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Lic. Gustavo Alanís Ortega
JPAC Chair for 2003
Commission for Environmental Cooperation
393, rue St.-Jacques ouest, bureau 200
Montréal (Québec) H2Y 1N9

Re: JPAC letter of 5 August 2003 regarding Trade and Environment Ministers Joint Meeting

Dear Lic. Alanís Ortega:

On behalf of the Council and the Parties' Ministers of Trade, we offer the following response to the Joint Public Advisory Committee's (JPAC) August 5, 2003 letter urging a joint meeting of trade and environment ministers to take place in the context of the North American Agreement for Environmental Cooperation (NAAEC).

This is an important issue for us, and as noted in previous correspondence with you, the Council will carefully consider the JPAC's advice. We appreciate the JPAC's continued interest in this matter, including the thoughtful agenda item suggestions made by the JPAC at the 10(6) environment and trade officials meeting in Mexico City in March, 2003.

As you know, at the 10th Regular Session of the CEC Council in June 2003, we requested that the NAAEC Article 10(6) working group, at a senior level, report back to the Council on a proposed agenda for this potential meeting, as well as their work on crosscutting trade and environment issues of concern before the next Council Session.

Once again, we thank you for your interest, and will keep you apprised of any developments.

Yours sincerely,

Jose Manuel Bulás
Alternate Representative for Mexico

Cc: Norine Smith, Alternate Representative for Canada
Judith Ayres, Alternate Representative for the United States
JPAC Members
William Kennedy, CEC Executive Director