



# State of New Mexico

## *Office of the Governor*

**Bill Richardson**  
Governor

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### **Governor Bill Richardson Secures European Support To Increase Trade & Tourism With New Mexico**

**Governor continues historic trade mission to Europe- meets with  
French Minister of Foreign Trade and representatives of Europe's  
largest trade organization in Paris, top travel tour operators in Berlin**

BERLIN, GERMANY- New Mexico Governor Bill Richardson continued his historic European trade mission by meeting today with the French Minister of Foreign Trade, Christine LaGarde, who pledged to help New Mexico build a strong, bilateral economic relationship.

The Governor also met with representatives of MEDEF (Mouvement des Enterprise de France), the largest business association in France, to promote the state's competitive business climate and specific incentives to assist with relocation or expansion.

The day concluded in Berlin, where Governor Richardson and Mayor Martin Chavez met with approximately 40 of Germany's top tour operators, travel agents and travel writers to promote New Mexico as a tourism destination.

"We discussed real opportunities in trade and tourism, and found the French and German business communities eager to hear what we had to say," said Governor Richardson. "They are looking for trading partners and increased investment in Europe, as we are in New Mexico, and there is a lot of common ground."

The meeting with France's top economic official, Christine LaGarde, was arranged by the French Ambassador to the United States, Jean-David LeVitte, who Governor Richardson hosted during the Ambassador's visit to New Mexico in May.

Specifically, Minister LaGarde and Governor Richardson agreed to work on a trade mission that would involve taking high-tech firms from New Mexico to France, and from France to New Mexico, to explore research and development partnerships and investment opportunities.

Minister LaGarde also agreed to assist New Mexico in identifying a region of the country that would be interested in signing an agreement to promote economic trade and cultural exchanges.

Company presidents/directors of leading French businesses in attendance at the MEDEF meeting included: Atemation, a leading distributor of IT products; Oberthur, leader in the printing of secure, high technology products and supplier of Visa and MasterCard cards worldwide; Renault, with its worldwide automobile and sales and finance divisions with 350 industrial and commercial sites in over 40 countries; Technip, an off shore oil/gas engineering and construction firm ranking among the largest full-service engineering and construction groups in the field of hydrocarbons and petrochemicals and has operational bases on five continents; EDF (National Electricity Agency), formed from the merger of London Electricity and Seeboard Group of companies as among the largest energy companies in the UK; and Arcelor, formed by the combination of steel giant Usinor (France), ARBED (Luxembourg), and Aceralia (Spain), among others.

“Each of these companies is looking to expand or initiate new operations in businesses that are a good fit with New Mexico,” said the Governor. “We have worked hard to develop and grow these relationships, and believe our efforts will ultimately pay off in new high-wage, high-tech jobs for New Mexicans and increased momentum for our economy.”

Governor Richardson is being joined on this trade mission to Europe by New Mexico Economic Development Secretary Rick Homans, Tourism Secretary Mike Cerletti, New Mexico Economic Development Partnership President and CEO Jim Colson, Albuquerque Mayor Martin Chavez, and other New Mexico business and civic leaders.