

**OPENING REMARKS FOR JEAN-
MARC LALONDE**

**PARLIAMENTARY ASSISTANT TO
THE MINISTER OF SMALL BUSINESS
AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP**

OTTAWA SMALL BUSINESS FORUM

FEBRUARY 16, 2007

OTTAWA CONGRESS CENTRE

8:30 A.M.

Check Against Delivery

Good morning, everyone.

Welcome to the 3rd Annual Ottawa Small Business Forum.

I'm pleased to be here on behalf of Harinder Takhar, Minister of Small Business and Entrepreneurship.

It's great to see such a fantastic turnout, with many friendly faces in the crowd.

This forum will help you *"take your businesses to the next level."*

That's very important.

As small business owners, you're the economic drivers of Ontario and the rest of the province counts on your success.

Vous créez des emplois, des investissements et des débouchés pour la main-d'œuvre compétente et dévouée de notre province.

[You create jobs, investments and more opportunities for the talented, dedicated workers of this province.]

Mais, ce n'est pas si facile d'atteindre la prospérité –
[But reaching prosperity isn't easy –]

Il faut travailler dur.
[It's hard work.]

Vous avez besoin d'une formation de pointe et des conseils
qui vous procureront l'avantage compétitif nécessaire pour
agrandir votre entreprise.

*[You need top-of-the-line training and advice that gives you
the competitive edge to grow your business.]*

Today, you'll get the best of both.

You'll learn from experts on how to:

- Do business with government,
- Sell more in less time,
- Build key relationships, and
- How to exceed your goals.

You'll also hear from some renowned speakers.

I know you'll learn a lot from them.

As a government, we're doing our part to help small and medium-size businesses grow and succeed.

We're partnered in 44 Small Business Enterprise Centres and nine satellite offices across the province.

They can provide you with:

- Guidance on licenses, permits and regulations;
- Access to professional expertise through lawyers, accountants and other experienced business mentors;
- Import and export information; and
- Access to many seminars, workshops, and conferences, just like this one, to provide important advice.

This is just a short list of what the centres can do for you.

There are many people in your shoes, hard working entrepreneurs that run small businesses all over Ontario.

C'est pourquoi nous avons travaillé d'arrache-pied avec nos partenaires pour ouvrir un autre bureau satellite de centre d'encadrement des petits entrepreneurs à Parry Sound, le mois dernier.

[That's why we worked hard with our partners to open another Small Business Enterprise Centre Satellite Office in Parry Sound last month.]

Rockland et Waterloo ont accueilli des nouveaux bureaux satellites en 2006.

[And Rockland and Waterloo became home to new satellite offices in 2006.]

Entrepreneurship is booming throughout the province.

And our centres are helping turn people with big ideas into people with successful businesses.

Another resource for your use is the Canada-Ontario Business Service Centre.

Its wealth of information is the "best-kept secret" in the province, so don't hesitate to give it a call.

You can find the centre's number in the government pages of the phone directory.

I'd like to thank the Ottawa Entrepreneurship Centre, the City of Ottawa, and all of the sponsors for hosting this event.

It's a boost for entrepreneurship throughout Eastern Ontario.

We will continue to work together to help businesses become even more innovative, leading edge and successful.

After all, a strong and vibrant business sector in Ontario means a strong and stable economic future for all of us.

Thank you.

Word Count=449