

SESSION 00-07 OF ALTERNATE REPRESENTATIVES

SUMMARY RECORD

The Council, represented by its Alternate Representatives, met on 29 and 30 August 2000 at the Secretariat of the CEC in Montreal, Canada. Mr. José Luis Samaniego (Mexico) chaired the meeting. Ms. Norine Smith and Mr. William Nitze represented Canada and United States respectively. Ms. Regina Barba represented JPAC and Ms. Janine Ferretti, Executive Director, represented the Secretariat. Mr. Cristóbal Vignal, Council Secretary, acted as Secretary of the session. Other officials of the Parties and the Secretariat were also in attendance (Annex A).

Item 1 Adoption of the agenda

The Alternate Representatives adopted the agenda based on the provisional agenda. The agenda as approved can be found in Annex B.

Item 2 Report by the Executive Director

The Executive Director reported on Secretariat activities. The Executive Director's notes are attached as Annex C.

Item 3 Report by the Chair of JPAC

The JPAC Chair updated the Alternate Representatives on JPAC activities. The notes of the JPAC Chair are attached as Annex D.

Item 4 Approval of summary records

The Alternate Representatives approved the summary records of sessions 00-05 and 00-06 of Alternate Representatives, as well as the summary record of the 2000 Regular Session of Council (00-00) and the summary of interventions made at the public portion of the Council Session.

Item 5 Sound Management of Chemicals

The Alternate Representatives discussed the issues raised by the SMOC Working Group in a memorandum dated 1 June 2000. The Secretariat was asked to prepare a general discussion document on the approach taken by the CEC with respect to capacity building throughout the work program in support of all major lines of action. The Secretariat will also explore capacity building issues for SMOC and raise this specific issue with the SMOC Working Group at its September meeting and report back to the Alternate Representatives in October.

Item 6 2001–2003 Proposed Program Plan

The Secretariat updated the Alternate Representatives on the status of program related activities to date and introduced the proposed 2001–2003 Program Plan. The Alternate Representatives exchanged preliminary views relating to the 2001–2003 Program Plan.

Item 7 Articles 14 and 15 of NAAEC**Item 7.1 Referral memorandum to JPAC pursuant to paragraph 5(b) of Council Resolution 00-09**

The Parties agreed to proceed expeditiously on the preparation of the referral memorandum to be provided to JPAC, pursuant to paragraph 5(b) of Council Resolution 00-09, in order to guide the JPAC in the performance of its review of the public history of submissions made under Articles 14 and 15.

Item 7.2 Update on Submissions on Enforcement Matters under Articles 14 and 15**Item 7.2.1 Submission SEM-98-006: Grupo Ecológico Manglar A.C.**

Mexico presented its views on Submission SEM-98-006 “Grupo Ecológico Manglar A.C.” and provided new information on the matter the Submission refers to. The Secretariat noted that its determination to the effect that a factual record is warranted—as notified to Council on 4 August 2000— was based on the submission and the information provided by the Party in its response, which did not include part of the information presented at this session.

Item 7.2.2 Submission SEM 98-007: Environmental Health Coalition

At the request of the Secretariat, Mexico granted the Secretariat access to the Metales y Derivados site referred to in the submission file by the Environmental Health Coalition. In addition, Mexico indicated that the information designated as confidential in its response could be disclosed to the Parties and used in the development of the factual record to be prepared by the Secretariat, except for the information related to the criminal aspects of the submission.

Item 7.2.3 Submission SEM-97-006: The Friends of the Oldman River

In connection with the recent decision of the Council to defer consideration of the Secretariat’s notification with respect to submission SEM-97-006, Canada provided an update on the domestic proceedings related to the matter referred to in the submission.

Item 7.3 French version of revised Guidelines for Submissions on Enforcement Matters under Articles 14 and 15

The Alternate Representatives formally adopted the French version of the Guidelines for Submissions on Enforcement Matters under Articles 14 and 15.

Item 8 Memorandum of Understanding with the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) re: Contribution to GEO 3

The Alternate Representatives approved, in principle, the objective to which the Memorandum of Understanding refers, subject to clarifications to be made to the text expeditiously, at the GSC level.

Item 9 Article 10(6) Environment and Trade Officials meeting

The Parties confirmed attendance of their Environment and Trade officials to the Article 10(6) officials meeting to be held on 13 October 2000 in Washington. The Alternate Representatives agreed that the agenda should focus on precaution and ecolabelling. Mexico undertook to share with the Parties and the Secretariat a draft agenda in advance of the meeting.

Item 10 Administrative Issues**Item 10.1 Use of Outstanding Balance from Financial Year 1998**

Pending the adoption of a Council Resolution on this matter at the next session of Alternate Representative, the Parties authorized the Secretariat to disburse funds up to a maximum of C\$38,000 in 2000 to the JPAC to implement its new mandate regarding Articles 14 and 15 issues, pursuant to Council Resolution 00-09, and C\$50,000 in support of the Children's Health and the Environment project.

As a fundraising incentive, C\$20,000 will be made available for NAFEC with the understanding that NAFEC will seek to triplicate this amount, that is to say, to obtain an additional C\$40,000.

Item 10.2 Tax refunds

Canada reported that good progress has been achieved with the Government of Québec on this matter, and expressed optimism that this issue will be resolved soon.

Item 11 Other issues

No other issues were discussed.

Item 12 Next sessions of Alternate Representatives

The Alternate Representatives agreed to meet in Washington, DC, on 13 and 14 October, immediately following the Article 10(6) officials meeting, and to hold a joint meeting with JPAC on the 13th.

Item 13 Closure of the session

The Chairperson closed the session.

SESSION 00-07 OF ALTERNATE REPRESENTATIVES

Montreal, Canada, 29-30 August 2000

List of delegations

CANADA

Alternate Representative Norine Smith, Environment Canada
Christine Guay, Environment Canada
Jenna MacKay-Alie, Environment Canada
Keith Robinson, Environment Canada
Carol Smith-Wright, DFAIT
Sandra Duxbury, Alberta Ministry of Environment
Daryl Hanak, Alberta Ministry of Environment

MEXICO

Alternate Representative José Luis Samaniego, Semarnap
Mario Aguilar, Semarnap
Véronique Déli, Semarnap
Luis Gonzalez, Mexican Embassy, Ottawa

UNITED STATES

Alternate Representative William Nitze, EPA Office of International Activities
Ana Corado, EPA Office of International Environmental Policy
Anne Rowley, EPA International Environmental Law Office
Katherine Ries, NOAA, Department of Commerce
Melida Tajbakhsh, Fish & Wild Life Service, Department of Interior
George Huffurd, Department of State
Alan Hecht, EPA Office of International Activities

JPAC

Regina Barba, Chair of JPAC
Manon, Pepin, JPAC Coordinator

**SESSION 00-07 OF ALTERNATE REPRESENTATIVES
AGENDA**

To be held at the CEC Secretariat on Tuesday, 29 August 2000 from 9:30 AM to 6:00 PM
and Wednesday, 30 August 2000 from 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM

- Item 1 Adoption of the Agenda
- Item 2 Report by the Executive Director
- Item 3 Report by the Chair of JPAC
- Item 4 Approval of Summary Records
- Item 5 Sound Management of Chemicals
- Item 6 2001-2002 Proposed Program Plan
- Item 7 Articles 14 and 15 of NAAEC
- Item 8 Memorandum of Understanding with UNEP re: Contribution to GEO 3
- Item 9 Article 10(6) Environment and Trade Officials meeting
- Item 10 Administrative Issues
- Item 11 Other issues
- Item 12 Next sessions of Alternate Representatives
- Item 13 Closure of the session

Note:

A private dinner for the Alternate Representatives, the Chair of JPAC and the Executive Director is scheduled on Tuesday evening at 7:00 PM, at Le Latini.

**SESSION 00-07 OF ALTERNATE REPRESENTATIVES
ANNOTATIONS TO THE AGENDA**

Item 1 Adoption of the agenda

In accordance with Council Rules of Procedure (R. 9.6), the Council shall adopt the agenda for the session at the beginning of the session based on the provisional agenda. The Alternate Representatives are expected to adopt the agenda for the session.

DOCUMENTS:

- a) Draft annotated agenda (distributed 24-08-00) C/C.01/00-07/AGEN/01/Rev.3

Item 2 Report by the Executive Director

In accordance with Council Rules of Procedure (R. 5.3), the Executive Director may make oral and written statements to the Council. The Executive Director will report on Secretariat activities, including on the status of Article 14 submissions, and highlight matters requesting the attention of the Council.

DOCUMENTS:

- a) Notes from the Executive Director (to be handed at the meeting)

Item 3 Report by the Chair of JPAC

Under this item the JPAC Chair will provide an update to the Alternate Representatives on JPAC activities, including the process for the JPAC public review of issues concerning the implementation and further elaboration of Articles 14 and 15.

DOCUMENTS:

- a) Call for Public comments on issues relating to the CEC's citizen submissions mechanism (distributed 1-08-00)
 b) Draft JPAC public review of issues concerning the implementation and further elaboration of Articles 14 and 15 (distributed 1-08-00)
 c) Provisional Agenda of JPAC Regular Session on 13-14 October (distributed 1-08-00)

Item 4 Approval of summary records

In accordance with Council Rules of Procedure (R.11), the Executive Director prepared the summary records of Sessions 00-05, 00-06, 00-00 and of the during public portion of the 7th Regular Session of the Council. Speakers have submitted corrections to the summary of their remarks (R.11). The Alternate Representatives are expected to review and approve the summary records.

DOCUMENTS:

- | | |
|---|---------------------------|
| a) Session 00-05 draft Summary Record (distributed 10-7-00) | C/C.01/00-05/SR/01/Rev.1 |
| b) Session 00-06 draft Summary Record (distributed 14-7-00) | C/ C.01/00-06/SR/01/Rev.1 |
| c) Session 00-00 draft Summary Record (Rev. 2 to be distributed) | C/00-00/SR/01/Rev.2 |
| d) Summary of interventions made during the public portion of the Council Session (Rev.1 to be distributed) | C/00-00/SR/02-Rev.1 |

Item 5 Sound Management of Chemicals

The Alternate Representatives are expected to discuss the issues raised by the SMOC Working Group in a memorandum dated 1 June 2000 with a view to providing a detailed response in terms of both the current status of the SMOC initiative and the outlook for this initiative in the 2001-2002 Program Plan.

DOCUMENTS:

- a) Memo from Council to the Chair of the SMOC Working Group re: memo dated 1 June 2000
- b) Memo dated 30 May 2000 from the Chair of the SMOC Working Group to Alternate Representatives. re: Program update and outcome of the 10th regular meeting of the North American Working Group on SMOC
- c) Memo dated 1 June 2000 from the Chair of the SMOC Working Group to Alternate Representatives re: SMOC Program Viability and Capacity-Building Concerns
- d) Capacity Building on Sound Management of Chemicals in Mexico, 1996 – 1999 (distributed 21-08-00)

Item 6 2001-2002 Proposed Program Plan

The Secretariat will brief the Alternate Representatives on the proposed 2001-2002 Program Plan.

DOCUMENTS:

- a) 2001-2002 Program Plan and Budget (to be distributed)
- b) 2000 Program Update, January to June 2000 (distributed 15-08-00)
- c) Quarterly financial report for 6 months ended 30 June 2000 (to be distributed)
- d) 2001-2002 Work Program Outline (distributed 24-05-00)
- e) Memo to Council dated 15 May 2000 from the Executive Director re: CEC Program and Budget (distributed 24-05-00)
- f) Timeline for completion of proposed 2001-2002 Program Plan and Budget (distributed 17-7-00)

Item 7 Articles 14 and 15 of NAAEC

Item 7.1 Referral memorandum to JPAC pursuant to paragraph 5(b) of Council Resolution 00-09

The Alternate Representatives are expected to review and finalize the draft referral memorandum

to be provided to JPAC, pursuant to paragraph 5(b) of Council Resolution 00-09, in order to guide the JPAC in the performance of its review of the public history of submissions made under Articles 14 and 15.

DOCUMENTS:

- a) Draft referral memorandum (distributed by Mexico 24-07-00) and translation of same (distributed by Secretariat 8-7-00)
- b) Diagram outlining the standard process relating to Articles 14 and 15 (distributed by Mexico in April 2000)
- c) Council Resolutions 00-09

Item 7.2 Submission SEM-98-006: Grupo Ecológico “Manglar”

Under this item, Mexico may wish to provide background information in relation to Submission SEM-98-006.

DOCUMENTS: No documents

Item 7.3 French version of revised Guidelines for Submissions on Enforcement Matters under Articles 14 and 15

As agreed to by the Alternate Representatives on 29 June 1999 in Banff (Session 99-08), a linguistic review of the French version of the Guidelines for Submissions on Enforcement Matters under Articles 14 and 15 was conducted on the basis of the English version adopted at the 1999 Regular Session of the Council. Following its own linguistic review of the French translation, the United States proposed certain linguistic changes. Canada and Mexico are asked to confirm acceptance of the changes proposed by the United States before the French version can be formally adopted.

DOCUMENTS:

- a) Request for changes submitted by the US (distributed by SEC 17-08-00)
- b) Revised French version of Articles 14 and 15 Guidelines (distributed 17-08-00)

Item 8 Memorandum of Understanding with the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) re: Contribution to GEO 3

The Alternate Representatives are expected to adopt a resolution authorizing the Secretariat to sign a Memorandum of Understanding with UNEP to support the development of the North American section of the GEO 3 report.

DOCUMENTS:

- a) Memo dated July 5, 2000 from Greg Block to the Alt. Reps. re: Contribution to GEO 3 (distributed 5-07-00)
- e) Memorandum of Understanding between the CEC and UNEP (distributed 5-07-00)
- f) Draft Council Resolution (distributed 18-08-00)

Item 9 Article 10(6) Environment and Trade Officials meeting

The Alternate Representatives are expected to review the arrangements for the Article 10(6) officials meeting scheduled for 13 October 2000 in Washington and to confirm attendance of Environment and Trade officials.

DOCUMENTS: None

Item 10 Administrative Issues**Item 10.1 Use of Outstanding Balance from Financial Year 1998**

The Alternate Representatives are expected to adopt a resolution regarding the use of the outstanding balance from financial year 1998.

DOCUMENTS:

- a) Explanatory memo dated 1 August 2000 from Riccardo Embriaco to the GSC (distributed 4-8-00)
- b) Memo dated 24 July 2000 from Executive Director to Council re: Budget results for 1997-1998 (distributed 25-07-00)
- c) Draft Council Resolution (distributed 18-8-00)

Item 10.2 Tax refunds

Pursuant to Council Resolution 95-04, the Secretariat forwarded to Canada in January 2000 a revised version of the proposed Understanding as submitted by the Government of Québec concerning immunities, tax privileges and courtesies for review and approval. Canada is expected to provide an update on its review and approval process of said Understanding. The Government of Québec is awaiting the signature of the above agreement in order to reimburse to the CEC approximately C\$1,200,000 in sales tax and to formalize the current ad-hoc arrangements regarding provincial health insurance, drivers licenses, English education rights, etc.

DOCUMENTS:

- a) Proposed Understanding between the Government of Québec and the CEC concerning immunities, tax privileges and courtesies
- b) Letter dated 17 May 1999 from Environment Canada
- c) Letter dated 15 July 1999 from Semarnap
- d) Council Resolution 95-04

Item 11 Other issues

At the time of writing no other issues were proposed under this item.

Item 12 Next sessions of Alternate Representatives

In accordance with the proposed schedule of sessions for the year 2000, the next session of Alternate Representatives is tentatively scheduled for 3-4 October in Montreal. Should these dates not be suitable, the session will have to be postponed until the beginning of November. The Alternate Representatives are expected to confirm the date of their next session and review the calendar of sessions scheduled up to December 2000.

DOCUMENTS:

- a) Schedule of sessions of Alternate Representatives for 2000 (distributed 23-08-00)

C/C.01/99-11/PLAN/01/Rev.12

Item 13 Closure of the session

The Chairperson is expected to close the session.

NOTES
For Report of the Executive Director
Meeting of the Alternate Representatives

29-30 August 2000

Program Update

The Secretariat provided the Parties on 18 August with a mid-year update on advancements in each program area. A copy is attached.

2001–2002 Proposed Program Plan and 2001 Budget

The Parties received copies of the Proposed 2001–2002 Program Plan and 2001 Budget last week. The program plan is based on the outline provided earlier in May, and reflects some of the comments received on the outline. A meeting of the Alternate Representatives is being arranged for early October to enable the Parties to discuss the program and budget in detail. JPAC is also reviewing the program and budget and will be providing Council with advice. In order to ensure continuity and minimize disruptions to the work of the CEC, it is expected that Council provide final approval of the program and budget in November. A teleconference is being scheduled for this purpose. A schedule of the 2001 program and budget approval process is attached.

Monitoring and Evaluation

A continuous monitoring system has been developed and is currently undergoing final testing. This On-Line Manager (OLM) will become operational in time to track project-related progress in 2001.

Evaluation work is set to commence shortly for the Mexico City Liaison Office, followed by the Law and Policy program area closer to the end of the year.

Article 14 Submissions

The status of the eleven submissions currently under review is as follows:

- One factual record is being developed. The Secretariat is currently developing a factual record on submission SEM-98-007/Environmental Health Coalition, et al., as instructed by Council.
- Seven submissions are being reviewed to determine whether development of a factual record is warranted. Two submissions concerning Canada (SEM-98-004/ Sierra Club of British Columbia, et al. and SEM-00-004/David Suzuki Foundation et al.); two concerning the US (SEM-99-002/ Alliance for the Wild Rockies, et al. and SEM-98-003/Department of the Planet Earth et al.); and three concerning Mexico (SEM-98-006/Grupo Ecológico Manglar A.C., SEM-98-005/Academia Sonorense de Derecho Humanos and SEM-97-002/Comité Pro Limpieza del Río Magdalena) are being reviewed in light of the response to determine whether development of a factual record is warranted. For two of these submissions, the Secretariat has requested additional information from the Party under Article 21(1)(b). On 13 September 1999 the

Secretariat requested additional information from Mexico under Article 21(1)(b), concerning SEM-97-002/Comité Pro Limpieza del Río Magdalena. No response to this request has been received. On 28 July 2000, the Secretariat received additional information from United States under Article 21(1)(b), and will continue its review of the submission to determine whether development of a factual record is warranted.

- Two submissions are being reviewed by the Secretariat under Article 14(1).
 - SEM-00-006/Comisión de Solidaridad y Defensa de los Derechos Humanos, A.C. The Secretariat is awaiting the Submitter's correction of a minor error of form under section 3.10 of the Guidelines.
 - SEM-00-005/Academia Sonorense de Derechos Humanos et al. The Secretariat dismissed the submission under Article 14(1). On 31 July 2000, the Submitters filed a revised submission.
- The Council has deferred consideration of the Secretariat's notification that a factual record is warranted with respect to SEM-97-006/The Friends of the Oldman River.

Meeting of World Environment Centre

The International Environment Forum, held by the World Environment Centre, is taking place in Montreal in October. The World Environment Centre is an association of major international businesses who are interested in demonstrating corporate leadership on environmental issues. The CEC has been invited to collaborate with the Centre in holding this Forum with a focus on trade and environment. It is a good opportunity for the CEC to expand its links with the business community and present some of its accomplishments in the trade and environment area. Attached please find a copy of the agenda and the list of participants.

Collaboration with GEO

The CEC has been invited to renew its collaboration with UNEP's GEO initiative and formalize it. As the Council may recall, the CEC assisted UNEP with the North American component of the 1999 GEO Report. This collaboration is consistent with the direction the Council gave the Secretariat in 1998 to develop collaborative relationships with centers of excellence. A memorandum of understanding laying out the terms of the CEC-UNEP collaborative arrangement is attached.

Linking up with GBIF

The CEC has been invited to link NABIN with the Global Biodiversity Information Facility (GBIF). GBIF has just recently been established to design, implement, coordinate and promote the compilation, linking, standardization, digitization, and global dissemination of the world's biodiversity data. GBIF has its origins in the OECD Megascience Forum Working Group on Biological Informatics established in 1996. Members of GBIF include 21 countries, including Canada, Mexico and the United States. NABIN is a member of the GBIF Steering Committee reflecting its success in the creation of a network of databases and information technology tools.

Developing Partnerships

The Secretariat is continuing to work to expand and deepen partnerships in the context of the work program. Developing partnerships has become more crucial for the CEC as the tightening of financial resources for program work becomes more apparent. The CEC's first GEF-sponsored initiative in partnership with PAHO and UNEP is proceeding well and offers a sense of the potential for developing partnerships and leveraging resources with other international organizations. Opportunities to work with other international organizations on other program initiatives exist. As a first step, the CEC is exchanging information with other international organizations on its program initiatives to identify areas of common interest.

Communications

Attached please find a collection of news materials that relate to the CEC and its work. As you can see, the CEC received a great deal of media attention over the past four months.

For the Council meeting in June the CEC communications group prepared a brochure describing CEC achievements, and an accompanying display. Since the Council meeting we have retained an in-house web expert, enabling us to upgrade the quality and consistency of our web presence and begin preparations toward the publication of an electronically-distributed newsletter (also to be available in print). Preparations are also underway for communications around several upcoming events, most notably the trade and environment symposium in October.

**ALTERNATE REPRESENTATIVES
SESSION 00-07**

**Held at the CEC Secretariat, Tuesday, 29 August 2000, from 9:30 AM to 6:00 PM
and Wednesday, 30 August 2000, from 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM**

Report by the Chair of JPAC — Regina Barba

I am pleased to be attending this meeting on behalf of JPAC. Since the June Council Session in Dallas transpired, some important matters have occurred to report.

Articles 14 and 15

Following the Council Session, JPAC invested a lot of energy and time to respond to its new responsibilities in accordance with Council Resolution 00-09 on matters related to NAAEC Articles 14 and 15. The working group on this issue worked diligently to prepare a “Draft JPAC Public Review of Issues Concerning the Implementation and Further Elaboration of Articles 14 and 15” via e-mail and conference calls. This was sent out for public comments on 31 July. The draft outlines the steps JPAC proposes to follow in its review of issues referred to it by Council. The deadline to submit comments on the draft document is 22 September 2000, so that we may prepare a summary report, in the three languages, for the next JPAC regular session on 13–14 October in Washington, DC. Based on this report and the discussion with the public on 13 October, we expect to release the final document in October.

JPAC has also asked for public input on the history of the submissions process for the lessons learned report. JPAC has created a separate working group for this part of its new mandate. A public workshop on lessons learned will take place on 7 December, in conjunction with JPAC’s regular session in Montreal. The Parties are invited to attend this workshop as observers. Financial assistance will be provided for public participation from the three countries in October from among those who have most contributed comments during the first call for public comments. The JPAC working group will select the participants. In addition, please note that on behalf of JPAC, I sent a letter to former and current submitters under Articles 14 and 15 to encourage them to provide comments on their experiences.

A second public workshop on lessons learned is planned in conjunction with the Council Regular Session in June 2001. The main reason to hold a second workshop in June and not earlier in 2001 is based on the financial resources of the CEC. We suggest that the financial assistance available for the public to attend the Council Session be used to fund participants who plan to attend both the Council Regular Session and also the JPAC Workshop on Lessons Learned. I suggest that the JPAC working group select the participants who will receive financial assistance for the JPAC workshop and the Council Regular Session, based on who has contributed the most in their responses to the second call for public comments on this issue. This second call for comments should be released once that the dates and location of the next Council Session are announced. I will greatly appreciate your support for this initiative, including announcing the dates and location of the next Council Session no later than March 2001.

Finally on this subject, I would like to remind you that, whenever it is available, we are ready to receive the Council's final referral memorandum in accordance with point 5(b) of Council Resolution 00-09.

Other Matters

JPAC will release a call for public comment on the proposed Program Plan and Budget for 2001–2003 once the Spanish and French versions are available. Concerning the issue of the translation into Spanish and French, I would like to recommend that the Secretariat review its work plan for the preparation of this document in order to allow more time for Spanish and French speakers to comment on this CEC core document.

Based on the public comments received on the proposed Program Plan and Budget for 2001–2003 and the exchanges with the public on it during the JPAC regular session on 13 October, JPAC will provide an Advice to Council. Please note that this call for public comments will also remind public to provide its comments on the “Draft JPAC Public Review of Issues Concerning the Implementation and Further Elaboration of Articles 14 and 15” and on Lessons Learned.

During this regular session, JPAC will also finalize its program plan for 2001. Aside from its new mandate on Articles 14 and 15, JPAC will continue to orient its work plan around the CEC's Program Plan. Four JPAC regular sessions are planned in 2001, each of which will be linked to a CEC meeting related to specific JPAC priorities. Plenary discussions with the public will be held during each JPAC regular session to seek input on CEC projects.

In addition, let me add that most JPAC members will attend to the *First North American Symposium on Understanding the Linkages between Trade and the Environment* on 11–12 October in Washington, DC. We are very much looking forward to participating. I congratulate the CEC for organizing this important session. The link between trade and the environment is at the core of our work together and the large number of participants registered to attend this event demonstrates that North American citizens are very concerned about this issue. I myself will be making a presentation during the closing session on the implications of public participation and I am eager to share views with the participants on this issue. Following the Symposium, JPAC plans an Advice to Council on what specifically should be the follow-up to the CEC's activities.

Finally, I would remind you that, in June 1998, it was suggested by the Council that the Alternate Representatives meet twice a year with JPAC members. Given that it was not possible to have a first joint meeting in June in Dallas, I hope that it will be possible to hold at least one joint meeting this year on 8 December in Montreal.