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Crosbie: 2006 Was Strongest Year Ever For Canada M&A Activity

TORONTO -(Dow Jones) - Investment-banking firm Crosbie & Co. said in a report that the Canadian mergers-and-acquisition market recorded 'another impressive quarter' in the fourth quarter of 2006, resulting in the 'strongest year ever.'

Crosbie said there were 1,968 announced transactions in Canada last year, which was up 22% from 1,613 deals in 2005.

It said the transaction value totaled C\$257 billion (US\$221 billion), which was up 55% from 2005.

There were 51 deals exceeding C\$1 billion, up from 33 such 'mega-deals' in 2005.

Cross-border activity represented 34% of the total number of transactions and 79% of total deal value, Crosbie noted.

Two of the largest transactions in the history of Canadian M&A were in the metals and minerals sector: the takeovers of Inco Ltd. and Falconbridge Ltd. However, the oil and gas sector was the strongest by dollar volume and number of deals, Crosbie said.