News release

For immediate release

"Training for Better Newcomer Integration" Cogeco and Centraide of Greater Montreal pool their efforts to support the integration of Syrian refugees

Montreal, February 22, 2016 – Cogeco and Centraide of Greater Montreal are pleased to announce the introduction of *Training for Better Newcomer Integration*, an innovative and transformational project to help foster the successful integration of Syrian refugees in their host country. Cogeco will invest $500,000 over five years to develop and implement a training and consulting program designed to help community and institutional stakeholders equip the many front-line workers involved in refugee integration with the tools they need to meet this challenge.

The ultimate goal of this project is to ensure that, over the next five years, Syrian refugees will integrate successfully into our community and contribute fully to its social and economic vitality. It should be noted that this project allows for a certain level of innovation in an area where too few resources are invested in relation to the magnitude of the needs and challenges faced, while also making a real difference in the lives of the refugees.

To achieve the project's goal, the front-line personnel working with Syrian refugee families must be well trained and equipped, as they will be required to deal with situations that can be complex. As well as understanding the hurdles facing the refugees, personnel will need to adapt their interventions to the new realities in which the refugee families find themselves. These local collaborators will have to meet a broad spectrum of needs, ranging from the immediate (food, housing, health care, etc.) to the medium and long term, in order to effectively support the refugee families throughout their social and economic integration into their host community (French language courses, job readiness training, education, psychological support, etc.).

The *Training for Better Newcomer Integration* project has a component specifically tailored to citizen volunteers involved in welcoming and integrating refugees. This component will develop and implement targeted training and awareness activities aimed at creating welcoming neighbourhoods. It will have a snowball effect in the community and enhance the effectiveness of refugee welcome and integration practices.

"Cogeco is especially proud to actively contribute to the establishment of this innovative initiative," said Louis Audet, President and Chief Executive Officer of Cogeco Inc. and Cogeco Communications Inc. "Thanks to Centraide of Greater Montreal and its in-depth knowledge of the community sector, we are firmly convinced that this program will have a real positive impact, not only on the Syrian refugees, but also on the people who will welcome them. Our five-year pledge demonstrates our clear commitment to support, today and in the years to come, the integration of newcomers into Quebec society. Overall, this initiative will have a lasting positive effect and it is an excellent way for Cogeco, as well as for other companies that may wish to join us, to foster the development of our community."

"We are very pleased to be able to count on the genuine commitment of a partner like Cogeco to develop this project," added Lili-Anna Pereša, President and Executive Director of Centraide of Greater Montreal. "We sincerely hope that this partnership will serve as an inspiration to the business community, and that other volunteers will join our effort. This initiative is the first in a series of measures that will be put in place to support the refugees' integration. No less than 71 agencies in Centraide's network provide support on a daily basis to refugees and immigrants in the Greater Montreal area. Nine of these agencies have the specific expertise to offer front-line services to newcomers: their work is well underway, and for the past several months they have been busily supporting Syrian refugees in their efforts to integrate successfully."

The tools developed under this initiative will be offered to the agencies supported by Centraide across Quebec as well as to the agencies supported by United Way in Ontario, which will also help to facilitate the integration of Syrian

refugees.

About Cogeco Inc.

Cogeco Inc. is a diversified holding corporation which operates in the communications and media sectors. Through its Cogeco Communications Inc. subsidiary, Cogeco provides its residential and business customers with video, Internet and telephony services through its two-way broadband fibre networks. Cogeco Communications Inc. operates in Canada under the Cogeco Connexion name in Québec and Ontario, and in the United States under the Atlantic Broadband name in western Pennsylvania, south Florida, Maryland / Delaware, South Carolina and eastern Connecticut. Through Cogeco Peer 1, Cogeco Communications Inc. provides its business customers with a suite of information technology services (colocation, network connectivity, managed hosting, cloud services and managed IT services), through its 21 data centres, extensive FastFiber NetworkTM and more than 50 points-of-presence in North America and Europe. Through its subsidiary Cogeco Media, Cogeco owns and operates 13 radio stations across most of Québec with complementary radio formats serving a wide range of audiences as well as Cogeco News, its news agency. Cogeco's subordinate voting shares are listed on the Toronto Stock Exchange (TSX: CGO). The subordinate voting shares of Cogeco Communications Inc. are also listed on the Toronto Stock Exchange (TSX: CCA).

About Centraide

Centraide of Greater Montreal is an independent organization managed by a board of directors that is representative of the community. It serves Laval, Montreal and the South Shore. About 57,000 volunteers are involved in the some 350 agencies supported by Centraide, and another 22,000 work on its annual campaign. Centraide is supported by some 1,600 private and public corporations and organizations as well as by large trade unions. To learn more: www.centraide-mtl.org. In Quebec, there are 18 Centraides that between them support 1,800 community agencies and projects which in turn offer help and comfort to 1.3 million vulnerable people.

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