



Joint Public Advisory Committee (JPAC)  
Comité Consultivo Público Conjunto (CCPC)  
Comité consultatif public mixte (CCPM)

24 March 2004

The Honorable David Anderson  
Minister of the Environment (Canada)

Ingeniero Alberto Cárdenas Jiménez  
Secretary, Secretariat of the Environment and Natural Resources (Mexico)

Administrator Michael O. Leavitt  
Administrator, United States Environmental Protection Agency

**RE: Commission for Environmental Cooperation Retreat in the context of the Ten-Year Review of the North American Agreement on Environmental Cooperation**

Dear Council Members,

On 4-5 May 2004 your Alternate Representatives and the senior staff of the Secretariat are planning a retreat in order to study the report from the Ten-year Review and Assessment Committee (TRAC) of North American Agreement on Environmental Cooperation (NAAEC) in the context of the June Council Session and to engage in a discussion on future directions for our institution.

During my recent meeting with your Alternate Representatives on 12 March in Oaxaca, I was informed that the Chair of the Joint Public Advisory Committee (JPAC) was not expected to attend this retreat.

I am frankly very concerned by this approach for several important reasons. While I fully understand the prerogative of the Alternate Representatives to meet among themselves should they choose, in this case the Secretariat will be included. As an institutional partner in the CEC, I cannot comprehend why JPAC would be purposefully excluded from a discussion about the future of the institution. May I remind you that a similar retreat was organized six years ago to discuss the four-year review report and the JPAC chair and support staff participated.

This is a watershed year for the CEC. JPAC has worked hard to provide input to the strategic planning process at the Secretariat, be constructively engaged in the development of the Operational Plan and an active participant in the Ten-year Review, as stated in Council Resolution 03-02. JPAC will be holding a public workshop one day prior to the 2004 Council Session in Puebla, Mexico regarding precisely the future directions of the NAAEC. It is critical for us, as partners in the CEC, to arrive at that session with the benefits of the discussion that is now planned between the Alternate Representatives and the Secretariat.

Over the years, we have all worked hard to create a common purpose and spirit of cooperation. While JPAC has, on some occasions, brought forward controversial issues and views, we have done so with respect and in the spirit of improving the Commission. We have made great progress in defining our collective roles and improving communications. I see this decision to exclude JPAC from the retreat as a setback and would ask you to reconsider.

Sincerely,

[Original signed]

Donna Tingley  
JPAC Chair for 2004

c.c.: CEC Alternate Representatives  
CEC Executive Director  
JPAC Members