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**Task Force on Tax Assistance for the Resource Regions  
and the New Economy  
The Tour Ends with Meetings in Shawinigan**

Québec, October 12, 2007 – The Task Force on Tax Assistance for the Resource Regions and the New Economy concluded its tour of the regions in Shawinigan, where it received eight companies and organizations. The Task Force now enters the second phase of its work, which will end in December when it submits a report to the government.

**Private meetings**

In the morning, the Task Force met with four companies that receive tax assistance for the resource regions. The four companies said they were in favour of the assistance, in particular pointing out the importance of measures that are predictable over a long enough period and the danger of suddenly ending them before the stipulated date. The companies emphasized the impact of the tax assistance on the labour market in the regions concerned, as the measures have helped people to enter the labour market who so far have been out of work. Criticisms were levelled at how the assistance is calculated according to the number of jobs during a reference year.

**Public hearings**

During the public portion of the day, the Task Force met three organizations dedicated to the region's economic development as well as representatives of the Coalition des régions pour l'entraide économique équitable.

The CRE de la Mauricie, the Société de développement économique de Trois-Rivières and the CLD de Shawinigan supported the application, in Mauricie, of tax assistance for the resource regions, arguing that it is justified by the region's economic situation and the current difficulties in the pulp and paper and the aluminum sectors. The three organizations stressed that the assistance was important to continue diversifying activities and attract investment. They decried the objections raised by central regions.

The Coalition des régions pour l'entraide économique équitable renewed its criticism of tax assistance for the resource regions, pointing to the perverse effects of subsidies used to cut prices and the resulting impoverishment of Québec. The coalition proposed a charter for fair assistance for Québec's regions.

**Initial results of the tour of the regions**

The meeting in Shawinigan marks the end of the Task Force's tour. The Task Force began the tour on September 11 in Val-d'Or and subsequently met with representatives of 125 companies and organizations in nine different regions. It travelled to eleven cities and received 135 briefs. The discussions held and the views presented in the briefs will be thoroughly studied over the coming weeks. They will contribute directly to the Task Force's review.

The full recording of the public hearings is available at: [www.gtaf.gouv.qc.ca](http://www.gtaf.gouv.qc.ca)

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