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**The Government of Québec grants one million dollars
to the 9th Montréal High Lights Festival**

Montréal, February 21, 2008 – On the occasion of the opening of the 9th Montréal High Lights Festival, the Minister of Economic Development, Innovation and Export Trade, Minister of Tourism and Minister responsible for the Montréal region, Mr. Raymond Bachand, officially announced a total of one million dollars in government assistance to the event.

A major international event with considerable tourism, cultural and economic spin-offs, the Montréal High Lights Festival offers many activities from February 21 to March 2. Like the previous editions, the 2008 edition proposes a rich and varied program, putting the spotlight mainly on the performing and culinary arts.

"The Government of Québec congratulates the Organizing Committee of the Montréal High Lights Festival, which invites tourists from here and elsewhere each year to enjoy a singular tourism and cultural experience in the heart of the metropolis, thus positioning Québec as a winter destination not to be missed," Minister Bachand pointed out.

"The Montréal High Lights Festival dazzlingly confirms the reputation of Greater Montréal beyond our borders as a festive and inviting city. I invite festival goers to turn out en masse for this highly colourful event," declared the Deputy Premier and Minister of Municipal Affairs and Regions, Ms. Nathalie Normandeau.

"This major international event highlights a multitude of cultural activities, while reserving a choice place for song, dance, music and various artistic styles. This is also an ideal time for the entire family to take advantage of Old Montréal's historical riches," concluded the Minister of Culture, Communications and the Status of Women, Ms. Christine St-Pierre.

The government contribution breaks down as follows: \$500,000 from the *Tourism Development and Promotion Support Program* – Financial Assistance to Festivals and Events, of the Ministère du Tourisme; \$450,000 from the *Fonds de développement de la métropole* (Greater Montréal Development Fund) of the Ministère des Affaires municipales et des Régions; \$30,000 from the *Aide aux projets* program of the Ministère de la Culture, des Communications et de la Condition féminine; \$20,000 from the *Diffusion en variétés* program of the Société de développement des entreprises culturelles.

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Sources:

Manuela Goya
Press Attaché
Office of the Minister of
Economic Development,
Innovation and Export Trade
and Minister of Tourism
418 691-5650
514 499-2552

Jonathan Trudeau
Press Attaché
Office of the Deputy Premier
and Minister of Municipal
Affairs and Regions
418 691-2050
514 873-2622

Marie-Hélène Paradis
Press Attaché
Office of the Minister of Culture,
Communications and the Status
of Women
418 380-2310

