

## **SESSION 08-03 OF ALTERNATE REPRESENTATIVES**

### **SUMMARY RECORD**

The Commission for Environmental Cooperation (CEC) Council, represented by its Alternate Representatives, met via conference call on 22 December 2008. Mr. Scott Fulton (United States) chaired the meeting, Mr. David McGovern and Mr. Enrique Lendo Fuentes represented Canada and Mexico, respectively. Mr. Adrián Vázquez, CEC executive director, represented the Secretariat, Ms. Jane Gardner, represented the JPAC as its chair, and Ms. Nathalie Daoust, Council Secretary, acted as secretary for the session. Other officials of the Parties and the Secretariat were also in attendance.

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

The Alternate Representatives adopted the agenda based on the provisional agenda (Annex A).

#### **Item 2 Brief remarks by the Executive Director and the JPAC Chair**

Turning to the Executive Director, the Chair congratulated the Secretariat for the efforts carried out in the last few months in developing and refining the draft 2009 Operational Plan. The Executive Director expressed satisfaction in seeing the conclusion of negotiations on the 2009 Operational Plan and thanked the Parties for their support throughout 2008 and for their commitment to trilateral environmental cooperation. He indicated he looked forward to the New Year and to discussing with the Parties the strategic direction of the CEC for the next five years.

The Chair then turned to the JPAC Chair and expressed appreciation for JPAC's Advice 08-03 on the draft 2009 Operational Plan. On behalf of the Council, he indicated that a response would be forthcoming and would offer the Council's views on the elements proposed by the JPAC. He also thanked the JPAC Chair for her dedication to the CEC and for fulfilling with success her second mandate as JPAC Chair. She responded by thanking the Alternate Representatives for the opportunity to be a part of the JPAC since 2003. Looking back at 2008, she reported that JPAC had completed its meetings for 2008 and that a new JPAC Chair, Nelly Correa from Mexico, had been elected for 2009. Acknowledging the commitment and talent of Ms. Correa, she stated JPAC's intention to hold three meetings in 2009, beginning with a meeting during the week of 6 April 2009, in Mexico, at a location to be confirmed. While the focus of the first meeting will be on watershed management, the topics for the two other meetings have yet to be agreed upon. In response to a request by Canada, she pointed out that a provisional calendar of JPAC meetings for 2009 will be circulated as soon as possible.

#### **Item 3 2009 Operational Plan and Budget**

The Chair congratulated the three countries for their engagement and thanked particularly the members of the General Standing Committee (GSC) for their assistance in ensuring that the Operational Plan meets trilateral support. He then invited his counterparts to comment and

approve the 2009 Operational Plan and budget. Both the Canadian and Mexican Alternate Representatives echoed the Chair's appreciation for the work carried out by the GSC and the Secretariat. Canada commented that the 2009 Operational Plan identified better than previous years project end dates and stressed the importance of embedding this information in project descriptions. The Canadian Alternate Representative then inquired of the JPAC Chair whether she had any concern about Council approving in principle the 2009 Operational Plan and budget while the public consultation was still underway. The JPAC Chair explained that JPAC had endeavored to resolve the conflict between the timing of the approval of the 2009 plan and budget and the conduct of a public consultation. On behalf of JPAC, she encouraged the Alternate Representatives to approve in principle the 2009 Operational Plan and budget pending completion of the public consultation period, following which the JPAC would be considering comments received and determine whether recommendations were warranted. The Alternate Representatives agreed to proceed in that fashion and confirmed their interest in receiving any further recommendations from the JPAC based on public comments.

With respect to the project on the recovery of the vaquita, the Alternate Representatives concurred that clear beginning and end dates needed to be identified for CEC projects. Recognizing the identified 2009 end date for this project, the Mexican Alternate Representative underlined the success of the recent meeting in Mexicali on the vaquita and indicated he will be looking forward to future discussions with his counterparts on this project. Having made these comments, the Alternate Representatives approved, in principle, the 2009 Operational Plan and budget as distributed by the Secretariat on 18 December 2008.

#### **Item 4 2009 funding resolution**

The Alternate Representatives voted in favor of Council Resolution 08-07 establishing CEC funding for 2009.

#### **Item 5 Alt Reps retreat**

The Chair confirmed that the retreat of the Alternate Representatives was currently scheduled for 28–29 January 2009, and would be held in the vicinity of Washington, DC. The Alternate Representatives agreed that a clearly defined agenda needed to be developed. The Canadian Alternate Representative noted that the current dates might present a challenge, since the Canadian Parliament is scheduled to resume its session then. He underlined, however, the expressed interest of the new Canadian Council member, Jim Prentice, in engaging with the CEC and recognized how this represented an opportune time to discuss the future work of the CEC. He concluded by stating that concrete results needed to come out of the retreat. The Mexican Alternate Representative suggested that the retreat should be held in a relaxed setting and be viewed mainly as a brainstorming session.

Having made these comments, the Alternate Representatives charged the General Standing Committee to work with the Secretariat in putting together the draft agenda and to confirm the most appropriate time for the retreat.

Before concluding the session, the Chair announced that the United States would be hosting the

2009 Council Session on 22–23 June 2009, at the Grand Hyatt Hotel in Denver, Colorado. He asked the Secretariat to work with US EPA in finalizing the details for the Council session. In closing, he drew attention to the appointment of Lisa Jackson as the new US EPA Administrator.

Holiday greetings were exchanged by all participants and the session was adjourned.