

SESSION 06-07 OF ALTERNATE REPRESENTATIVES

SUMMARY RECORD

The Commission for Environmental Cooperation (CEC) Council, represented by its Alternate Representatives, met via conference call on 19 December 2006. Mr. José Manuel Bulás (Mexico) chaired the meeting (he was later replaced by José Manuel Medina), Mr. Jerry Clifford and Ms. Jenna Mackay-Alie (on behalf of David McGovern) represented the United States and Canada, respectively. Mr. Doug Wright, CEC acting executive director, represented the Secretariat, Mr. Carlos Sandoval, represented JPAC as its chair, and Ms. Nathalie Daoust, Council secretary, acted as secretary for the session. Other officials of the Parties and the Secretariat were also in attendance.

Item 1 Adoption of the agenda

The Chair opened the session and suggested, given the short time he had available, going directly to item 3 where Council decision was required. This proposal was supported by both the US and Canadian representatives.

Item 3 2007–2009 Operational Plan

The Mexican Alternate Representative indicated that Mexico had reviewed the 15 project descriptions and was in a position to vote favorably. The Canadian representative began by offering congratulations to the Secretariat and the GSC for the work invested in developing and reviewing the project descriptions, and then expressed agreement with the project descriptions. The US Alternate Representative also voiced his appreciation for the work carried out and indicated that the US also was ready to approve the 15 projects. Thus, the cooperative work program portion of the CEC Operational Plan for 2007, comprising fifteen projects and their corresponding budgets and budget categories, was approved by the Alternate Representatives.

The Alternate Representatives agreed to take additional time to review the remainder of the 2007 CEC Operational Plan and budget. They asked the Secretariat to arrange a conference call during the week of 15 January 2007 for the purposes of discussing any additional matters and approving the rest of the plan and budget. They directed the GSC to work together with the Secretariat to finalize the CEC 2007–2009 Operational Plan document for their approval during their January teleconference.

In order to allow the Secretariat to operate after 31 December 2006, the Alternate Representatives voted in favor of a Council resolution approving the use of surplus funds from pre-2006 financial years for operational expenses and for implementing the 15 cooperative work program projects approved by the Alternate Representatives for 2007. The Secretariat read the corresponding draft Council resolution, the Alternate Representatives voted in favor, and the Secretariat committed to distributing the resolution in the three languages for the Parties' signature.

Item 4 2007 Funding Resolution

The Canadian representative reported that Canada was not in a position to sign the annual funding resolution for 2007 given that their internal procedures for long-term CEC funding had not yet been completed. However, she conveyed that Canada was considering interim options, including a proposal for partial funding of the CEC for 2007 (until 31 March 2007). She stressed that this delay should not be taken as a lack of commitment towards the CEC on Canada's part. The Alternate Representatives agreed to discuss this issue during their next teleconference.

Item 5 Next meeting of the Alternate Representatives

The Alternate Representatives agreed to schedule a conference call the week of 15 January 2007, at a date and time to be confirmed by the GSC.

The US Alternate Representative urged his counterparts to work towards bringing to closure the pending SEM votes during the next teleconference. He expressed that the United States stands ready to vote on the Coal-Fired Power Plants submission. The Mexican representative indicated that a letter regarding the Lake Chapala II submission would be forthcoming.

The Mexican Alternate Representative offered to host the next face-to-face meeting of the Alternate Representatives in early February in Chiapas, Mexico. The Alternate Representatives agreed to consult their respective schedules and confirm at a later date. The US Alternate Representative mentioned that there was still much work ahead and suggested that the face-to-face meeting focus on potential deliverables for the 2007 Council Session. Furthermore, the US Alternate Representative suggested that the meeting would most likely occur after the meeting of the UNEP Governing Council that will take place early February. The Mexican representative asked whether the presence of the trade ministers was being contemplated for the 2007 Council Session. The US Alternate Representative reported they didn't foresee such a meeting for 2007 but recommended that a meeting of the trade and environment high-level officials be held either prior to or following the next face-to-face meeting in Mexico.

Item 2 Interventions by the Acting Executive Director and JPAC representative

The JPAC chair offered to send by e-mail his report from the last JPAC meeting in Cancún, which was very successful. The Alternate Representatives took the opportunity to congratulate Carlos Sandoval for the good work and efforts he had carried out during his chairmanship in 2006 and indicated they looked forward to working with JPAC in the New Year.