

Canada is a well respected partner in the Algerian transport sector, due in part to the similar problems facing the two countries, such as long distances and harsh, diverse climates. Canadian success at establishing such an advanced transportation network is admired by the Algerian industry. In the past, Canadian firms have provided aircraft overhaul services, locomotives, helicopters, trucks, and many other products and services.

The Algiers Subway project has been under discussion for a long time now. The Algerian government continues to insist that it will go ahead with the project, and are seeking foreign partners and foreign capital to proceed. This project will take a long time to come to fruition, if it ever does, but the enormous potential has kept several Canadian firms interested.

Financing, technology transfer and investment will remain very important factors in this sector. Training and improvement of existing infrastructure are among the top priorities and Canadian companies should expect to include such proposals in any contract negotiation. The Algerian government seeks to improve its own ability to produce necessary products and services and in the long term to reduce dependence on foreign technology and foreign products.

## **TELECOMMUNICATIONS**

Many opportunities exist in the telecom sector in Algeria. Telecommunications hardware and software, as well as consulting services are among the more active sub-sectors. The Algerian PTT is planning to vastly expand its telecommunications network, with new public switching contracts expected to involve tens of thousands of new lines a year for the next five years. As well, areas such as spectrum management are being discussed by the PTT.

Northern Telecom has a local office and dominates the private switching market. Attempts are being made to enhance cooperation between the Algerian PTT and the Canadian Department of Communications (DOC) through visits and technical exchanges.

Given the vastness of the country and the sparseness of the population in the south, rural telephony is another area of interest to the Algerian government. HF systems and all of the related equipment will be needed to extend telecom services across the Sahara and to improve existing communications.

The Ministry of the Interior makes extensive use of microwave communications, particularly in the security services and this equipment is constantly being upgraded. Motorola and Siemens are the two primary suppliers of this type of equipment. The Algerian government also hopes to advance with its program of fibre optic installation and hopes to have approximately 2,000 kilometres of fibre optic lines laid by 1994.