



"Canadian Business Does Not Understand Brazil"

by Almeiri Santos, RealTrade Magazine

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Even the Canadian ambassador to Brazil, Paul Hunt, agrees it is time for Canada and Brazil to know each other better. He made the statement saying that unfortunately Canadian business does not know Brazil and therefore does not properly utilize the available opportunities. Similarly, Brazilians know little about Canada.

"Canada ignores the modern Brazil and still think it is only a place of beautiful beaches, Amazon and security problems. This is a shame for Canadians and it is time to change this vision." According to the Ambassador, the challenge is "how to move Canadians beyond samba and beach".



Canadian Ambassador to Brazil, Paul Hunt in conversation with Rafael Benke, Vice President Corporate Affairs and International Relations of Vale Inco

Hunt will be in Canada for two weeks and will be traveling together with Ambassador Paulo Cordeiro of Brazil to the west of Canada in meetings with different sectors of industry offering information to help Canadians understand what a great partner Brazil is.

"Canada needs to understand Brazil and see where this bilateral relationship can get" said the Canadian diplomat in a meeting organized by DFAIT - Ontario Region and the Brazil-Canada Chamber of Commerce (BCCC), last Friday in Toronto.

However, the recent visits of representatives of the Government of Canada to Brazil such as Minister Stockwell Day and Minister Lawrence Cannon among others, resulted in more relevant information about Brazil in Ottawa, said Hunt who also mentioned the strategy of the EDC (Export Development Canada) to help Canadian and Brazilian business to work together.

According to the ambassador, Brazil is not interested in short term contracts and big bets are in investments long-term, joint ventures, and co-investments especially in areas of developing technologies.



Paul Hunt - Canadian Ambassador to Brazil; Eduardo Klurfan - Chairman of BCCC and Ambassador Américo Dyott Fontenelle - The General Consul for Brazil in Toronto

Hunt also talked about the possibilities in the area of military defense and affirmed that "partnerships in this area will bring confidence to the bilateral relationship".

The postponement of the visit of President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva to Canada (the visit that was scheduled for last year had to be postponed due to the Canadian Federal election) is not seen as something negative by the ambassador. "That caused no problem. The only thing is that it is harder to find a new opportunity in the agendas of President Lula and our Prime Minister Stephen Harper. We are hoping that the official visit of the President of Brazil to Canada might happen in the coming months".

On the situation of the Brazilian economy before the international financial crisis, Hunt said "Brazil is in very good shape and relatively stable for investment."

The Canadian ambassador said it is also very important to understand the differences in the various areas where business can flow within this trade relationship. "It is not one size fits all." He said that two points are important in the current scenario: "First, we are in a pretty good space. Difficulties are gone (relating to Embraer x Bombardier) and Second: the business relationship between these two countries has quality."