Pathways
to Education

For Immediate Release

RIO TINTO ALCAN INVESTS $13 MILLION IN PATHWAYS TO EDUCATION'S *GRADUATION NATION* INITIATIVE

(TORONTO) February 18 – Today, Rio Tinto Alcan announced a $13 million investment over five years (2011-2016) in Pathways to Education Canada that will support the significant expansion of the program in the province of Quebec. Pathways will use this generous contribution to add three new sites and a regional office in Quebec. A leadership council will also be established to help generate awareness and support in the province. With this donation, Pathways will now be able to help thousands of Quebec students graduate from high school and successfully transition to post-secondary education.

"This investment reflects Rio Tinto Alcan's bold leadership in addressing a critical issue affecting Quebec and our country," said David Hughes, president and chief executive officer, Pathways to Education Canada. "This is a clear response to Pathways' call-to-action to build a 'Graduation Nation', where all youth have an equal opportunity to complete high school and realize their full potential."

Pathways' expansion plan for Quebec represents an important next step in the organization's five-year plan to establish and sustain high-performing programs in 20 high-need communities by 2016. This 'Graduation Nation' initiative will support more than 10,000 students per year and make universal access to education a priority issue for all Canadians. Thanks to the support of Rio Tinto Alcan, Pathways is able to take a leap towards this goal, but achieving this vision entirely will require a significant investment from additional partners.

In keeping with Rio Tinto Alcan's corporate objective to support communities in the regions in which they operate, its investment in Pathways will be directed to improving the educational success of youth in Quebec. Pathways will identify three high-needs communities in the areas of Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean, Mauricie and Montreal that would benefit most from the Pathways program. All three chosen sites will meet Pathways proven site-selection criteria, which include, but are not limited to, the selection of an appropriate community agency, the successful completion of an in-depth community engagement process and the formal approval of the Pathways Canada Board of Directors. Pathways will also establish a regional headquarters in Quebec to provide leadership, expertise and administrative capacity to the Quebec operations and expansion. Pathways is well-poised to activate this donation, with a successful site already operating in Verdun and the recent appointment of Pierre Côté as the president and executive director of Pathways Quebec.

Pathways will also develop a leadership council of high profile volunteers and advocates in Quebec who will help raise awareness of the Pathways program and the importance of high school education and graduation. Rio Tinto Alcan's chief executive office, Jacynthe Côté, and members of her management team will assume roles on Pathways' provincial and national leadership bodies.

Rio Tinto Alcan's donation was made out of the company's "Keeping Youth in School Together" campaign that aims to support organizations that provide various projects and initiatives that encourage students to stay in school in regions in which the company operates.

"The *Keeping Youth in School Together* program was developed out of the belief that the business community must take the necessary steps to help combat high school dropout rates to ensure the next generation is properly prepared to run our businesses," said Jacynthe Côté, chief executive office, Rio Tinto Alcan. "Pathways to Education has a proven track record of success and has already helped countless youth graduate high school and achieve greatness. Our contribution will help Pathways reach more Quebec students and help ensure a promising future for Quebec."

The Pathways to Education program offers a comprehensive, community-based and results-focused approach that sets it apart from other programs in its holistic commitment to improving the opportunities of participating students. Pathways provides academic tutoring, group and career-oriented mentoring, student advocacy and financial assistance, including transit tickets or meal vouchers, as well as academic scholarships for post-secondary studies. Since its inception in 2001, Pathways has expanded to eleven communities across the country as part of its long term goal to serve 10,000 students in 20 communities by 2016.

About Pathways to Education Canada – www.pathwaystoeducation.ca
Pathways to Education Canada is a charitable organization that helps youth in low-income communities graduate from high school and successfully transition into post-secondary education or training. Pathways addresses systemic barriers to education by providing leadership, expertise and a community-based program proven to lower dropout rates. Founded in 2001, Pathways operates in eleven communities across Canada, with programs in Ontario, Quebec, Nova Scotia and Manitoba.

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