



JPAC ADVICE TO COUNCIL 97-3

Assessment of the First Three Years of the Agreement

THE JOINT PUBLIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE

CONSIDERING

- That Article 10, paragraph 1, subparagraph b of the NAAEC establishes that: "...the Council shall, within four years after the date of entry into force of this Agreement, review its operation and effectiveness in the light of experience";
- That through Council Resolution 97-6, dated 12 June 1997, the Council asked JPAC to provide advice on the implementation and further elaboration of the NAAEC in the light of experience, and provide comments to the Council and the Review Committee by the end of 1997;
- That JPAC has actively participated throughout the year in the evaluation process: on the occasion of the NAAEC evaluation meeting held in Montreal on 18-19 April; at the special Council meeting convened on 24 October; and by asserting its vision of the CEC through JPAC Resolution of Advice 97-1 to Council;
- That the month of December was the deadline set by Council for JPAC to provide its views on the operation of the NAAEC;
- That, further to JPAC's involvement in this assessment and participation in the meetings of the Experts' Group chaired by Maurice Strong, we share the conclusion of this Committee and specifically endorse its recommendations;

JPAC summarizes the situation after three years as follows:

The CEC is an innovative institution; it is both maturing and deepening; and it is adding value in the sense that a range of environment problems are being addressed for the first time from a Continental perspective. These are significant achievements. At the same time, as a practical working agreement of cooperation across a continent, it is a model for the future management and development of a North American Community. However, the CEC is still fragile. It must receive a continuing and increased level of support and advocacy from the parties.

JPAC advises that four essentials must be fulfilled for the organization to continue to be as useful and effective as possible:

1. Its program of work should continue to focus on a few major themes and the achievement of concrete results, with a core interest in the trade-economy-environment relationship.
2. The Parties should demonstrate sustained, continued attention on issues and problems of implementation, now that several programs are “up and running.”
3. The Parties should commit themselves to achieve the level of funding initially agreed upon (US\$5 million/year from each party), given that the tendency to add new programs on a shrinking funding base is not advisable.
4. Strong advocacy and public commitment from the Parties (at the political and official level) to the goals and achievements of the Commission is necessary, so that the good work and practical problem-solving now going on is given due recognition.

APPROVED BY THE MEMBERS OF JPAC

11 December 1997