Dear Brazilian colleagues,
Distinguished guests and participants,
Dear friends,

To begin, let me thank and congratulate the organizers of this conference for the quality of the event and the relevance of the workshops’ themes.

In my presentation, I will emphasize the importance of a different vision for the internationalization of universities. A vision that differs from what we usually hear in academic and government spheres, especially — but not exclusively — in the Northern countries.

Why speak of a «new» way to conceive internationalization of universities?

Because the current discussion about internationalization raises questions about the role and the mission of universities. In North America and Europe, governments are exerting a lot of pressure on universities — sometimes subtly sometimes not so subtly — to step up their efforts to recruit students abroad. Why? Because in the context of an aging population, the contribution of these students has become invaluable: they inject billions of dollars (or euros) into their host countries’ economies and they represent a source of precious skilled workers.
This conception of internationalization raises several issues about the role of universities. It forces them to compete fiercely against one another, using various means and strategies to obtain their “market share” of foreign students.

But what is the role of universities? Is it to meet the new requirements of the global economy? Is it to use internationalization in order to compensate for their lack of funding? I truly believe the response is "no". The role of universities is rather to work together to create robust networks, based on the convergence and complementarity of expertise, with the goal of sharing and developing a culture of knowledge across the globe.

Such a vision leads to three conclusions:

- First, internationalization is a tool (and not an end in itself) that allows the 21st century universities to better fulfill their mission.

  Indeed, in 21st century, we cannot achieve the highest standards of quality in research and training without student and faculty exchanges, as well as joint programs.

- Secondly, as a tool, the process of internationalization must be subordinate to the development plans of the universities and not the contrary. In this way, we can associate with partners on the basis of shared values while maintaining our own identity.

- Finally, in terms of strategy, this means that success is based on two essential ingredients:

  - Projects must originate from the base (i.e. professors and their students).

  - The overall strategy must result from the large-scale integration of those projects and not from external demands for increase revenue.
Put in another way, promoting an open world to students; developing and supporting research collaborations among professors; stimulating exchange and sharing expertise to advance knowledge; benefiting from the best practices developed by different institutions in various educational and research fields; encouraging comparative analyses to better understand the scientific, social and environmental issues that confront us; these are the true measures of the value of internationalization.

One word sums up these practices. This word is “collaboration” not competition. My university, UQAM, has a long tradition of collaboration: in the development of its curricula, in its research projects and dissemination activities, in its popularization of science, and even in its modes of governance founded on collegiality and participation. Consequently, UQAM has approached internationalization in this different way, as evidenced in its collaboration with Brazil. But before delving into specific examples, let me briefly introduce you to my university, the Université du Quebec à Montreal, commonly known as UQAM.

**UQAM, a Latin American University**

I’d like to emphasize that even if UQAM is located in a northern climate (we even had a few snowflakes last week in Montreal) my university is in essence a Latin American university. In a world dominated by Anglo-Saxon culture, our university is committed to advance "science in French". We are Latin, not only because of the language, but also in our hearts. Our winters are cold, but we are very warm and welcoming. As proof, each year we welcome nearly 42,000 students, including more than 3,000 students from 86 countries across the world.

Since UQAM’s creation in 1969, more than 225,000 graduates have allowed the university to shine on the local, national and international stage through their contributions. While the numbers speak for themselves, they do not illustrate what makes UQAM unique: our dynamic campus life; the dedication and availability of our professors; the innovative approach of our researchers; our close ties with the community including cultural groups, the business community and public and non-public agencies; our desire to ensure
the transfer of knowledge; and finally, the energy, boldness and commitment demonstrated by the new generation of students.

**But what about UQAM and Brazil?**

Many of those characteristics are shared with Brazilian universities. Moreover, our universities have similar concerns with regard to major social, cultural and environmental issues. These are areas that give rise to research, training and collaborative projects.

Recent years have also been marked by the accelerated development of collaborative relationships between UQAM and Brazilian universities. As proof, fully one third (35) of the 110 cooperation agreements between Canadian and Brazilian universities involve my university, UQAM, with partners such as the University of Sao Paulo and the Federal Universities of Rio de Janeiro, Santa Catarina or Rio Grande do Sul, to name a few.

For over 30 years, UQAM have been collaborating with Brazilian colleagues in a variety of areas: environment, urban management, violence prevention, human rights, but also literature and identity, women's studies, community development, social economy, and many others. To provide a complete list is impossible, but for the sake of argument, I have selected two examples that show how internationalization practices that are based on collaboration and on the interests of researchers prove to be more effective than those practices arising from outside interests.

**Two exemplary collaborations**

UQAMAZONE is an example of collaborative research whose very duration is testimony to its success. Since 1994, this project has brought together researchers in environmental sciences from UQAM and researchers from Brazil who focus on an environmental approach to human health. The research, conducted in the Brazilian Amazon, has identified the sources of mercury in the Tapajos region, how it circulates in the environment and how it comes into contact with the inhabitants, creating various health problems. Approximately 500 participants from 12 communities participated in the study.
Based on a participatory approach, the project has brought about new practices and habits, both in diet and in agricultural techniques. In 2007, a new project was launched in order to tackle chronic mercury exposure and the transmission of Chagas’ disease that affects small farming communities in the Amazon.

UQAMAZONE has given rise to several student exchanges, the establishment of a multidisciplinary doctoral course, internships in the Amazon, several joint publications in English, French and Portuguese, as well as numerous dissertations and theses. And this is without mentioning the benefits generated by the project to the local populations, particularly in terms of human and environmental health.

The Amazon is not the only focus of our researchers; urban centres are also of great interest. In 2006, during an event organized by the Agence universitaire de la francophonie (AUF), a professor of Urban and Tourism studies at UQAM, Luc-Normand Tellier, met a professor from the Institute of Urban and Regional Planning at the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro, Carlos Veiner. This was the beginning of a productive collaboration. Five years later, an excellent regional research centre in urban planning, funded by the AUF, was created. Researchers from Quebec and Brazil, as well as Argentina, Mexico and Colombia participate in this vast network. Their goal? To promote a comparative analysis of urban centres on a variety of topics, such as housing, urban conflicts, social movements, governance and inequality.

Since then, the centre has been responsible for several activities including, among others, an important conference in Rio de Janeiro, an international seminar in Montreal, a collective work, several scientific articles, student exchanges and a course trip to Rio de Janeiro that will focus on major worksites in preparation for the 2014 World Cup and the 2016 Olympics. In addition to these scientific impacts, this collaborative network has also had significant practical benefits in order to rethink and humanize the city.

**Internationalization and the Open Access Movement**

I announced in the title of my talk that I would discuss two innovative initiatives. I have talked of a new vision of internationalization through
collaborative research. Now I would like to discuss another strategy that also appears as a promising initiative, that is open archives and open resources, better known as the "open access" movement.

Like many others, I am convinced that knowledge that does not circulate freely is wasted knowledge. As many others, I think that the results of research must be disseminated as widely as possible while respecting linguistic pluralism; like many others, I hope that the results of researches from my university can reach the entire world, but also, that my community has access to knowledge produced by researchers from around the world; as many others, I believe universities have a major role to play in encouraging knowledge sharing, and an excellent way to achieve this is through the promotion of open access.

When I was Dean of the Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities, I worked for my institution to sign the Berlin Declaration on Open Access to Knowledge. Then, with colleagues, we ensured that our university adopted an open electronic archive where all researchers can submit their articles and other scientific publications. Now, as UQAM’s Rector, I would like to see these practices become widespread, not only at my university, but across the entire scientific community.

The benefits of an institutional repository are numerous. Authors can have access to recent publications of their colleagues and benefit from a directory that includes all their contributions; they can have access to the consultation statistics for their work and they can receive international exposure. For the University, it’s an opportunity to appreciate the magnitude of the contributions of its community, in addition to receiving global visibility. For the rest of the world, it means free and open access to knowledge stemming from academic research. Producing, distributing, sharing, and preserving knowledge; removing barriers that hinder scientific exchange and impede the circulation of knowledge: this is the very heart of the academic mission.

In a context where universities are faced with shrinking budgets and skyrocketing subscription costs to scientific journals, institutions should be more sensitive to the potential of open access initiatives. And though these economic incentives are a good reason to switch to open access, other
ethical, philosophical and scientific factors should lead universities to adopt these new practices.

My profound conviction is that knowledge should not be treated as an ordinary commodity but as a valuable common good. In other words, we need to consider the results of university research as an integral part of the human heritage.

**In conclusion**

The vision proposed here is that of an academic network that operates in open collaboration, providing the best means for all people to play an active role in the innovative and democratic society of the 21st century.

What we need are policies and programs that clearly build on the internal educational and scientific dynamics of universities and not on the so often temporary external factors that define the university’s “market”.

Because research and education projects stem from the collaboration among researchers, we need national policies that support institutions in the concerted development of their strengths.

Indeed, history shows that the most innovative and inventive actions would never have happened if professors, students and citizens together had not asked themselves how to solve problems. The same can be said for institutions that can better support their members if they are involved in a collaborative network that promotes open research.

Of course, choosing collaboration still presents some risks because it involves working in a network and trusting many partners. However, where there are risks, there are also opportunities and by working in collaboration, we divide the risks and multiply the opportunities.

**Merci. Thank you. Obrigado.**

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