

**NIOCAN ACQUIRES THE ST. LAWRENCE COLUMBIUM (SLC)
SITE FROM THE MUNICIPALITY OF OKA**

AN ESSENTIAL PART OF THE MINING PROJECT

Montreal, January 13, 2004 - On January 12, 2004, the municipal council of Oka approved the Niocan offer for the acquisition of 40.8 hectares on the St. Lawrence Columbium (SLC) site, where 45% of Niocan's tailings will be disposed of. The remaining portion of 55% will be returned underground as backfill at the new mining site.

This is the first time in Quebec's mining history that a new operation will contribute to the restoration of an abandoned mine site.

The agreement includes a payment of \$200,000 to the municipality and the restoration of the SLC site, which was abandoned by St. Lawrence Columbium in 1976. NIOCAN has committed to transferring the site back to the municipality at the end of the mining operation.

After issuing a mining lease to Niocan for the Oka niobium deposit, the Ministry of Natural Resources **approved, in 2000, the use of the SLC site as a tailings disposal area.**

The Ministry of the Environment accepts Niocan's comprehensive design for the retaining dikes and the restoration of the site.

With the acquisition of the St. Lawrence site, NIOCAN has fulfilled all of the requirements to obtain the Ministry of the Environment's certificate of authorization, which should be issued soon.

NIOCAN inc. is a mineral resource company that owns niobium deposits in the Oka area. Current proven and probable reserves point towards a minimum 17 years of operation and an estimated recoverable value of more than \$1.0 billion. NIOCAN is working towards a start-up of these operations and the production of ferroniobium. Ferroniobium is increasingly used in the production of specialty alloys in the aerospace and power generation industries, as well as in the high-strength low-alloy steel used in the automobile, construction, and pipeline sectors.

- 30 -

For additional information, contact:

René Dufour, Eng.
Chairman of the Board
Tel: (514) 340-4711 ext. 4926
Fax: (514) 340-7211

Richard Faucher, Eng.
President & CEO
Tel: (514) 288-8506
Fax: (514) 843-4809
E-mail: rfaucher@niocan.com

