (environment, culture, aesthetics, heritage, well-being of the residents, etc.) while strategically identifying major issues facing tourist destinations around the world.

"This important agreement with Tourisme Cantons-de-l'Est is the first agreement signed by the CED with a tourist region of Quebec, and it comes just a few weeks after the signing of similar agreements with Mexico City and the Douro Valley, a region of Portugal", noted Mr. Vallerand, president of the CED and guest speaker at Rendez-vous Champlain sur le tourisme symposium. To this day, more than a dozen other destinations have expressed their interest for the SMED and new agreements will be announced shortly. "The fact that such agreements are being made one year earlier than forecast in the CED's business plan is excellent news. This confirms the importance of the existence of the CED in serving international destinations," added Mr. Vallerand.

With its headquarters located in Montréal, the CED began operations in February 2007. The CED has signed partnership agreements with Canada Economic Development for Quebec regions, the *Ministère du Tourisme du Québec* and the *Ministère des Affaires Municipales et des Régions*, and among its objectives is the export of Canadian and Québec expertise in tourism destinations to international markets.

About the CED

The CED is a non-profit organization dedicated to the research and creation of tools to support the development of sustainable tourism for destinations around the world. In performing its mission, the CED executes and further develops the tasks of the Destinations Council and other departments of the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO). It does so by adding value and expertise to the policies and innovative practices concerning tourist destination management. The UNWTO is a specialized agency of the United Nations with 153 member states and some 300 associate members from the tourism industry.

- 30 -

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