



**MEDIA RELEASE**  
**February 18, 2010**

## **Ontario Centres of Excellence (OCE) Signs Agreement With World-leaders in Optical Technologies**

### ***Memorandum of Agreement sets stage for Ontario Photonics Research to Build on Commercial Success***

**Toronto – February 18, 2010** - Ontario's recognized expertise in the field of photonics has been given a major shot in the arm with the signing of an agreement between Ontario Centres of Excellence (OCE) and OptoNet, a German-based cluster that is a world leader in optical technology.

The Memorandum of Agreement links OCE's Centre of Excellence for Photonics with OptoNet, a cluster of 92 companies that includes leading research and educational organizations, investment companies and public institutions based in Germany's Thuringia region. The one-year agreement was signed at the opening of a workshop on solar /greentech and medical technology trends at Toronto's Fairmont Royal York Hotel.

Under the terms of the agreement the two parties will work collaboratively to strengthen technological and industrial development in the optical technology sector. The agreement also provides for:

#### Strengthening of industrial and business cooperation:

- exchange of information on opportunities for cooperation between companies with the aim of acquiring access to new markets,
- organization of trade missions and hosting of Ontario, Canadian and German delegations,
- benchmarking between Ontario, Canadian and German companies;

#### Support of joint R&D activities:

- cooperation in scientific and technological research between research centres with special focus on healthcare, information and laser technologies,
- exchanges within the framework of joint R&D projects initiated by each of the partners;

#### Collaboration with regard to providing training for students:

- exchange of information on the types of training in photonics, mainly focused on key fields such as micro-optics, image processing, lasers or optical fibers,
- encouragement of exchanges – students, academic staff, researchers, post-doctoral fellows – by leveraging organizations that provide grants;

#### Vivid exchange of information:

- analysis of competences and fields of cooperation,
- exchange of information for technological and business intelligence.

OCE will also work with the Ontario Photonics Industry Network (OPIN) on many of the initiatives contained in the memorandum of Agreement.

Photonics already bring remarkable advances to laser surgeries that limit bleeding and speed recovery. Laser eye surgery is now commonplace while laser-based dentistry is replacing the fear and pain associated with high speed drills. Photonics technology is also being used in the field of geonomics to diagnose medical conditions faster and save lives.

“This agreement has tremendous potential for the thriving Ontario photonics industry,” said David Choat, OCE’s Interim President and CEO. “With photonics playing an ever-increasing role in areas such as health care the future of the industry is promising.”

“On behalf of Thuringia and OptoNet we are pleased to be part of this international collaboration with Ontario Centres of Excellence in this very exciting field,” said Matthias Machnig, Minister of Economy, Labour and Technology, Free State of Thuringia. “There is no doubt that this collaboration will lead to new jobs and opportunities for both Thuringia and Ontario.”

“Many experts believe that photonics will be to the 21<sup>st</sup> century what electronics were to the 20<sup>th</sup>,” said John Milloy, Ontario’s Minister of Research and Innovation. “Ontario is already recognized as a leader in the field, and our most talented researchers are ready to bring their work to the world stage. This agreement with Germany’s Thuringia region will help Ontario companies tap into a global market estimated to grow to \$800 million over the next two years.”



Ontario Centres of Excellence (OCE) Interim President and CEO, David Choat (seated left) signs a Memorandum of Agreement with OptoNet representative, Dr. Ulrich Simon at Toronto’s Fairmont Royal York Hotel on February 18, 2010. Standing are Tony Rockingham, the Assistant Deputy Minister of the Ministry of Research and Innovation (left) and Matthias Machnig, the Minister of Economy, Labour and Technology, Free State of Thuringia.



(L-R) Ontario Centres of Excellence (OCE) Interim President and CEO, David Choat; Tony Rockingham, the Assistant Deputy Minister of the Ministry of Research and Innovation; Matthias Machnig, the Minister of Economy, Labour and Technology, Free State of Thuringia; and Dr. Ulrich Simon, OptoNet representative.

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**About Ontario Centres of Excellence (OCE) Inc. ([www.oce-ontario.org](http://www.oce-ontario.org))**

Ontario Centres of Excellence (OCE) Inc. drives the commercialization of cutting-edge research across key market sectors to build the economy of tomorrow and secure Ontario's global competitiveness. In doing this, OCE fosters the training and development of the next generation of innovators and entrepreneurs and is a key partner with Ontario's industry, universities, colleges, research hospitals, investors and governments. OCE's Centres work in communications and information technology, earth and environmental technologies, energy, materials and manufacturing and photonics. OCE is funded by the government of Ontario and is a key partner in delivering Ontario's Innovation Agenda. OCE through its Centre for Commercialization of Research (CCR), an initiative supported by the federal government, also acts as a catalyst which allows innovative businesses to grow and achieve sustainable, commercial success and global competitiveness.