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## DR trade mission spurs \$18M in sales

By CB Online Staff  
 cbnews@caribbeanbusinesspr.com



The 15 Puerto Rican companies that took part in a trade mission to the Dominican Republic this month rang up more than \$18 million in immediate and projected sales combined, Economic Development & Commerce Secretary José Pérez-Riera said Monday.

More than 100 business meetings were arranged during the mission to the Dominican cities of Santo Domingo and Santiago de los Caballeros between Nov. 13-18. The trip was a joint effort between the Puerto

Rico Economic Development & Commerce Department (DDEC) and the new Puerto Rican/Dominican/Caribbean Business Alliance, known as Enlace Empresarial (Enlace).

"This mission was an example of what can be achieved if the private sector and government unite in a focused effort," said Enlace President Luis Torres Llompart. "The numbers speak for themselves."

Representatives from Enlace's main organization members took part in the trade mission: Salvador Calaf Legrand, president of the Puerto Rico Chamber of Commerce; Pedro Watlington, president of the Puerto Rico Manufacturers Association; Vicente Sánchez, president of the Puerto Rico Products Association; and Elliot Rivera, former president of the island's United Retailers Association and the Puerto Rico Engineers Association.

Participating companies from the chemicals, manufacturing, construction, energy and services sectors included: Caribbean Chemical Industries Corp; Colls Corp.; Danosa Caribbean; Fulero Insurance; M.R. Franceschini Inc.; Metropolitan Industrial Food Service; NCM International; New Energy Consultants & Contractors; PENTA Consulting; PKF Torres Llompart; Sánchez Ruiz LLC; Tam Industries; Ticket Center; Universal Solar Products; UPM Group; and William Estrella Attorneys & Counselors.

The \$18 million in business generated in the Dominican Republic brings the value of projected sales for Puerto Rican companies stemming from foreign trade missions and fairs to \$143 million since the Fortuño administration took office in 2009, Pérez-Riera said.



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A key aim of the Dominican Republic trip and earlier Costa Rica mission in October is to help local small and midsize business take advantage of opportunities provided under the U.S.-brokered Dominican Republic-Central America Free Trade Agreement.

The initiative is part of the Fortuño administration's efforts to get Puerto Rico stronger footing in the global economy through the promotion of exports, services and products.

Previous missions to China, the Dominican Republic, Chile, Spain, Guatemala and El Salvador generated more than \$120 million in potential business, according to DDEC data.

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