

UCAI/1789/2004

Mexico City, 27 April 2004

Ms. Donna Tingley
JPAC Chair for 2004
Commission for Environmental Cooperation
393, rue St-Jacques ouest, bureau 200
Montréal (Québec) H2Y 1N9

Re: JPAC Letter dated March 24

Dear Ms. Tingley:

On behalf of the Council of the Commission for Environmental Cooperation (CEC) and the Alternate Representatives I would like to thank the Joint Public Advisory Committee (JPAC) for its letter to Council relating to the upcoming retreat on the Ten-Year Review of the North American Agreement on Environmental Cooperation (NAAEC), to be held on May 4-5, 2004 in Mexico.

The Alternate Representatives decided, at their last meeting, to hold an Alternate Representatives retreat in order to discuss and share some views – amongst themselves – on the draft report of the 10 Year Review and Assessment Committee. The fact that we are proceeding in a different manner from our one other retreat – held six years ago – should not put into question the JPAC's contribution to the CEC. JPAC has contributed tremendously to the success of the CEC over the last decade. We have been pleased with the progress made as a result of our mutual commitment to define our collective roles, and to improve communications.

However we feel that it is equally important for the Parties to have the opportunity for a candid Party-to-Party discussion on the issue of the 10 year review and the future of the CEC -- and this is what will take place on May 4-5. The Secretariat, while in attendance, will be present only in their technical capacity as Secretariat, will provide supplementary information as requested by the Alternate Representatives, will undertake work requested by the Alternate Representatives, and will also act as resource persons for the portion of the retreat which will address updates on work-programme related items that the Alt Reps will need to deal with at the Council session.

We agree that this is a watershed year for the CEC, and it is very important that all views are considered as we prepare for the Council's discussion on the future of the CEC. It is important to us that we bear in mind the views of the JPAC, and the public, in the process of the ten-year review and setting a strategic direction for the next decade. We fully intend to share with the JPAC – and with our respective National Advisory Committees - the results of the Alternate Representative's retreat, however we would expect that the JPAC would have their own views on the recommendations in the TRAC report, and would want to make these known to the Council. To that end, and as we prepare for the Council's discussion, we would expect to receive JPAC advice on the draft TRAC report, in advance of the Council session, so that we have the opportunity to consider this advice prior to the Council's discussion on this issue in June.

We look forward to working with you as we make important decisions for the long-term planning and strategic vision for CEC work.

Sincerely,

José Manuel Bulás Montoro
Alternate Representative for Mexico

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