

**INTERNATIONAL FORUM ON SOCIAL AND SOLIDARITY ECONOMY:  
PUBLIC AUTHORITIES AND CIVIL SOCIETY  
Montréal (Canada), Palais des congrès, 17-20 October 2011**

The social and solidarity economy refers to collective practices of sustainable development that contribute to building a more just and egalitarian world. It can only grow in a global perspective, by linking economy to society, local to global, labor to investment, and production, consumption and the environment. Enabling public policies and programs are important so that this approach can develop and deliver in its full capacity. Thus, it becomes an engine for development and plays an increasingly important role in meeting needs that are not adequately addressed by the public or private economy. The social economy is one of the responses to the current economic crisis, both for the South and the North.

**Event Objectives**

1. Bring together key players in the social and solidarity economy from countries in the North and South and their partners in government, labor, research organizations and international institutions.
2. Contribute to the strengthening of partnerships between civil society and government committed to the social and solidarity economy in the various participating countries.
3. Highlight the experiences of successful partnership, particularly in the development of public policy.
4. Contribute to the development of exchanges on the theme of the social and solidarity economy, especially between Quebec and other countries or regions.

**Organizers**

The event is organized by the Chantier de l'économie sociale in partnership with the Government of Quebec and the City of Montreal. Several other organizations are collaborating to organize the event. They include FAST (Financial Alliance for Sustainable Trade) and the Centre for Studies and International Cooperation (CECI), RIPESS North America (Intercontinental Network for the Promotion of Social Economy), the Confederation of National Trade Unions (CSN), the Quebec Federation of Labour (FTQ), the Association of Democratic Trade Unions (CSD) and the Canadian for Community Economic Development Network (CCEDNET)

**An International Sponsoring Committee**

Several national and international institutions have already confirmed their willingness to participate in the success of the event. These organizations and others will be invited to be part of an international sponsoring committee. The sponsoring committee will be co-chaired by Mr. Laurent Lessard, Minister, Ministère des affaires municipales et de l'occupation du territoire (MAMROT), Gérald Tremblay, Mayor of Montreal and Nancy Neamtan, CEO of the Chantier de l'économie sociale.

Among the individuals and organizations that have expressed an interest to collaborate are the International Labor Organization (ILO-ACTRAV), UNDP (ART-Universitas), the Director of the State Secretariat for Solidarity Economy, Government of Brazil, Mr. Paul Singer and the Brazilian Forum for Solidarity Economy, the Forum on Social Innovation (OECD, LEED program), the Mexican Cooperative Group (ESMF) and many others.

## Themes

The main theme of the international forum will be: the need for a State - civil society dialogue to develop public policies for the social economy. This theme identifies one of the conditions essential to the development of the social economy and its overall contribution to sustainable development.

This theme includes several issues that are sub-themes of the event:

- **Local and regional development:** the social and solidarity economy is foremost the outcome of collective action at the local level, where the most successful initiatives are locally rooted.
- **Innovation:** the social and solidarity economy calls upon innovation by enterprises in their relations with the market, with government and non-market sectors, in the links between the formal and informal economy, in the selection of evaluation criteria, and in response to needs (housing, child care, etc.).
- **Finance and trade solidarity:** access to capital reflects the realities of the social and solidarity economy as well as access to local markets and to procurement programs, which are major challenges.
- **The world of work:** the creation of stable jobs and the democratization of their management as well as the contribution of unions and workers' pension funds to support the development of the social and solidarity economy are also major issues.
- **Food security:** the question of food security and sovereignty emerges in very different ways in the South and North. But collective production, sustainable production, cycles of production and local consumption is common approaches to assure that all inhabitants of the planet are healthy and have sufficient food.

## Participation

The international meeting will bring together approximately 1,000 participants, actors and promoters of the social and solidarity economy, researchers, funders, NGOs, government officials (municipalities, regions and countries), civil society organizations and social movements from Quebec, Canada and more than 50 countries from the Americas, Africa, Europe and Asia. The event will include conferences, thematic workshops and cultural events. Actors in the social economy of Quebec will propose a variety of possible visits throughout the region and the Montreal area to better understand the reality of Quebec's social economy and to build ties between Quebec and those actors in other countries.

### For More Information:

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