

Beat: Business

## PRO-COLOMBIA, Three Day-Forum of Business Matchmaking in PARIS

### Carreau du Temple From October 24 to 26

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**USPA NEWS** - From October 24 to 26, 2017, 150 Colombian Exporting Companies participated in a Work Day of Private Commercial Meetings (24) and Two Days of Business Forum (25 and 26). Most of the Companies were Small and Medium and coming from the regions of Bogota, Antioquia, the Coffee Triangle, Valle del Cauca, Norte de Santander, Atlantico, Santander and Bolivar....

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These Companies met 150 European Buyers (France, Sweden, Belgium, Spain, Italy, Portugal, Germany, Netherlands, Switzerland, United Kingdom, Finland, Norway), as well as Asian Buyers from Countries like China, South Korea and Japan. The Others were from Russia and Turkey. Most of the Buyers were coming from France.

- The Products and Services represented were from the following Fields :

- \* Agri-foods: Flowers, fruit, sugar, beverages, coffee by-products, cocoa, confectionery, snacks, processed fruit and aromatic herbs.
- \* Fashion: jewelry and costume jewelry, underwear, bathing suits, shapewear, homeware, casual outerwear and sports apparel.
- \* Industry 4.0: animation, videogames, creative industries and audiovisual production
- \* Metalworking: handicraft and workwear.
- \* Chemicals: natural ingredients, cosmetics, cleaning household products, pharmaceutical products and nutraceuticals.

- The 2017 Edition of France-Colombia Year, whose main aim is to strengthen already Booming Bilateral Relations, was officially launched via a Key Event in Bogota, on December 16-23, 2016. The Presidents of both Countries decided to organize a 2017 France-Colombia Year on January 25, 2015. This Year also aims to lend a Hand to the deep-rooted Transformation undergone by Colombia in its Peace process with the FARC's, and in its Effort to grow at the International Level.

From October 28, 2017 to November 1, 2017, at Paris Expo (Porte de Versailles Paris) is held "Salon du Chocolat" with a special focus on Colombian cocoa.

- For France in Colombia Season (December 16, 2016 to July 14, 2017), Several Major Events are presented to Colombian Spectators :

- \* France as special Guest at the Cartagena Music Festival, International Book Fair of Bogota and Fotografica Biennale of Bogota.
- \* French Seasons at the Teatro Mayor and the Teatro Colon of Bogota; a Welcome to France in Bogota fair (attracting Academia and the Worlds of the Economy and Tourism).
- \* A Grand Exhibit at the CNAP at the Banco de la Republica of Bogota.
- \* A Major Program for Artists in Residence as well as "Les Assises du Français" (French-Language Educators Symposium) in Colombia.

- Governments of France and Colombia signed agreements and strengthen bilateral relations : In 2015, a total of 12 Agreements on Different Issues signed the Governments of France and Colombia during the Official Visit of Prime Minister Manuel Valls, which strengthens and reinforces the Bilateral Relationship. One of the Documents was the Double Taxation Agreement that provides Security and Stability to Entrepreneurs from both Countries, which, and as said by President Juan Manuel Santos, is expected to give a Boost to the Investment made by Entrepreneurs from both Countries.

- Why invest in Colombia ?

Colombia has one of the most outstanding Macroeconomic Performances within the Region. The stability and continuity of Government Policies and Independence of its Economic Bodies guarantees an Ideal Environment for investing. Additionally, and not less relevant, the Country is Strategically Located with Access to the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. Colombia has different International Commercial Agreements that allow Preferential Access to more than 45 Countries and approximately 1,500 million Consumers around the World. Qualified Labor in the Country exceeds that of Countries such as Brazil, Chile, Peru, Argentina and Venezuela, according to the IMD ranking for 2014.

Colombia is a Country with a Strategic Geographic Location. Its ports, both in the Caribbean and the Pacific Oceans, allow for the best position in South America as a dispatch center for Central America, North America and Europe. It has land borders with Venezuela, Peru, Ecuador, Brazil and Panama. The country is made up of Five Areas, characterized by their Culture, Art, Folklore, Gastronomy and Music. Each Region is Unique; however, the Country has a Sole National Identity and Territorial Integration through Land, River and Air Routes.

The Five Regions are :

- \* Andean Region
- \* Caribbean Region
- \* Pacific Region
- \* Eastern Region
- \* South-Eastern or Eastern Plains Region

This continuous improvement to Investment Conditions is complemented by a Good Business Environment. According to the Doing Business 2014 Report from the World Bank, Colombia is ranks Sixth in the World and first in Latin America in Protection to Investors. Additionally, this ranking places the Country Third as the "Friendliest" Destination for doing Business in the Region.

The Country has considered External Markets as a Primary Factor for Development and Growth of Exports and as a Result, it has a Promotion Policy by means of Financial Instruments, Market Intelligence and Incentivizing Competitiveness. Exports of the Agricultural and Food and Beverages Sectors represent 19% of the Total, while Manufacturing represents 23% and Oil and the Extractive Industries amount for 54%.

Photo cover : H.E.Federico Alonso Renjifo Velez Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Colombia in France and Juliana VILLEGAS Vice President Pro Colombia

Source : European Business matchmaking Forum @ Carreau du Temple (Paris, France), from October 24 to 26, 2017

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