

Beat: Politics

FRENCH PM GABRIEL ATTAL VISITED QUEBEC'S PARLIAMENT & PRIMARY SCHOOL

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USPA NEWS - TALK TO QUEBEC'S INVESTORS & ENTREPRENEURS IN MONTREAL

Prime Minister Gabriel Attal travelled to Ottawa, Quebec and Montreal from Wednesday April 10 to Friday April 12, 2024, accompanied by ministers, parliamentarians and business leaders.

In 2023, France was Canada's third largest merchandise export market in the European Union and its twelfth largest trading partner globally, with bilateral merchandise trade totaling \$12.9 billion.

In 2023, Canadian exports to France reached \$4.3 billion, while imports from France totaled \$8.6 billion.

On this occasion, French PM, Attal, met with the Prime Minister of Quebec, Francois Legault with a view to continuing to strengthen Franco-Quebecois cooperation on major international crises and in economic, energy, environmental, research and civil security matters in particular. The two heads of government, of France and Quebec, participated in an uncanny conversation at the International Chamber of Commerce, of Montreal, on 12 April, evening.

It is very naturally that the French Prime Minister is invited by the Chamber of Commerce of Metropolitan Montreal, in the line of great international leaders with inspiring personalities from all horizons, internationally recognized and whose vision and achievements have changed our world. Thus, Gabriel Attal, aged 35, with great ease, because certainly the youngest of these leaders follows in the footsteps of these predecessors at this series of economic meetings, the 44th President of the United States, Barack Obama, former first lady of the United States Michelle Obama, former Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton, ex-General Electric chairman Jack Welch, Wikipedia founder Jimmy Wales, Apple co-founder Steve Wozniak and co-founder from Twitter Biz Stone.

This economic meeting was organized by the French Chamber of Commerce and Industry in Canada, the Chamber of Commerce of Metropolitan Montreal and the Council on International Relations of Montreal. This 21st Alternating Meeting of Prime Ministers was an opportunity to discuss the close ties that unite Quebec and France. In a global context marked by complex geopolitical and economic issues, the theme therefore had an angle taking into account this troubled context during this exchange laying the foundations for stronger, reinforced collaboration for the years to come between France and the Quebec.

THE ORGANIZERS OF THE 21ST ALTERNATE MEETING OF PRIME MINISTERS

The discussion between the prime ministers was preceded by a panel made up of French and Quebec companies who will discuss the green transition and strategic commercial relations between Quebec and France.

The organizers are

- Francis Repka, President of the French Chamber of Commerce and Industry in Canada
- Michel Leblanc, President and CEO of Chamber of Commerce of Metropolitan Montreal
- Pierre Lemonde, President and CEO, Montreal International Relations Council

FRENCH PM GABRIEL ATTAL & COUNTERPART FRANCOIS LEGAULT TALK TO QUEBEC'S INVESTORS & ENTREPRENEURS AT THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE OF MONTREAL

The Chamber of Commerce of Metropolitan Montreal, the Council on International Relations of Montreal and the French Chamber of Commerce and Industry in Canada welcomed Gabriel Attal, Prime Minister of the French Republic, and François Legault, Prime Minister of Quebec, for a large forum as part of the 21st Alternating Meeting of Prime Ministers on April 11, 2024, evening.

"The Chamber is very pleased to participate in the relaunch of the alternating meetings between the French and Quebec prime ministers. The privileged relationship between Quebec and France is an important vector of economic development, which we must

maintain and stimulate. On both sides of the Atlantic, companies face uncertain contexts, with major geopolitical and economic challenges. I am certain that this discussion will lay the foundations for strengthened collaboration for years to come and will inspire the next generation of our business community as well as the graduate students present for the occasion," declared Michel Leblanc Pdt and CEO of the Chamber of Montreal

PM GABRIEL ATTAL PRAISES FRENCH ECONOMIC REFORMS & INVESTMENT INCENTIVES TO THE CANADIANS

The two prime ministers then went to the International Chamber of Commerce of Quebec, where a debate moderated by a journalist, to allow a political-economic exchange during this conversation, in front of a hundred business leaders, bosses, investors of Quebec. PM Attal took the opportunity to inform of the good economic health of France and took the opportunity of this window of communication to encourage Canadians to invest in France (VAT Tax the reduction of 10 billion in taxes, the reduction of Professional tax at 25% instead of 33%...). For him, it is about strengthening Franco-Quebec relations with priorities in particular increasing our economic relations, linked to the two respective youths, with a particular angle of innovation, via research and development, but also, encouraging start-ups in digital without forgetting the promotion of the French-speaking world.

The message seems to have gotten across regarding the promotion of economic investments between France and Quebec, orchestrated among others by the Minister of Industry, Roland Lescure, as PM Attal has recalled on several occasions.

"Out of sight, close to the heart! It is thanks to you and your companies which are present with €4 Billion Euros of commercial exchanges, between France and Quebec" introduced Gabriel Attal, by way of introduction to his remarks.

"France has improved a lot through profound transformations of the labor market, with a simplification of regulations for industrial and active establishments in formalized France, thanks to Roland Lescure who knows Quebec well." The French Prime Minister, also cites the impetus of President of the Republic Emmanuel Macron elected in 2017 "Training was invested for 300,000 youngsters in 2017, as well as the reduction in taxes for businesses, (Drop from 33% to 25%) at the level of neighboring countries, an VAE tax industry, from €3 Billion instead of €8 Billion, which will soon be lowered even to zero." PM Attal recalls "

When it comes to energetic transition and fighting against climate change, Prime Minister Attal likes to recall the French efforts, in line with the Paris Agreement, "54 Million Euros financed for green hydrogen, decarbonization, and certain Quebec companies, have already involved in France," he explains.

He concludes with a proud comparison with neighboring countries, such as Germany: "Despite inflation and the war in Ukraine, France has resumed better activity than our neighbors, and no recession with 0.5% growth, versus an average of 0.3 in the EU and 0.2% in Germany"

PM FRANCOIS LEGAULT CALLS FOR A WIN/ WIN CO-OPERATION BETWEEN FRENCH & QUEBEC'S BUSINESS

On the Quebec side, Francois Legault seemed to align himself on the same long line with his French counterpart, recalling that the 70% of imports to Quebec from France were very prosperous and that business should increase between the two countries, because "Francophones are less offensive than Anglo-Saxons, in terms of business, and that must change" he claimed, while encouraging investors in his country to become more involved with France, with regard to affinity of culture, of and above all of sharing of language and values.

Regarding the question of raw materials, Francois Legault, the PM of Quebec, thinks that "it is time to dare with regard to China" because "seventy (70%) of our exports go to the USA , but we must ensure protectionism" He gives as an example "Green Aluminum has a certain cost which must be paid by companies, and that is fair"

While his French counterpart Attal thinks that protection is a very good lever to increase our production, as part of the energy transition, for example for mid-sized companies and SMEs.

we must also look at the geopolitic evolution of the world as a call to secure our value and resilience chain with reliable and allied partners,

He then concludes that "Quebec is a perfect partner with signed agreements between us with each value chain where we must be

sovereign and not be dependent, especially in R&D"

Quebec's PM Legault, adds as he refers to his counterpart by quoting him "Gabriel said that he makes Quebec the gateway for French companies to the United States like France, so that it is the gateway from Quebec to the European Union It's Win/Win.

To finish PM Attal, as an invitation to come invest in France, announces that in mid May the CHOOSE FRANCE annual summit for investment in France will take place, CGI collects the proceeds

As for Francois Legault, PM of Quebec, he announced that in Newfoundland certain projects will take place as well as other projects with green electricity to great advantage. "The energy transition must go through collective transport." he insists "Concerning GHGs per habitat, in the 360 provinces, Quebec is among the best, France is also a leader, so we must work together" concludes Francois Legault, the Prime Minister of Quebec.../ Reported from Quebec, our correspondent Rahma Rachdi, on ground on site (Handy-reporter)

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