

**SEVENTEENTH REGULAR SESSION OF THE COUNCIL  
Commission for Environmental Cooperation (CEC)**

**17 August 2010  
Guanajuato, Guanajuato, Mexico**

**SUMMARY RECORD**

The Council held its seventeenth Regular Session on 17 August 2010, in Guanajuato, Guanajuato, Mexico. Juan Elvira Quesada, Secretary for Environment and Natural Resources chaired the meeting, Lisa P. Jackson, Administrator of the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and Jim Prentice, Canadian Minister of the Environment, represented the United States and Canada, respectively. Evan Lloyd, CEC Executive Director, represented the Secretariat. Nathalie Daoust, Council Secretary, acted as secretary for the Session. Other delegates were also in attendance ([http://www.cec.org/Storage/127/15245\\_part1stfinal.doc](http://www.cec.org/Storage/127/15245_part1stfinal.doc)).

**Welcoming reception and official opening of the 17th Regular Session of the CEC Council**

During the welcoming reception held on 16 August 2010, Rosario Morales Cervantes acted as master of ceremony and invited the Mayor of Guanajuato to deliver welcoming remarks and then the executive director of the CEC Secretariat, the JPAC Chair, and the Council members each to say a few words. Finally, she asked a representative from the State of Guanajuato to deliver closing remarks.

Nicéforo Guerrero Reynoso, Mayor of Guanajuato, began by welcoming the delegates to Guanajuato and pointed to the bicentennial celebrations underway. He expressed wishes for a very fruitful meeting and commended the work of the CEC in protecting the health of communities and ecosystems while contributing to building a stronger and more prosperous North America.

Evan Lloyd, executive director of the CEC Secretariat, welcomed everyone to these proceedings. He began by referring to the disastrous events in the Gulf of Mexico which, he said, have reminded us how precious and how fragile our environment is—and how dependent we are, in terms of our economy and the well being of our communities, upon its health. He went on to point out that efforts need to be made at the local, regional, and international level to manage our economic activity in a manner that does not threaten our future and that of our children. He stressed that in the months ahead the world will be looking to Mexico, and to the leadership expected from our governments in terms of the global effort to halt and reverse the disruptive impacts of climate change by reducing climate pollution and making the transition to a lower-carbon economy. Lastly, he noted how the focus here in Guanajuato will be upon the shared environment of North America and how the CEC can support the best efforts of citizens, industry, and governments alike to achieve through cooperation greater environmental results than what may be accomplished by each country individually.

Glen Wright, chair of the Joint Public Advisory Committee (JPAC), thanked the host for his hospitality. He underlined how the historic town of Guanajuato was perfectly suited to hold a meeting where the future of our countries and children will be discussed. He also took the opportunity to congratulate Mexico for their bicentennial celebrations.

Minister Jim Prentice greeted the audience and thanked Secretary Elvira for hosting the event. He stressed the importance of this meeting as a prelude to the December UN climate change conference in Cancun and expressed Canada's support for Mexico. Hopeful that important progress will be made in Cancun, he reiterated Canada's commitment to reaching a binding international agreement. Turning to Administrator Jackson, he wished a happy 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary to EPA and acknowledged the work of the agency in protecting the environment. He also congratulated the Administrator for her steadfast efforts and focus on children's health. Recalling the 2009 session in Denver, he noted the expressed commitment of Council to revitalizing the CEC and renewing the Parties' collective efforts. He noted how this commitment had led to the appointment of new US JPAC members, a new CEC executive director, as well as the development of a strategic plan for 2010–2015.

Administrator Jackson greeted the gathering and expressed her pleasure in taking part in the 17<sup>th</sup> session of the CEC Council. She stated that this meeting held promises of success as it comes at a time when challenges are no longer local but global. When our predecessors met 15 years ago, she emphasized, the NAAEC was a groundbreaking accord and, since then, officials in the three countries have worked steadfastly in its fulfillment. She noted important steps taken by the Council in Denver to address justice and community protection and listed EPA's international priorities which had just been announced: 1) Building strong environmental institutions and legal structures; 2) Combating climate change by limiting pollutants; 3) Improving air quality; 4) Expanding access to clean water; 5) Reducing exposure to toxic chemicals; and 6) Cleaning up electronic waste. Recognizing the ambitious agenda both at home and at this meeting, she indicated she was happy to be joined by two counterparts who share the same commitment of working towards a more sustainable North America.

José Gerardo Mosqueda Martínez, in representation of the Governor of Guanajuato, extended warm regards to everyone. He thanked Secretary Elvira for selecting Guanajuato and mentioned that the historic town of Guanajuato and adjacent mines were listed as one of UNESCO's world heritage sites. He invited everyone to visit the city and its surroundings, particularly the bicentennial grounds. Turning to the environment, he reported on extraordinary efforts carried out by Mexico to instill in children an attitude of respect for the environment. In his views, the countries of North America needed to work on four levels in protecting the environment: 1) scientific and technical; 2) economic; 3) legislative; and 4) political and cultural. Pointing to the bicentennial celebrations and recalling the valorous fight for the independence of Mexico, he drew a parallel with the battle that now needs to be waged to avoid destruction of the planet. In closing, he invited the three countries to coordinate efforts in this regard.

Secretary Elvira began by greeting all attendees and thanked his counterparts for their willingness to adjust their schedules and participate in this meeting. He also acknowledged the presence of new JPAC members, greeted the new executive director and welcomed the other honorary guests. Turning to the CEC, he spoke of a reinforced and more efficient organization with improved governance. He stated that the priority themes identified by the Council in Denver had been

captured in a five-year strategic plan. This plan, he indicated, provides us the opportunity to make a difference. Tomorrow, he continued, is the most important day for North America as important decisions will be made about our common future, and Mexico needs the assistance of Canada and the United States as the world forum on climate change (COP16) approaches. He noted that COP16 will be a very important political event as next steps for the region, in terms of climate change, will be defined. He then invited everyone to stand up and officially opened the seventeenth Regular Session of the CEC Council.

### **Item 1 Adoption of the agenda by Council**

The Session Agenda was adopted by the Council as drafted (the Council Session agenda can be found at <http://www.cec.org/Storage.asp?StorageID=3739&SiteLanguageID=1>).

### **Item 2 Ministerial discussion on the 2010–2015 Strategic Plan**

Secretary Elvira stressed the importance of adopting a strategic plan that will chart the course for the CEC’s work over the next five years. He invited Alejandro Posadas, member of the General Standing Committee for Mexico, to present the draft 2010–2015 Strategic Plan as well as the expected results for 2015.

Alejandro Posadas described the process for developing the strategic plan, which included consultations with officials in the three countries and three meetings focused on the three priorities established by the Council during the 2009 Council session: *Healthy Communities and Ecosystems*; *Climate Change–Low-carbon Economy*; and *Greening the Economy in North America*. He went on to present the seven strategic objectives identified under the plan, which, he said, offered balance among areas of work and involved not only the public sector but also communities and the private sector. Finally, he explained that the draft strategic plan had been recently transmitted to the JPAC for analysis and advice and that a public consultation was currently underway.

Secretary Elvira commended the work carried out since Denver and described the strategic plan as a rich proposal involving the three countries and included three of their key sectors. He also noted how the seven strategic objectives were aligned with standards currently being discussed in the international arena, particularly the ones relating to the needed balance between trade and the environment. He added that the strategic objectives allowed a clear focus on what needed to be achieved domestically and trilaterally in North America. He pointed to current efforts in the three countries to harmonize standards.

Pointing specifically to *Healthy Communities and Ecosystems*, Secretary Elvira welcomed the fact that local governments and communities will be engaged in sharing responsibilities with the federal government for improving environmental health and protecting ecosystems. As for the proposed work under *Climate Change–Low-Carbon Economy*, he stressed the potential for North American leadership in this area in setting the example for other developed countries. He reported on Mexico’s objective to reduce by 7% its emissions from 2008–2012 and described short-term objectives, including bold forest conservation measures as well as the decision to limit oil exploration. He proposed that together with Canada and the United States regional figures of emissions reduction be generated to set an example of successful cooperation. Turning to *Greening the Economy in North America*, he again underlined how

cooperative work through the CEC could provide examples of achieving sustainable economy in a region. He concluded by saying that the strategic plan offered the possibility of leading the three countries in the desired direction.

Administrator Jackson was also invited to provide comments. She began by referring to existing bilateral agreements and bodies collaborating on a number of issues. However, this moment, she said, is about how three countries can coordinate their efforts in a way that is strategic and ambitious. Through NAFTA, these areas of work represent what the three countries can achieve together in the most efficient manner. The Strategic Plan is the appropriate document needed at this time and tailored to the Parties' commitment to transparency and effectiveness. It also allows for doing more with less through a wide range of approaches, including partnerships with local communities. She added that the strategic plan was focused on yielding results and attaining goals. The document includes true innovations, she said, building on the past while acknowledging the need to incorporate new elements. She congratulated the officials and the Secretariat for their work and affirmed President Obama's commitment to the North American Agreement for Environmental Cooperation (NAAEC) and underlined his interest in transparency.

Turning to *Healthy Communities and Ecosystems*, she echoed Secretary Elvira's comment about the fundamental importance of engaging citizens directly in the protection of the environment and in ensuring the safety of chemicals and agriculture. The sound management of chemicals is a commitment of the United States, she reinforced, and the enforcement of environmental laws is a critical component of the NAAEC. She also expressed support for the work to address invasive alien species and emphasized again the value of working with a variety of stakeholders to achieve success. Regarding *Climate Change–Low-carbon Economy*, Administrator Jackson acknowledged the importance of this work, particularly in the current international context. The comparability of data will build the foundation for complementary programs dealing with climate change and she pointed out how AirNow represented an international platform through which related information could be disseminated. She encouraged the Council to not abandon progress in trilateral work in support of air quality—noting the health co-benefits that can also stem from GHG mitigation. Finally, commenting on *Greening the Economy in North America*, she emphasized how vital this area of work was and said that the CEC offered opportunities for productive cooperation and the possibility to expand green job opportunities.

Minister Prentice, on behalf of Canada, also offered a few comments on the strategic plan. He first noted that he, as environment minister, had the advantage of being responsible for climate change negotiations that had been embraced around the world and in various corners of North America. He shared his perspective that the environment had been historically well protected in North America compared to other areas of the world. This, he said, represented a strategic advantage since the region was able to be competitive trade wise operating within the parameters of a well-protected natural environment. He noted how, in 1993, NAAEC had been built on this strategic advantage and that it was the responsibility of the Parties to continue pursuing the objectives of the NAAEC. Referring to the 2009 Council session, he reminded of the Council's desire to refocus, renew and revitalize the CEC. He recognized that the 2010–2015 strategic plan succeeded in focusing on the priorities established in Denver and recalibrating the work of the CEC. He proposed to endorse the strategic plan in principle, pending the JPAC-led public consultation.

Commenting on *Healthy Communities and Ecosystems*, he indicated that consensus had been reached on establishing the North American Partnership for Environmental Community Action (NAPECA) and conveyed he embraced Administrator Jackson's concept of ensuring important symbolic actions in support of vulnerable communities and children at risk. Regarding *Climate Change–Low-carbon Economy*, he reiterated Canada's support for the Copenhagen Accord. Acknowledging the challenges in the coming years, he stressed the importance of the three countries standing together and being partners in dealing with this important issue. Again, he underlined how the three countries stood out in terms of progress and that the CEC could play an important role in assisting the Parties in achieving a North American standard for measurement, review and verification (MRV). He underscored the importance of showing regional leadership in this respect for the Cancun COP16 conference.

Finally, turning to *Greening the Economy in North America*, Minister Prentice commented on the need for striking a balance between economy and the environment and the governments' essential role in inspiring children through their achievements. As such, he explained that the CEC represented a vehicle through which citizens could be inspired to become active players. Finally, he noted that more could be done in terms of chemical management, that it represented an important issue for the Government of Canada and underlined the Parties' duty to show regional achievements in this area.

Secretary Elvira concluded this portion of the agenda by stating that the strategic plan provided the executive director and the CEC staff clarity regarding desired achievements over the next five years. He again referred to the distinctive elements and the new working culture reflected in this plan such as the integration of the private sector and the direct involvement of communities allowing for the protection of populations, more particularly women and children. He also pledged support for the integration of GHG inventories from the three countries and echoed his Canadian counterpart's suggestion that such an endeavor could provide a different way of viewing the MRV and setting an example for regional reporting, while allowing for saving in terms of cost and energy.

### **Item 3 CEC governance proposal**

Introducing the CEC governance proposal, the Chair began by stating that the Council needed to build closer ties with JPAC and citizens in general. He added that the executive director of the Secretariat had also received the mandate to improve the governance of the CEC through strengthening of the organizations' accountability and transparency and through ensuring the alignment of CEC's work with Council's priorities in pursuit of clear strategic objectives.

He then turned to Evan Lloyd and invited him to share his views and delineate possible steps for the implementation of the governance proposal.

Evan Lloyd began by thanking the Council members for the confidence they had placed in him and shared his enthusiasm in taking over these new responsibilities. He then proceeded with a slide presentation, offering thoughts on his approach to the governance proposal and identifying a path forward. He first noted the appropriateness of this discussion following the exchange on the strategic plan in that form should normally follow function. He recognized that the main challenge for the CEC was to put in place the appropriate structure and functioning model to ensure an organization which is effective, efficient, and focused on achieving results. Pointing to the underlying themes of the governance proposal—Renew, revitalize, refocus—he highlighted the

three messages he took away from the proposal: 1) strengthen the supportive functions of the Secretariat; 2) structure operations in a manner that is cost efficient, transparent, and ensures maximum support and alignment with Council objectives; 3) improve delivery of Council priorities. He offered initial thoughts on potential steps to address these recommendations and pointed to actions that had already begun at the Secretariat. In addition, he proposed to collaborate with government officials to examine and initiate work prescribed in the governance proposal and to make an interim report to Council by the end of November on readily achievable measures to enhance both efficiency and transparency. Finally, he suggested that the development of the 2011–2012 operational plans will provide a great opportunity to integrate important measures to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the CEC, including: 1) focusing on a smaller set of more ambitious projects; 2) making rational decisions concerning the staff and resources necessary to support and coordinate specific projects; and 3) integrating an effective performance management framework that could expand to encompass the performance of working groups and officials in accordance with responsibility for project results and outcomes. In closing, he offered to provide a regular progress report to Council over the next two years on the implementation of the proposal. (The presentation from the executive director can be found at: [http://www.cec.org/Storage/127/15244\\_EDPresentation-Governance-Aug2010-final.ppt](http://www.cec.org/Storage/127/15244_EDPresentation-Governance-Aug2010-final.ppt)).

Secretary Elvira thanked Evan Lloyd for his presentation and invited his counterparts to comment. In this regard, he commended the role of Minister Prentice in raising awareness in Denver about the need to renew, revitalize and refocus the CEC.

Minister Prentice began by expressing support for the plan put forward by the executive director, particularly in regards to the proposed strengthening of performance and management tools. As for the alignment with Council priorities, he assured the executive director of the Council's commitment to be more readily available to ensure a connection with the Secretariat. Taking the opportunity to underline the part played by the JPAC in CEC's governance, he expressed satisfaction with the current membership of JPAC comprising, he said, some of North America's leading citizens. As such, he stated that JPAC needed to play a more essential role in governing the organization and invited letters from the JPAC to be transmitted directly to the Council members. In closing, he assured the executive director of the full support from Canada and expressed appreciation for what had been accomplished since Denver, including the proposed focus on community initiatives.

Administrator Jackson commended Jim Prentice for his leadership in Denver and for believing that the revitalization of the organization was crucial for its future. She also echoed her Canadian counterparts' comment regarding the importance of giving JPAC an active role as partner and advisor. Referring to Evan Lloyd's presentation, she indicated the Council would be looking forward to seeing details and shared her expectation that future programs will be more focused. She also recognized that hard decisions will need to be made by the executive director regarding allocation of resources, particularly for overhead expenses. She offered the Council's assistance in discussing these matters and reinforced the need for a close relationship between the Secretariat and the Council when difficult decisions will be required.

Concerning the SEM process, Administrator Jackson stressed the importance of finding a key to improving the process. Again, she suggested that the Council hold conference calls in the next six months to address this matter.

Secretary Elvira drew attention to the point made about organizing resources in pursuit of Council priorities. He supported the idea that fewer projects should be carried out and with more cross-fertilization. This, he added, will require fewer resources for monitoring and reviewing. In addition, he echoed the comment from his US counterpart that fewer resources be dedicated to overhead expenditures in order to allocate more funds to CEC projects. Assuring the executive director that the Council will be more closely involved, he expressed certainty that more efficient work could yield concrete results.

Finally, turning again to elements of the governance proposal, he expressed support for multi-year operational plans as well as for opening negotiations on model rules of procedure in dispute resolution.

#### **Item 4            Joint meeting with JPAC**

The Chair welcomed the JPAC on behalf of the Council and underlined that the main purpose of the joint meeting was to exchange views. Acknowledging the renewal of JPAC membership in the last year, he invited each member to introduce him/herself. Following the introductions, he turned to the JPAC Chair for introductory remarks.

**Glen Wright**, the JPAC Chair, reported on a very productive meeting over the last three days where a number of issues had been reviewed and discussed. The exchange, he indicated, had been energetic and positive. He underlined that the diversity of backgrounds among JPAC members will certainly contribute to the quality of JPAC advice to Council. Noting that written advice will be submitted to the Council in the coming weeks on the 2010–2015 strategic plan and the governance proposal, he offered that JPAC provide initial comments on both documents. He reminded the Council that the draft 2010–2015 strategic plan was currently posted on the CEC website for a 30-day public consultation and that the written advice will follow this period. Lastly, he proposed that a member report briefly on the JPAC forum on healthy communities and ecosystems held the day before.

**Gustavo Alanis** spoke first on the issue of governance. His first comment concerned the need for a better, more timely and more effective communication with the Council. He drew attention to the fact that JPAC advices are often left for months without response. Improved communication, he underlined, will render benefits for the organization as a whole. He then pointed to the difficulty encountered this year in securing dates for the Council session. He encouraged that in the future internal politics interfere as little as possible in the pursuit of CEC activities. He then turned to public participation and asked that additional efforts be undertaken to ensure the conduct of timely public consultations, thus preserving the credibility of the organization and meeting public expectations. In this regard, he indicated that the JPAC could have provided better input on the draft strategic plan had it been received earlier. Finally, he stressed JPAC's desire to be an ally for the Council and assured that all CEC issues were treated with much respect.

**Tim Hearn**s indicated he had been asked by his JPAC colleagues to provide comments on the CEC governance proposal based on his personal background as former chief executive officer of a large public corporation and current chair of various boards and committees for both the private and not-for-profit sectors. He first commented that JPAC had been encouraged last year by the Council's commitment in Denver to strengthen the various processes within the CEC. However, he continued, there is clear evidence and a viewpoint that JPAC, the Secretariat and the CEC can each perform at a

higher level than they currently are. Emphasizing that governance, whether in the public or private sector, has moved to a much needed higher level of accountability and performance in our society, he offered a list of five critical elements and principles of governance: 1) meet and communicate regularly, 2) provide leadership and direction, 3) establish alignment, 4) determine accountability, and 5) measure performance outcomes. Although the governance proposal makes good suggestions concerning JPAC and the Secretariat, it is silent on the performance of the CEC itself and the overall effectiveness of the organization, he said. There are two options before us, he continued, we can remain as we are and probably continue to underperform, or we can continuously and seriously examine the governance of the organization, particularly at the overall Commission level and find ways to lift our collective performance. Adding that many JPAC members are busy, results-oriented, achievement-driven people and thus not comfortable working in a system that doesn't achieve results, the latter option of looking for continuous improvement is probably most desirable. He noted that JPAC had undertaken to examine its own effectiveness in 2009. Finally, he concluded by stating that the governance proposal, as it was presented to JPAC, is unfinished work and thus offered JPAC's advice, help, and support in raising the collective performance of the CEC to a higher and newer level.

**Geoffrey Garver** spoke to the Council on timeliness and efficiency in general. He pointed out that Secretary Elvira had emphasized in his opening remarks the need to improve efficiency of the SEM process. Referring to a graph distributed to the Council with data on SEM votes and timeliness, he underlined that only half of the votes had taken place in less than 180 days. Furthermore, he said, the last two votes have taken two years and the current votes have been pending for three years. This, he added, is a cause of concern since it impacts on the credibility of the process and doesn't serve well the Council. He continued, saying that this represented an opportunity for a public commitment on the part of Council regarding timeliness of the voting process. He suggested that the Council commit itself to voting on factual records within 120–180 days, a timeframe considered reasonable by JPAC.

Secretary Elvira responded to Gustavo Alanis' intervention about the difficulty of securing dates for the Council session. He underscored that the positive element was each Council member's desire to being present at the session, thus the need to identify a mutually convenient date. Acknowledging the delay in delivering the draft strategic plan to JPAC, he recognized however that the new executive director and the three countries had been working hand in hand in developing the strategic plan and that the Council would now benefit from JPAC's input. As for the governance proposal, he agreed that both Evan Lloyd's experience and JPAC's involvement and advice will yield new ideas. Finally, he agreed that further efforts were needed to strengthen the environmental justice component of the CEC and that any improvement to the SEM process will be beneficial. Stating that a more agile mechanism is needed, he suggested that the executive director sit with JPAC to identify ways to improve the SEM process, including the voting mechanism.

Administrator Jackson began by acknowledging the quality of individuals comprising JPAC. She recognized the need to foster good communication between JPAC and the Council and allow JPAC to be a more fluid and effective advisory body. In response to Geoff Garver's intervention on SEM, she agreed that nothing will speak more to the Council's responsiveness than renewing and revitalizing the SEM process. In this regard, she expressed the US commitment to improving the SEM process.

Minister Prentice thanked the JPAC members for their valuable contribution. He reinforced the group comprised some of the most distinguished citizens in North America and that the renewal of JPAC

membership and the appointment of Evan Lloyd as executive director coincided with the Council's desire to revitalize the organization and move it to a higher level in order to fulfill the original vision behind the North American Agreement on Environmental Cooperation (NAAEC). He added that strong people had been appointed on JPAC to provide the best possible advice to Council. In this regard, he encouraged JPAC advices to be transmitted directly to the Council without any filter, and suggested that a timely response from Council should follow. He reminded that Council had agreed in Denver that each CEC constituent had a role to play. As such, Minister Prentice assured both the Secretariat and JPAC of his commitment to be more readily available. In closing, he welcomed JPAC comments on the governance proposal.

The JPAC chair, Glen Wright, then turned to Nancy Southern to provide initial comments on the draft 2010–2015 Strategic Plan.

**Nancy Southern** began by thanking Mexico for hosting the event, the United States for appointing new JPAC members and Canada for providing her the opportunity to serve on the committee. Acknowledging that the analysis on the draft strategic plan came from diverse points of view within JPAC, she shared that members had expressed general appreciation for the document and were most supportive of the three Council priorities, and particularly pleased with the creation of the North American Partnership for Environmental Community Action (NAPECA). She then proposed, on behalf of JPAC, that an overarching principle be the greater use of collaborative partnerships with industries, academia, NGOs, and indigenous people. Indigenous people should participate in a dialogue with the CEC and take part in problem-solving, she suggested. Other comments included the fact that the strategic plan is silent on trade and on carbon capture. JPAC believes these issues should be included, she stated. She then shared that JPAC believes land use and corridors (including transportation and energy) should be incorporated, and that JPAC encourages the enhancement of PRTR and its inclusion in the SP, *Taking Stock* being seen as one of the CEC's greatest success. In this regard, she shared the strong message of concern expressed by the public. In terms of semantics, she pointed out that the use of "could" to describe strategic objectives may be perceived as ambiguous and that the JPAC recommends the use of "shall," "will" or "must" to provide a greater clarity of purpose and results. Also, a better definition of terms such as "vulnerable," "resilient," "renewable energy," etc. was suggested since a good definition of these terms will help in developing future operational plans. In closing, she underlined how the tremendous spirit of cooperation she had noted among the public, the Council, the JPAC and the Secretariat was the strong backbone of the CEC.

Secretary Elvira thanked Nancy Southern for a very good analysis. Recalling the previous strategic plan, he underscored how this one is linked to the reality of North America in terms of climate change, to the future of greening our economy and to each country's obligations *vis-à-vis* its own citizens. He also agreed with the importance of strengthening ties with the private sector as well as linking the work of the federal government with communities and local governments alike, underlining that, for Mexico, the participation of local governments will set an example for other local governments to dedicate resources and involve their citizens in the protection of the environment. Turning to the governance proposal, he indicated JPAC could generate useful comments and provide more clarity to Evan Lloyd in fulfilling his mandate. Finally, on the topic of climate change, he stressed how the cooperative work achieved through the CEC could set an example of how three countries can work together and accomplish what could not be achieved in Bonn or Copenhagen.

Minister Prentice thanked Nancy Southern and expressed support for her comments. He also took this opportunity to endorse the final draft Strategic Plan 2010–2015 noting the importance of finalizing the document as soon as possible by integrating JPAC comments. As we look forward, he affirmed, we need to go back to the central principles of the NAAEC, which includes the need to be vigilant about the environment in a context of competitiveness. In this regard, he expressed support for JPAC’s comment to speak of the linkage between trade and the environment and examine issues of land use and agriculture. Pointing to his US counterpart, he commended her leadership in integrating a focus on children’s health and in including partnerships with indigenous and vulnerable communities. Finally, he agreed that the PRTR work should be incorporated in the strategic plan.

Administrator Jackson also agreed with all JPAC comments, particularly the need to foster greater partnerships. She also echoed Minister Prentice’s comment about the trade and environment linkages. She also expressed support for the overarching principles presented by Ms. Southern and stressed that the importance was not only on *what* we will do but *how* we will do it. Pointing to First Nations and indigenous communities, she emphasized that sustainable ethics should always be part of the way we carry out CEC activities.

**Nelly Adriana Correa** was invited to provide a report on the JPAC workshop held the day before. She began by congratulating the Council for its decision to focus CEC’s work on healthy communities and ecosystems. She explained that the workshop had examined the interrelationship between human health and healthy ecosystems, and included a very interesting presentation by Dr. Aaron Bernstein, a pediatric doctor co-author of “Sustaining life: How human health depends on biodiversity”. She explained that, although the relationship between human health and the environment has often been understood as the impact of industrial pollution, studies have shown that human health depends directly on a healthy natural environment which is abundant with good quality of air, water, and food. It is also known, she added, that the disruption of ecological processes can contribute to spreading emerging or re-emerging diseases such as SARS, H1N1, etc. On behalf of JPAC, she therefore suggested that the CEC was best positioned to undertake the identification of 1) shared natural systems of particular importance in maintaining the health of communities; 2) potential threats to priority natural systems which may be deriving from trade; and 3) potential benefits deriving from trade affecting conservation of shared ecosystems. In closing, she stressed that environmental standards and regulations represent important tools in the hands of governments to ensure the health of communities and ecosystems. In this regard, she added, the CEC has played to date an important role in promoting harmonization of environmental laws and strengthening their enforcement in the North American region.

**Glen Wright** provided closing remarks. He shared that, in his views, the Council had shown good leadership during this session and that there was now a more realistic opportunity to optimize and join efforts.

Administrator Jackson took the opportunity to thank Nelly Adriana Correa for her chairmanship and individual leadership expressed in 2009.

Minister Prentice conveyed he was proud of the relationship among Council members and their joint commitment to revitalizing the CEC, which stemmed from a frank discussion held in Denver in June 2009. He thanked JPAC for their comments on the draft 2010–2015 strategic plan and stated that, in

his opinion, the plan brings life into what was envisioned in 1993 when the NAAEC was adopted: namely, an organization which is transparent, focused, and responsive to priorities of all three governments.

Finally, Secretary Elvira added his congratulations to JPAC for this energetic session and indicated he was pleased to see that both the Council and JPAC were heading in the same direction and yielding very positive results.

#### **Item 5 Progress report from the Executive director**

Secretary Elvira invited the executive director to report on CEC accomplishments since the last Denver Council Session (as per Rule 5.3 of Council Rules of Procedure). (The presentation from the executive director can be found at <http://www.cec.org/Storage.asp?StorageID=3820>).

Administrator Jackson commented on the impressive accomplishments of the CEC. She congratulated the executive director and the Secretariat staff for the quality of the reports and for demonstrating the benefits of trilateral cooperation. Acknowledging the importance of the work undertaken to date, she underlined the need to keep people and communities in focus. Environmentalism, she explained, is about making urban and suburban areas safe and clean, about protecting children in schools and workers in their jobs. She pointed to large communities suffering from chemicals dumped directly into local water, residents who still live without potable water and sanitation services, and indigenous communities who can only access water that doesn't meet EPA standards. Illegal dump sites still expose elderly people and children to dangerous toxics, she added. All these issues deserve attention and, as such, governments will look to the CEC to help accomplish these goals in the next five years, she concluded.

Secretary Elvira agreed with Administrator Jackson's comments and thanked the executive director for a very complete report. He then turned to Minister Prentice for additional comments.

Minister Prentice thanked the executive director and the Secretariat for the work carried out since the last Council session. He noted how, in the interim, in line with the decision to renew and revitalize the CEC, Evan Lloyd had been appointed as the new executive director, a new strategic plan had been developed as well as proposal to renew the governance of the CEC. These are essential building blocks the Council had agreed to pursue in Denver, he explained. He indicated he was impressed with the report on CEC accomplishments and the work of the CEC over the last five years. He pointed particularly to the North American Environmental Atlas, which represents an incredible tool for users in the three countries. He also reported on Council's re-commitment to ensuring a functioning relationship between Council members and the desire to meet more often and to provide more timely advice and information to the Secretariat. Minister Prentice took the opportunity to thank the JPAC members for their hard work over the last year and underlined that JPAC was comprised of some of North America's most distinguished citizens. He noted that the CEC is poised to carry out exceptional work and that, in the coming year, a new focused and targeted strategic plan will be set in motion. This plan, he explained, reflects the desire of the three countries to work together on climate change, on protecting communities and the health of children as well as on greening the North American economy. The way forward, he added, is one where the integrity of JPAC, the Secretariat and the Council will be maintained and where the three entities work together in a respectful way. Finally, he

asked Evan Lloyd to comment on recommendations from the Eastern Research Group (ERG) on improving the performance of the CEC.

Evan Lloyd explained that the ERG report provided an assessment of the work and effectiveness of the CEC over the last five years in accordance with the objectives set in the previous strategic plan. While the first part of the report listed accomplishments under the work program, he explained that the second part provided advice on the efficacy of the CEC performance measurement regime, namely methods of planning, tracking and measuring. He commented that a number of specific recommendations stemming from the analysis will prove useful as steps are taken to make the next strategic plan operational and as new projects are defined in a way that is measurable and achievable.

Secretary Elvira acknowledged in his closing remarks that the appointment of Evan Lloyd has been a very positive decision for the organization. He also echoed Minister Prentice's comments on the North American Environmental Atlas and suggested that it be expanded in the future to include additional data aligned with the new priorities. On a related note, he recalled how the CEC, in 2007, had supported work to protect the monarch butterfly. In 2010, he reported, only 1.5 hectares of the 5,000 hectares of the butterfly sanctuary in Mexico have been lost to illegal logging. He acknowledged the efforts of authorities in fighting this crime and reducing the loss from 400 hectares to 1.5 hectares but thanked particularly the United States and Canada for supporting Mexico in this endeavor.

## **Item 6 The 2010–2015 Strategic Plan and report on the kick-off projects**

### **Item 6.1 Healthy communities and ecosystems**

#### ***Establishment of new Pediatric Environmental Health Specialty Unit (PEHSU) Network in North America***

Enrique Cifuentes, Principal Research Scientist, Harvard School of Public Health, and Director of the PEHSU initiative—Visiting Profesor, *Departamento de Salud Publica, Universidad de Guadalajara* - was invited to profile the CEC-sponsored environmental health services work underway in communities surrounding Lake Chapala and related efforts in support of the network of North American PEHSUs. As part of his presentation, he highlighted community outreach services and consultations with public agencies on the effects of water pollution, pesticides and chronic, low-level exposures to mercury. He stressed that sustainable training programs, community outreach services and research programs can provide viable solutions to addressing environmental health risk in vulnerable populations. (The accompanying slide presentation can be found at:

<http://www.cec.org/Storage.asp?StorageID=3823>.)

### **Item 6.2 Climate change–Low-carbon economy**

#### ***Improving comparability of emissions data, methodologies and inventories in North America***

The Chair invited Loretta MacDonald, Senior Program Engineer, GHG Reporting Section, Environment Canada, to provide an update on the work of Party officials to develop an agenda for ongoing collaboration in support of this initiative. The presentation highlighted how the project will lay the foundation for future inventory work on GHG data and black carbon as well as transition to a low-carbon economy. In addition the project will assist in supplying information and tools to inform future mitigation. (The accompanying slide presentation can be found at:

<http://www.cec.org/Storage.asp?StorageID=3824>.)

### **Item 6.3 Greening the economy in North America**

#### ***Intelligence-led Enforcement for North American E-Waste Activities***

Susan Bromm, Director for Federal Activities, Office of Enforcement and Compliance Assurance, USEPA and US co-chair of the Enforcement Working Group, was invited to profile the work of Party officials to enhance the trilateral exchange of information and intelligence among environment, customs and enforcement agencies in order to target and interdict illegal exports of used electronic products. During her presentation, Ms. Bromm emphasized the importance of information sharing among officials in the three countries and the need to draw a more complete picture of illegal e-waste activity in order to generate the appropriate response to this enforcement challenge. (The accompanying slide presentation can be found at:

<http://www.cec.org/Storage.asp?StorageID=3825>.)

Administrator Jackson commented on the three presentations. Regarding the PEHSU initiative, she underlined how the project was so simple yet so complicated. Acknowledging the vulnerability of children, she commended the work carried out under this project to empower community members in educate others, particularly mothers. Concerning the kick off project under Climate Change–Low-carbon Economy, she underlined the work already accomplished in completing an air emissions inventory and indicated that a similar inventory was needed for water. She reinforced the US commitment to data and to the provision of accurate data. Turning to electronic waste, she recognized the need for the three countries to work together recognizing that the matter poses a number of challenges.

Minister Prentice commented on the good quality of the three kick-off projects. He expressed much support for the PEHSU initiative. He referred to the Canadian Chemical Plan Management whereas 5000 chemicals have been assessed and a regulatory framework has been developed for each chemical. On the topic of climate change, he mentioned that the domestic measurement, review and verification (MRV) agreed to in Copenhagen is most challenging and that the CEC can assist the three countries in assembling quality information and consistent data. As for the Intelligence-led enforcement kick-off project, Minister Prentice recalled the enforcement component of the NAAEC and supported the need to cooperate in this area. Pointing out that the Secretariat would be reporting back and seeking Council's guidance on next steps, he thanked the Secretariat for bringing forth projects aligned with the Council's stated priorities.

Secretary Elvira thanked the three presenters and acknowledged these were concrete initiatives. He underscored that the projects could easily generate elements to pull together legislation.

### **Item 7 Report on the North American Partnership for Environmental Community Action (NAPECA)**

The Chair invited the executive director to report on progress under NAPECA, particularly on the pilot projects underway aimed at building partnerships at the community level in support of the three Council priorities. In his report, the executive director described the three pilot projects (in the US and Mexico), their level of funding and main focus. He noted that the evaluation of the pilot

stage is planned for early fall and that the definition of the parameters of the grant program will follow with the objective of identifying and awarding a more comprehensive set of community-based grants in 2011. (The accompanying report can be found at: [http://www.cec.org/Storage/127/15243\\_2010\\_CEC\\_grants-EDreport\\_to\\_Council\\_Aug2010.doc](http://www.cec.org/Storage/127/15243_2010_CEC_grants-EDreport_to_Council_Aug2010.doc))

## **Item 8 Council public session**

Mr. Glen Wright, JPAC Chair opened the public session by introducing the Council members. One representative from each country was invited to report on the outcomes of discussions held at the public networking session.

The following comments and recommendations were made by *Anna Tilman*, one of three representatives from the public: 1) the pollutant releases and transfer registries in each country and the CEC's PRTR are critical tools for citizens, thus more efforts should be made to reach out to communities about the application of PRTRs; 2) policies and tools need to be developed to conduct cumulative assessments of chemicals. The current chemical-by-chemical approach to risk assessment and risk management ignores simultaneous exposure to several similar chemicals. New chemicals need to be dealt with as well; products (including food) specifically directed to children's use should be given special examination; 3) it is recommended that the CEC improve its public engagement, for example, through increased participation in CEC programs and projects, and carry outreach activities to improve awareness and knowledge of its work; 4) the CEC needs to attend to indigenous communities.

*Mindahi Crescencio Bastida*, representing Mexico, listed the following recommendations for sustaining healthy communities and ecosystems: 1) generate solid socio-environmental information for decision making; 2) increase public participation involving the private sector, industrial sector and indigenous communities in CEC planning processes; 3) create a trinational program to monitor exposure to contaminants affecting communities and animal species; 4) work towards standardizing environmental regulations; 5) switch to low carbon economies, and 6) increase CEC's budget to strengthen North American cooperation and public participation.

*Archie Beaton*, representing the United States, recommended improving PRTR, through third party auditing of specific sectors, to use the information from PRTR reports to deal with specific chemicals, to include e-waste under PRTR, and to conduct more research and communication as a way of bringing more players into CEC processes.

### **Summary of public oral interventions in order of appearance:**

#### ***Implementation of complementary action to the Obama-Calderon initiative to mitigate greenhouse gases by Mr. Luis Felipe Ayala Soto.***

Mr. Ayala Soto called upon the Council to plan and develop complementary actions to mitigate greenhouse gases within the NAFTA framework and the Obama-Calderón initiative. This, he noted will give continuity to a previous commitment from the CEC Council, made in 1998, to work with the private sector to promote the implementation of the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM). He urged the Council to develop guidelines and policies that promote sustainable projects and which will ultimately contribute to mitigating climate change. Such projects, he mentioned, will bring a number of benefits at the local, state and national level.

***Climate change action, carbon markets, and ecosystem benefits in North America, by Mr. Markus Gehring, Centre for International Sustainable Development Law, and Jean Monnet Chair, University of Ottawa***

Mr. Gehring's intervention highlighted the importance of trying to balance the environment and the economy, and focusing on legal reforms and regulations that can integrate both sets of priorities. His recommendations to the CEC Council, included: 1) collaborate more closely to develop the legal framework for carbon markets- to examine the potential for joint methodologies and accurate accounting for Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and forest Degradation (REDD). He suggested that the three partner countries could even venture further to pioneer and share low-emission strategies such as integrated land-use planning policies that take REDD (the "green carbon") into account for forests, agriculture, infrastructure development; 2) generate an open dialogue on the inclusion and pricing of ecosystem services, including for North American businesses, perhaps with three comparable case studies in the three NAFTA countries; 3) carry out concrete and practical joint work on economic measures, such as the redirection of perverse subsidies that facilitate a transition to a low carbon economy. Mr. Gehring stated that the three North American countries need to identify the obstacles to reform, find real examples of ways to overcome them, and move beyond pilot projects, to scale up the lessons learned for North America.

***The shared responsibility of grasslands conservation at a North American scale, by Mauricio de la Maza on behalf of Jurgen Hoth, WWF Mexico.***

Only a century and a half ago, the North American grasslands were "oceans of grass". Now, this ecosystem is in peril, perhaps more than any other, Mr. de la Maza stated. Among the many environmental services provided by grasslands, livestock production, carbon sequestration, aquifer recharge and biodiversity stand out. He underlined the need to recognize the economic value of these services to stop grassland loss and to restore this important ecosystem. Grasslands are the foundation of the 70+ billion dollar beef industry in the U.S and 6.5 billion in Canada, he continued. Mr. de la Maza quoted decreasing bird populations as an indicator of the precipitous decline of the grasslands ecosystem and called on the governments to: 1) enforce existing laws concerning land use, 2) develop new regulations and incentives where current ones are inadequate and 3) help develop a comprehensive grasslands conservation strategy. The importance of enforcement cannot be overstated he added, as recent rapid conversion of grasslands to croplands in Mexico has been done in defiance of legal limits on both land-use change and ground water extraction. The depletion of aquifers by agricultural expansion pits short-term economic gains against long-term economic stability in a region that already faces serious financial hardships. Sustainable economic solutions are much closer aligned with grassland conservation goals than the current model of agricultural expansion. Mr. de la Maza urged the CEC to build on already existing frameworks and proven mechanisms for collaboration such as the North American Bird Conservation Initiative (NABCI), and the Chihuahuan Desert Grasslands Conservation Alliance to promote grassland conservation at a continental scale and emphasized the urgent need to take domestic and international action to spur grassland conservation for the benefit of North America's people and wildlife.

***The Need for Greenhouse Gas-Related Data Collection for Transborder Freight Transportation in North America, by Nicholas Nigro, Pew Center on Global Climate Change.*** Mr. Nigro noted that the biggest barrier to quantifying greenhouse gases is the fact that greenhouse gas-related data for transboundary freight transportation in North America is inconsistent and incomplete. On behalf of the

Pew Center, he recommended that the CEC facilitate and encourage the adoption of data collection methods that are consistent and comprehensive for transboundary freight movement in North America. In all three countries, he stated, the vast majority of all greenhouse gas emissions from moving goods are from freight trucks since they carry nearly 70 percent of freight and have significantly greater carbon intensity than other modes.<sup>1</sup> If we focus in on transboundary freight movement, we have a good chance of making a marked improvement in the environmental impacts of moving goods in key locations, Mr. Nigro noted. Furthermore, he recommended that the CEC coordinate adoption by the three North American countries of data collection methods that are consistent and comprehensive for transboundary freight movement. To this end, the data collection should include metrics such as greenhouse gas emissions, greenhouse gas intensity, and overall fuel use. These data should also contain multiple performance measures such as delays at border crossings, congestion delays due to bottlenecks, capacity utilization, and intermodal efficiency. The collection of these data will greatly assist in identifying opportunities for improvement that will lower greenhouse gas emissions and create a more sustainable freight transportation system in North America.

***PRTR information in support of environmental policies and decision making, by Luis Sánchez Cataño, Colegio de Ingenieros Ambientales de México A. C.***

Recognizing the catalytic role of the CEC in creating the North American PRTR and the importance of the program, he requested to include it as part of the new CEC's Strategic Plan, within the Healthy Communities and Ecosystems priority. The information stemming from the registry can be applied to identify potential risks to human health, investigate possible impacts on communities, among others. He expressed concern over the possibility of losing such an important tool if it is not integrated into the new strategic plan of the CEC. His recommendations included the need to 1) share lessons learned; 2) support the participation of key stakeholders; 3) promote local PRTR programs; 4) provide a common platform for collaboration among interest groups on PRTR; and 5) re-establish the children's health project under the auspices of the CEC.

***Transboundary Environmental Impact Assessment (TEIA) in a North American Context, by Chris Wold, Associate Professor, Lewis & Clark Law School***

In his address to Council, Mr. Wold proposed developing an agreement on a continental approach to transboundary environmental impact assessment (TEIA), which could yield many benefits for the CEC and the North American environment. A regional TEIA agreement would raise the public profile of the CEC and prove its relevance to North Americans, he said. The TEIA has particular relevance in the NAFTA/NAAEC context where the three Parties share borders of thousands of miles, with activities in all three countries having transboundary impacts. Many of the projects along the border relate to energy development and transmission of electricity, thus implementing a TEIA agreement could help implement CEC's new strategy on climate change, Mr. Wold stated. In addition, it would fulfill the promise of Article 10(7) of the NAAEC to seek an agreement on TEIA. Mr. Wold noted that an agreement among the Parties would provide an agreed method for analyzing those impacts and doing so in a uniform way. He added that a series of case studies could help the Parties highlight the similarities and differences in current EIA and TEIA methodologies, and could frame renewed negotiations. He concluded by mentioning that the CEC is uniquely positioned to catalyze these efforts by providing objective information and logistic support for any trilateral negotiations on this issue.

***Recuperación de áreas verdes en zonas urbanas, by Luz Alejandra Delgadillo, Ehecatl Consultoría***

**Ambiental.** Ms. Delgadillo explained that current urban development has turned cities into grey, contaminated places, many of which have actually become urban heat islands (UHI). Ms. Delgadillo proposed to develop studies to identify the ten most important cities where such heat islands occur in North America, as well as economic mechanisms to implement geotechnology. By implementing geotechnology in our cities, particularly those that have UHI, it is possible to counteract the increase in temperatures and other negative impacts on our environment.

***Conservation of migratory birds and their habitat in North America by Carla Sbert, Nature Canada***

Ms. Sbert urged the CEC to focus its efforts over the next five years on restoring the health of North America's grasslands ecosystems. Less than 20% of the Canadian grasslands remain and many grasslands species are struggling, she said. Given the growing threats to species and habitat, she urged the governments of Canada, Mexico and the United States to establish a North American-wide effort to stop any further loss and restore the grasslands. She also noted that the CEC is uniquely positioned to address trends of grasslands degradation, while recognizing the contributions the CEC has already made towards the conservation of North America's grasslands and its wildlife. She conveyed that Nature Canada strongly supports the new plan which indicates that the CEC might undertake an initiative to promote best management practices to sustain biodiversity and improve economic performance of local communities, adding that supporting good practices and promoting their widespread adoption should be one of the components of any serious program to address the threats to grasslands. Nature Canada also recommends that, in order to increase the resilience of grasslands ecosystems, and in addition to promoting best practices, the CEC should also facilitate actions that only governments can take and that are key to the future of North America's grasslands. She added that two critical, urgent and long-overdue actions the CEC can undertake are: 1) creating additional protected areas; and 2) eliminating pesticides that kill birds and other wildlife.

***North America's e-Waste: A Primary Source of a Global Crisis, by Jim Puckett, Basel Action Network (BAN)***

Mr. Puckett began his intervention by explaining BAN's mission, which is: 1) to prevent the globalization of the hazardous trade, including the externalization of risk and costs to developing countries; 2) to promote a toxics-free future; and 3) to promote global environmental justice. Currently, he said, we are all awash in electronic gadgetry of all kinds, caused by the unprecedented growth of the information technology (IT) industry. This industry, by nature, is highly innovative, and has consequently brought "hyper obsolescence" of products, generating tons of electronic waste, Mr. Puckett noted. 50 million metric tons of e-waste generated globally each year, an amount that will continue to grow as the developing countries continue to catch up on consumer trends, he cited. The problem, Mr. Puckett said, is that e-waste is toxic waste. It contains toxic metals, brominated flame retardants, as well as other halogenated hydrocarbons, such as polyvinyl chlorides (PVCs), and chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs). In addition, he noted, most of the e-waste is being generated by North American consumers. Therefore, we have a sure responsibility in generating solutions to this problem, he affirmed. Many recycling companies, instead of actually recycling the different components properly, simply export e-waste to countries with lax regulations, like China. In conclusion, Mr. Puckett urged the Council to ratify the BAN amendment to stop the movement of hazardous waste either through ratification of the amendment through the Basel Convention or through national legislation and to put this at the top of CEC agenda.

**Replies from the Council members:**

**Secretary Juan R. Elvira Quesada** thanked the public for engaging in this dialogue through the CEC, by sharing their views, concerns and information. With regards to the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) projects, Minister Elvira stressed that Mexico is currently looking at new alternatives, through the Obama-Calderón alliance, specifically on methane, to be able to reduce emissions significantly. Responding to Mr. Gehring, Minister Elvira emphasized that Mexico has high expectations for the Cancún Climate Change conference to reach an agreement on protecting forests as one of the priorities for reducing emissions. In response to Mr. de la Maza and Ms. Sbert on the conservation of grasslands, Mr. Elvira noted that Mexico in the last year protected 500,000 hectares in Northern Chihuahua and introduced a new bison population to aid in the restoration of the habitat. To Mr. Nigro, Secretary Elvira agreed that significant work can be undertaken at the CEC with respect to transboundary freight transportation. On the issue of the PRTR, he explained that Mexico has issued four inventories (2004–2007) in the past three and one-half years, with data harmonized with Canada and the United States, which represents significant progress. To Mr. Wold, concerning a TEIA agreement, Minister Elvira confirmed that Mexico and the US have already agreed to a bilateral TEIA agreement addressing the BP oil spill. Addressing Ms. Alejandra Delgadillo, Secretary Elvira affirmed that Mexico is providing support and creating incentives for projects that involve geotechnologies to restore green spaces in urban areas in the excess of P\$100,000,000. Mr. Elvira concluded by noting that Mexico is actively promoting a different kind of ranching that does not involve farming or agriculture, but instead is dedicated to conserving and protecting wildlife as well as promoting its sustainable production. Most of the efforts, he noted, are concentrated in northern Mexico, and cover large grassland areas. The total area covered by these farms, when added to the national protected areas, amounts to 35% of all national territory being managed under the sustainable framework.

**Administrator Lisa P. Jackson** acknowledged the quality of the presentations, and echoed Minister Elvira’s enthusiasm regarding the US-Mexico work on methane, and committed to joining him in October to rally world support for bringing methane to “the big four” [four principal greenhouse gases: carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>), methane (CH<sub>4</sub>), nitrous oxide (N<sub>2</sub>O) and the halocarbons (a group of gases containing fluorine, chlorine and bromine)]. In response to Mr. Gehring, she indicated that the Cancún meeting (COP16) will provide an opportunity to move into climate change action, ecosystem benefits, and deforestation and reforestation issues. Administrator Jackson accredited WWF’s important work for the conservation of grassland ecosystems, the largest shared ecosystem between Canada, Mexico and the United States and encouraged them to continue their efforts. She recognized Mr. Nigro’s call to commit to the harmonization of cross border freight transportation data between the three countries. Administrator Jackson underlined the importance of PRTR as one of the most empowering tools to inform communities about the contaminants in our environment. She added that EPA looks forward to new opportunities for collaboration and improvement of the PRTR programs. To Mr. Gehring, Administrator Jackson responded that EPA is excited to take on the BP oil spill as an opportunity to carry out a transboundary environmental impact assessment. To Ms. Alejandra Delgadillo, Administrator Jackson replied by commending her presentation and recognized the importance of greening urban areas and reducing heat island effects. To Ms. Sbert, she thanked her for emphasizing the impact of pesticides on birds and their habitat, and underlined that EPA is proud of President’s Obama initiative to reinvigorate the pesticides program. Lastly, Minister Jackson addressed Mr. Puckett’s presentation on e-waste, recognizing that Americans are voracious consumers, and noted that

education needs to play a role in bringing a solution to this problem. She added that we have an environmental responsibility to ensure that e-waste does not poison children in other countries, and assured that US EPA shared his concern and is working on different fora to address the e-waste issue. She also agreed that e-waste was an important subject to include under the CEC.

**Minister Jim Prentice** recognized the breadth and depth of the presentations and thanked the public and the JPAC members for their participation and contribution to the CEC. In response to the presentations on climate change, he underlined that CEC's new Five-Year Strategic Plan identifies this issue as one of the three priorities. Minister Prentice echoed Minister Elvira and Administrator Jackson's high expectations for the Cancún meeting to achieve significant progress in reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation, adding that the Cancún meeting can be a step towards the conversion of the Copenhagen accord into a binding international agreement. Addressing the presentation from Nature Canada, on grasslands conservation, Minister Prentice noted that Canada has taken remarkable steps in the protection of ecosystems, expanding its national park system by 30% in the last three years. Specifically on grasslands conservation, he noted that the government of Canada is moving forward with the Grasslands National Park in a multi-million dollar initiative with Nature Conservancy Canada and Ducks Unlimited to protect the most fragile areas of this ecosystem. On the issue of freight transportation, Mr. Prentice recognized that the largest source of emissions in Canada comes from the transportation sector, which is why Canada has engaged in a robust regulatory strategy for all new vehicles, to comply with continental tail pipe emission standards, starting with 2011 automobiles, followed by all categories of heavy trucks, planes, ships and trains. With regards to the PRTR, the access to information and the provision of timely information has to be a cornerstone for continued efforts on PRTR.

Mr. Glen Wright thanked the Ministers for their respectful attention and for the time that will be invested in reviewing the JPAC input on the CEC's five-year Strategic Plan. Minister Elvira also thanked attendees for their participation.

## **Item 9 Signing of Council resolutions and ministerial statement**

The chair invited his counterparts to join him in signing Council Resolution 10-02 on Children's Health and the Environment—Pediatric Environmental Health Specialty Units, Council Resolution 10-03 establishing funding for the CEC for 2011, as well as the Ministerial Statement. Following the signing ceremony, the Council members exchanged gifts.

Session adjourned.

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<sup>i</sup> North American Transportation Statistics. (n.d.). Table 5 -1 Domestic Freight Activity By Mode (tons). Retrieved 5 August 2010, from North American Transportation Statistics Database: <http://nats.sct.gob.mx/nats/sys/tables.jsp?i=3&id=15>