

Financial Services Leadership Council to work with three levels of government to promote employment

TORONTO, November 23, 2009 – Chief executive officers from a cross-section of Ontario’s financial services industry gathered today to form a “Financial Services Leadership Council” to guide implementation of a strategy designed to raise Toronto’s status as a global financial services hub. Creation of the Council was recommended in a report issued last week by the Toronto Financial Services Working Group.

The Council held its inaugural meeting today with Ontario Premier Dalton McGuinty, federal Finance Minister Jim Flaherty, provincial Finance Minister Dwight Duncan and City of Toronto Mayor David Miller. They discussed the working group report, entitled “Partnership and Action: Mobilizing Toronto’s Financial Centre for Global Advantage,” which was prepared for them by Boston Consulting Group, and expressed their support for its goal of growing Toronto Region to become one of the two leading financial clusters in North America and one of the top ten global hubs.

[For a copy of the report, please visit the Toronto Financial Services Alliance website at www.tfsa.ca.]

The Council also selected former Manulife CEO Dominic D’Alessandro to chair the Council. In this capacity – an unpaid position – Mr. D’Alessandro will preside over meetings and act, from time to time, as a liaison with the three levels of government on Council matters.

Mr. D’Alessandro, who was unable to attend today’s meeting, said, in a statement, that he was pleased to take on the new role. “Enhancing the region’s financial services sector represents an unprecedented economic opportunity for our city, our province, indeed, our country,” he said. “I look forward to the Financial Services Leadership Council’s role in seizing this opportunity, and enhancing our position as a leading financial centre.”

The Partnership and Action report discussed at today’s meeting identifies four priority opportunities that have the potential to drive a projected incremental 25,000-40,000 jobs and \$4 billion - \$5 billion in annual GDP over a five-year time horizon. A common theme is building world-class hubs of expertise or activity. The priorities are:

- Establishing a global institute for risk management.
- Entrenching Canada’s position as the leading global hub for mining, metals, and energy financing and trading.
- Becoming a global leader in retirement financing solutions.
- Growing skilled financial services activity clusters, eg. fund administration, advanced, technology functions, legal, accounting, actuarial, customer service, credit adjudication.

The Council will take steps to flesh out these priorities and develop a plan to move forward on the proposals.

“Toronto is already home to the world’s strongest and most stable financial sector,” said Mr. D’Alessandro. “Our aim is to capitalize on this position of strength, and in turn, attract new investments and generate many more good paying jobs to the region.”

The Council applauded the Government of Ontario’s announcement, at the meeting, that it will invest \$1 million in the Council’s plans. Additional funding partners are expected to participate as the strategy is fleshed out.

“Momentum is on our side,” said Mr. D’Alessandro. “We already have a dynamic and diverse sector. There’s incredible support from all three levels of government, and across our industry. We have a strategy in place, and the determination to move this initiative forward.”

History of the initiative

The process was launched after discussions between Ontario Finance Minister Dwight Duncan and a group of financial CEOs. The Toronto Financial Services Working Group was created, co-chaired by Janet Ecker (President of the Toronto Financial Services Alliance) and Don Drummond (Chief Economist, TD Bank Financial Group). The Working Group engaged the team at Boston Consulting Group, who co-invested their own resources in a project they consider crucial to Toronto’s success, conducted research around the world, and consulted with leaders from across the industry to develop the recommendations set out in the report. One of the recommendations was to create a leadership council. In a show of unprecedented unity of purpose, chief executive officers representing the breadth and depth of Canada’s financial services industry – banks, insurance companies, securities firms, pension funds, investment managers, stock exchanges – agreed to participate on the council, which held its inaugural meeting today.

In the introduction to the Partnership and Action report, co-chairs Janet Ecker and Don Drummond write:

“There will be those who question the wisdom of governments expending effort on a sector that is not struggling. With so many sectors of our economy in trouble, why focus on our banks and insurance companies, our securities and investment firms? But that is precisely why we should. They have weathered the storm. They have proven their value to our economy in a time of need. When other sectors are shrinking, they are able to grow. If we expect to sustain future economic growth and the quality of life that flows from it, if we want to be able to replace the employment we are losing, then it is a trend that needs to be accelerated, not taken for granted.”

Confirmed Private Sector Members of the Financial Services Leadership Council

Chair: Domenic D'Alessandro
(formerly of Manulife Financial)

Charles Brindamour
(Intact Financial)

Ed Clark
(TD Bank Financial Group)

David Denison
(CPP Investment Board)

William Downe
(BMO Financial Group)

Blake Goldring
(AGF Management Limited)

Jim Leech
(Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan)

Thomas Kloet
(TMX Group)

Gerald McCaughey
(CIBC)

Gordon Nixon
(RBC)

Michael Nobrega
(OMERS - Ontario Municipal Employees Retirement System)

Charles Sims
(Mackenzie Financial)

Robin Spencer
(Aviva Canada)

Donald Stewart
(Sun Life Financial)

Richard Waugh
(Scotiabank)