

2^e Conférence des
Chefs de gouvernement des
Régions partenaires

QUÉBEC
9 et 10 décembre 2004



SUMMARY OF DECISIONS

QUÉBEC CITY
DECEMBER 10, 2004

On December 9 and 10, 2004, the minister-president of Bavaria, the prime minister of the Western Cape, the Governor of Upper Austria, the premier of Québec and the governor of Shandong met in Québec City for the Second Conference of Heads of Government of the Partner Regions.

In their discussions, the Partner Regions reaffirmed the significance of the dialogue that has developed between the members, notably with regard to the globalization issues and challenges that they must face. They stressed the great importance for regions from such diverse backgrounds to share the problems they encounter and the policies they each implement. In doing so, they reasserted their willingness to strengthen dialogue over the years to come.

During the Conference, the Heads of government studied the update of the activities carried out after the First Conference in Munich in 2002. They welcomed the conclusions of the workshops held on December 8 and debated these themes: “*Youth: Development of an Emerging Culture*” and “*Economy: Innovation and Technological Development*”. They explored the outlooks and the collaboration options open to the Partner Regions. They also decided where the Third Conference will be held.

This paper summarizes the outcome of these discussions.

UPDATE OF THE ACTIONS TAKEN SINCE THE FIRST CONFERENCE

The minister-president of Bavaria, the host of the first Conference, reminded everyone of the principles adopted by the heads of government in Munich in 2002. They acknowledged the importance of adopting a sustainable development policy in order to bear responsibility toward future generations. They recognized that intercultural dialogue is the best guarantee of world peace and tolerance. They also declared their willingness to develop cooperation within the group of the Partner Regions.

The update showed that the partners generally brought their policies into line with the principles of the Munich Declaration. Moreover, they took advantage of the forums they were offered to promote the sustainable development concept and defend cultural diversity. They noted that a true multilateral cooperation was taking shape within the Partner Regions.

The Heads of government expressed their satisfaction with the results that were obtained. They hope that the coming years will bring an acceleration of the multilateral cooperation.

OUTLOOK AND COLLABORATION OPTIONS

In light of the reports about the two workshops held on December 8, one for youth and the other for innovation and technological development experts, the Heads of government discussed outlooks and explored collaboration options.

Economy: Innovation and Technological Development

Evoking the globalization context that pushes economies more than ever toward excess, performance and modernity,

Observing the increasing importance of innovation as a factor in social and economic progress and the need to convert research findings into industrial and commercial activities,

Emphasizing the mutually profitable advantages of putting researchers and experts from the group of the Partner Regions into contact,

Considering that biotechnology, medical technology and sustainable energy, comprising a balanced energy concept tailored to the needs of the respective regions, are strategic fields,

The Heads of government agree to:

- develop dialogue and cooperation to increase the synergy between their economies in order to be better able to face globalization challenges, notably in the field of research and innovation, key contributors to economic development,
- encourage networking between experts in the mentioned fields within the Partner Regions during large conferences or international congresses,
- create partnerships between research centres to make the most of each person's complementarity,
- facilitate Conference follow-ups regarding information sharing, networking and partnership development.

More specifically, they have decided to:

- explore research-development partnership options regarding the improvement of photovoltaic cell efficiency,
- share their energy efficiency experience,
- identify the bilateral or multilateral cooperation options during the next several months, following the medical technology researchers and experts' networking activities,
- favour the establishment of business connections in the field of biotechnology and health-related technologies through the concerned industries' national associations.

Youth: Development of an Emerging Culture

Establishing that it is up to governments to offer youth a society in which it will find stimulating sources of inspiration to express its creativity and develop its full potential and in which young people will want to fully assume their responsibility as citizens,

Reiterating their willingness to promote understanding between people in different parts of the world and knowing that it is at the youth level that intercultural relationships that are sources of mutual understanding and tolerance must be developed,

Asserting youth's basic role as a factor in evolution, change and society renewal,

The Heads of government have decided to:

- encourage the spread of information about all of the Partner Regions to youth in order to favour better knowledge of their respective culture, increase sharing and give rise to the development of networks,
- work together to develop youth networks using a virtual communication tool that will allow them to share their knowledge, skills and know-how,
- encourage youth encounters in order to be better prepared to face the impact of globalisation,
- continue efforts within their respective entity to favour youth access to the job market,
- encourage youth to get involved in democratic life.

CULTURAL DIVERSITY

The Heads of government have reaffirmed the importance that they attach to a globalization that respects cultural diversity, a source of wealth for humanity. They are satisfied with the progress made since the First Conference with regard to the elaboration of an international cultural diversity protection instrument.

The members congratulated themselves on the fact that UNESCO will elaborate this international legal instrument. They agree to closely monitor the situation's evolution and plan to consult each other on a regular basis in order to influence the file's progress since the deadline is autumn 2005.

EDUCATION

The Heads of government have agreed that a comparative analysis of the education system should be made in order to identify the best practices.

THIRD CONFERENCE

The Heads of government thank the Governor of Upper Austria for inviting them to his country for the Third Conference of Heads of Government of the Partner Regions in the summer of 2006 and enthusiastically accept. They favourably received his proposal to focus this conference on the following themes: education, renewable energy and peace.

Signed in Québec City on December 10, 2004, in German, English, Chinese and French, the four texts are equally authentic.



Edmund Stoiber
Minister President of Bavaria



Ebrahim Rasool
Premier of the Western Cape



Josef Pühringer
Governor of Upper Austria



Jean Charest
Premier of Québec



Han Yuqun
Governor of the province of Shandong