

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

**24 June 2009
Denver, Colorado, United States**

SUMMARY RECORD

The Council held its sixteenth Regular Session on 24 June 2009, in Denver, Colorado, United States. Lisa P. Jackson, Administrator of the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), chaired the meeting, Juan Elvira Quesada, Secretary for Environment and Natural Resources, and Jim Prentice, Canadian Minister of the Environment represented Mexico and Canada, respectively. Adrián Vázquez, CEC Executive Director, represented the Secretariat. Nathalie Daoust, Council Secretary, acted as secretary for the Session. Other delegates and special invitees were also in attendance. ([List of participants.](#))

Item 1 Official opening of the 16th Regular Session of the Council

During the welcoming reception held on 23 June 2009, Carol Rushin, Acting Regional Administrator for EPA Region 8, acted as master of ceremony and invited, in turn, the Council members, the JPAC Chair and the executive director to say a few remarks.

Administrator Jackson began by officially opening the Session and welcoming the participants to Denver. She underscored the importance of the three nations meeting together in a common understanding of their interconnectedness. She noted the shared environmental concerns and the potential for achieving successes through collaboration. Noting that the North American Agreement on Environmental Cooperation (NAAEC) was created in an effort to link trade and the environment, she reinforced that meetings such as this one prevented trade and environment conflicts and represented a strong foundation to explore future opportunities. In addition, she stated this meeting offered the Council a chance to set a new course of action as the three countries face common challenges. Referring to the development of the next CEC Strategic Plan, she affirmed that the Council will pursue an open dialogue, exchange ideas and identify a shared vision to ensure a cleaner, healthier and more sustainable environment in North America. In closing, she underlined the importance of adapting the organization to current times.

On behalf of Mexico and representing Secretary Elvira, Mauricio Limón, Mexican Undersecretary of Management for Environmental Protection, addressed the audience. He reconfirmed Mexico's commitment to the CEC and to the spirit of the NAAEC and indicated Mexico arrives to this Session with great enthusiasm and expectation for what it will represent on the history and development of the Commission. He underscored how the CEC has been thus far an example of successful cooperation worth replicating elsewhere around the globe and pointed out the enormous progress achieved by societies and governments to build an institutional infrastructure, environmental legislation, public awareness and participation and a network of governmental, social and private cooperation unprecedented in the history of our countries. He noted some of the accomplishments, for example, how lindane has recently been incorporated into the Stockholm Convention and how the CEC's regional action plan on mercury has inspired the UNEP's mercury program. Finally, underlining the importance of JPAC as a force of public

representation, he commended their work and indicated Mexico looked forward to receiving their recommendations stemming from the workshop held on 22 June 2009. In closing, recognizing the emerging challenges and the difficult economic circumstances, he stated that the commitments and reforms that we make in these times represent the starting point for a better environment, a better future, a better quality of life for this and future generations and wished everyone a successful meeting.

Dale Eisler, Canadian Consul General in Denver, spoke on behalf of Canada and representing Minister Prentice. He indicated that Canada was eager to hear about progress being achieved regionally through the CEC, which, he added, sets the continent apart from others. Noting how this meeting will serve to define future orientations, he stressed that the CEC's key role is to promote action and become an inspiration for other continental partnerships. He gave as an example the Clean Energy Dialogue, which has stemmed from key environmental improvements achieved in the three countries. In closing, he indicated he was hopeful and optimistic that the success of the meeting will add to the CEC's record of achievements.

Adriana Nelly Correa, chair of the Joint Public Advisory Committee (JPAC), thanked the host for the privilege to meet in Denver where one can easily notice citizens' engagement towards nature. She reported on a successful public workshop on 22 June on climate policy coherence in North America and stressed the opportunity for the CEC to work on this topic at a regional level. Given JPAC's responsibility to serve as a bridge between citizens and the Council, the JPAC will be pleased to convey to the Council the promising opportunities for North American cooperation on climate change that have emerged from the workshop. Pointing to the recent appointment of five new Canadian and one Mexican JPAC members, she expressed appreciation for the high quality and multi-sectoral representation among the group. She concluded by stating that the JPAC's role is also to provide advice to the Council and that they intend to continue fulfilling this role diligently.

Adrián Vázquez, CEC executive director, was the last one to address the gathering. He said that this meeting was coming at a critical moment for the CEC and for the region—not only as it faces an international economic crisis but also because of the perils of accelerating change to the earth's climatic system. The realization that action to protect the environment is a critical component of economic recovery and that, ultimately, security depends upon progress towards sustainable development, is like a sliver of light breaking through dark clouds. In this vein, he referred to the preparatory meeting of the Major Economies Forum on Energy and Climate (held earlier that same day) in which the three North American countries participated. In addition, he noted the upcoming meeting of the three national leaders of Canada, Mexico and the United States to discuss a trilateral agenda. Moreover, he reminded the audience that the objective of this Council meeting is to take stock of the CEC's progress, share the Council's perspective on critical issues, and chart a path for action over the next five years. In closing, he acknowledged the work of the government officials, the JPAC, as well as the staff of the CEC Secretariat.

Item 2 Adoption of the agenda by Council

The Session Agenda was adopted by the Council as drafted ([Council Session agenda](#)).

Item 3 Report from the Executive Director

Administrator Jackson invited the executive director to report on CEC accomplishments since the last Council Session (as per Rule 5.3 of Council Rules of Procedure) and present the interim report on *CEC Results and Performance, 2005–2010*. ([Executive Director's report](#)).

Minister Prentice thanked the executive director for his diligent work over the last three years. On behalf of Canada, he also took the opportunity to welcome the new JPAC members. He then reflected on the excellent relationship among the national leaders in North America. In response to the executive director's presentation, he shared Canada's interest in following-up on some of his recommendations, particularly those concerning the governance of the CEC and the relationship between the JPAC, the Secretariat and the Parties. As for the 2010–2015 Strategic Plan, he emphasized the need to develop a plan that will usher in a new era of cooperation among the three countries and focus the efforts of the CEC. He also agreed that future work needed to take into account both North American competitiveness and environmental sustainability.

On behalf of Mexico, Secretary Elvira thanked the executive director for his work and successes. He added that Adrian Vazquez had been instrumental in helping Mexico improve its environmental performance. Commenting on the interim report, he noted that cooperation among the three countries and the willingness to find common solutions to regional challenges had served as an example for other regions. He also expressed support for the interim report's recommendation on the measurement of project results. In closing, he underlined the joint desire of the three countries to see the CEC begin a new life after 15 years with a strengthened efficiency and the expansion of stakeholders' involvement.

Administrator Jackson thanked the executive director for his service and thoughtfulness and extended congratulations to the CEC Secretariat staff for the many successes accomplished. She stated that the CEC results reinforced the tremendous potential of trilateral cooperation and the advantages of a common vision. However, she recognized that further efforts are required. In response to the interim report, she underlined her interest in more results-oriented projects as well as in strengthening the transparency, accountability of the CEC while increasing the lines of communications among the CEC constituents. Finally, she indicated that the advice provided by the executive director will represent an important foundation for the Council's deliberations in the afternoon. Again, she thanked Adrian Vazquez for his leadership and the successes accomplished during his tenure.

Item 4 Reports from the Council-appointed working groups

Evan Lloyd, CEC Director of Programs, acted as master of ceremony for this portion of the Council session and introduced the items and the guest presenters.

Item 4.1 North American Air Working Group (NAAWG)

The chair of the North American Air Working Group, Sue Stendebach, Senior Advisor on International Air Quality, at EPA's Office of Air and Radiation, was invited to highlight the working group's recent work to enhance air quality management across North America. This included updating Mexico's emissions inventory, realizing significant advancement toward comparability and synchronicity of regular inventory updates, and assessing all North American emissions inventories and ambient air monitoring networks. Finally, Ms. Stendebach presented to the Council a proposal for a North American Air Quality strategy for 2010-2015 developed by the working group. ([Presentation by the NAAWG.](#))

Referring to the three countries having identified climate change as one of the main environmental priorities, Minister Prentice asked Ms. Stendebach how the CEC's work to date on air quality management could help focus efforts in this area. In response, she noted how the multi-pollutant approach can contribute to current climate change efforts given the interactions and efficiencies that now exist in controlling pollutants. She indicated that co-benefits are particularly important when dealing with greenhouse gases (GHGs) because many of the pollutants originate from the same source, such as the power industry and the motor vehicle sectors. Moreover, she pointed to the North American air emissions inventory already prepared by the CEC as well as the upcoming work on ambient emissions monitoring, adding that the inventory of GHGs and more focused efforts on them are part of the proposed North American air management strategy.

Secretary Elvira commented that the achievements of the North American air working group have been of direct assistance to Semarnat and have contributed to the production of compatible and up-to-date information on air emissions in the three countries. He pointed to monitoring efforts underway in Mexico to compile data on air emissions in twenty of the largest cities and how interest is growing for increased air monitoring throughout Mexico. OECD has reported substantial air quality improvements in the last 25 years in Mexico. This, he stated, is largely due to cooperative efforts undertaken through the CEC as well as the development of remediation and instruments of standardization. In closing, he commended again the work and leadership of the CEC and the NAAWG in this area.

Administrator Jackson emphasized the invaluable role and work of the NAAWG, which constitutes a strong foundation upon which the three countries can build meaningful and effective air quality programs. She also acknowledged the working group's widespread coordination that allows for efficiency and eliminates duplicative efforts. This contributes to effective program implementation and a common leveraging of resources. Although applauding the development of the air strategy and expressing support for future work in this area, she said that the Council would be discussing potential organizational changes which will likely impact the proposed air strategy. In closing, she suggested to her counterparts that the NAAWG and the work accomplished in recent years through the CEC could serve as a foundation on which to build and implement future climate-related initiatives.

Item 4.2 Sound Management of Chemicals (SMOC) Working Group

The chair of the Sound Management of Chemicals Working Group, Alfonso Flores, Director General, Comprehensive Management of Hazardous Materials and Activities, Semarnat, was invited to profile the group's accomplishments in reducing the risk from mercury in North America. Among the

highlights, Mr. Flores mentioned the preparation of a Mexican mercury market report study, which includes the author's concrete recommendations for reducing mercury. He also noted the contribution of the CEC in reducing mercury in the health care sector and in providing comparable monitoring data on mercury in maternal blood. ([Complementary presentation.](#))

Minister Prentice congratulated the SMOC Working Group and took the opportunity to commend Administrator Jackson for her leadership during the G8 meeting in Syracuse, Italy and for raising both chemicals management and the effect of chemicals on children as issues of important concern. He indicated that Canada shared the concerns expressed by the United States in this area and noted how mercury was an important illustration of the harmful effects of chemicals on children, affecting particularly the northern populations in Canada. Referring again to the work of the CEC, he agreed that the organization should not be involved in detailed chemical-by-chemical assessment since this is already being done. Rather, the focus should be on coordinating the existing chemicals management efforts in the three countries. As an example, he pointed to Canada's Chemicals Management Plan that benefits from extensive resources and allows Canada to be a world leader in the the assessment of some 5,000 chemicals that are at risk. He added that Canada was close to completing the scientific assessment of 200 chemicals that have been flagged as the most problematic. This effort, he explained, has resulted in government decisions, such as the ban of bisphenol A in plastic baby bottles. Turning to the chair of the SMOC Working Group, he asked him which critical steps are needed to coordinate existing domestic efforts without duplicating resources.

Alfonso Flores explained that, in the context of a fast-moving international agenda on the management of chemicals and the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM) framework, synergies among the three countries are possible and can serve to demonstrate that regional efforts can yield successes and have a direct impact on the health of citizens and children. He pointed to examples such as the regional action plan on mercury and the resulting elimination of mercury from medical equipment in children's hospitals. Recalling Council Resolution 08-06, signed in Ottawa last year, he suggested that the work of the SMOC Working Group be tied to international developments in the management of chemicals in order to achieve, by 2020, the sustained sound production and management of chemicals.

Secretary Elvira commented that the accomplishments of the SMOC Working Group have been very useful and have allowed North America to be an example for the world. He pointed to the elimination of lindane and its safe disposal in North America, which is at the root of its inclusion under the Stockholm Convention. He also mentioned the involvement of the CEC in the successful disposal of persistent pollutants such as DDT from different sites in Mexico. Finally, he pointed that the CEC has been instrumental in bringing Mexico to update its mercury inventory and in assessing the current status. In closing, he stated Mexico's commitment to pursue collaboration with the *Secretaría de Salud* in creating mercury-free hospitals in Mexico.

Administrator Jackson thanked Mr. Flores for the report and expressed appreciation for hearing about concrete results—particularly when referring to a chemical such as mercury. She indicated she looked forward to seeing similar results being achieved with respect to other chemicals of mutual concern. She stressed that both collaboration and also stakeholder involvement were key to accomplishments in this area. She noted that the EPA has agreed to join the mercury convention and indicated she looked forward to working with partners and the international community to reduce the risk presented by the

substance. Then, referring to the recent G8 meeting and the Second International Conference on Chemicals Management, she reminded the audience that the United States has expressed support for working on a global partnership to phase-out the use of lead in paints. The priority of the United States is to ramp up efforts by EPA and the country to assess and take action on existing chemicals with particular emphasis on protecting children. As well, many opportunities also exist in the United States to build capacity for collaboration. Finally, she saluted the efforts of both Canada and Mexico on the management of chemicals and indicated she looked forward to continued initiatives in this area and to the SMOC Working Group reporting back in 2011 on further achievements under a broader and renewed agenda, particularly with regard to chemicals inventory and bio monitoring as well as chemicals of mutual concern.

Item 4.3 Biodiversity Conservation Working Group (BCWG)

The chair of the Biodiversity Conservation Working Group, Rebecca Lent, Director, Division of International Affairs, NOAA/NMFS, was invited to describe recent accomplishments in cooperative work to conserve North America's marine environment. Project results included a Baja to Bering condition report that provides a comparative status analysis of ten marine protected areas across the three nations in regards to water, habitat and living organisms. During her presentation, Ms. Lent emphasized that the existence of the BCWG not only benefits the projects but also extends to the domestic arena, and that a healthy economy needs a healthy ecosystem. ([Complementary presentation.](#))

Minister Prentice thanked the BCWG for its hard work. He noted that when the G8 Syracuse Accord on biodiversity was negotiated, someone had said: "There are many errors of omission and commission that our children and grandchildren will forgive us for but this will not include forgiving us for the loss of biodiversity." Minister Prentice added that the loss of species, the evaporation of living things from the Earth that cannot be replaced is something that we must guard against and be vigilant about. He mentioned that Canada has recently completed what the Prime Minister calls the greatest act of conservation in a generation by expanding the Nahanni National Park to 30,000 square kilometers. This, he explained, represents the culmination of thirty years of work to allow the protection of one of North America's largest and most intact ecosystems. In closing, he assured that each of the three countries is committed to taking action to protect biodiversity.

Secretary Elvira congratulated his Canadian counterpart for the expansion of the Nahanni National Park and held this out as an example for Mexico and the United States. He also congratulated the BCWG for its work and noted that the comparison of three protected natural areas in North America provides an opportunity to assess the efforts of the three nations to protect biodiversity. He also thanked the CEC for the work carried out in the last two years to conserve the leatherback turtle, the monarch butterfly, and the vaquita. Finally, he reported that, on 5 June 2009, the World Wildlife Fund, along with the *Fundación Carlos Slim* and the Mexican federal government, had launched an initiative funded by US\$100 million to protect the ecosystems of natural areas in Mexico.

Administrator Jackson acknowledged both Canada's and Mexico's conservation efforts. She expressed agreement for the BCWG chair's statement that a healthy and functioning North American environment is important and acknowledged it is currently under threat from a number of stressors, including habitat degradation, invasive species and climate change. Emphasizing that the Obama Administration considers conservation of biodiversity a high priority, she stated it is imperative to

address these issues both through domestic and collective efforts through the CEC. Recalling Council Resolution 01-03, which established the Biodiversity Conservation Working Group, she reiterated US support for the establishment of the BCWG and increased cooperation to conserve and protect resources. Turning to future activities proposed by the BCWG, she singled out the ecosystem resiliency, species conservation, and the impact of consumer choices on biodiversity. The ability of the North American region to address these issues will be, in her opinion, one of its greatest accomplishments.

Item 4.4 North American Working Group on Environmental Enforcement and Compliance Cooperation

The chair of the North American Working Group on Environmental Enforcement and Compliance Cooperation (EWG), Patricio Patrón Laviada, Federal Attorney for Environmental Protection in Mexico (*Procuraduría federal de protección al ambiente*—Profepa), was called on to describe recent accomplishments in capacity building and cooperation to enhance the effectiveness of environmental law enforcement throughout the region. As part of his presentation, he highlighted the delivery of wildlife enforcement and inspection training to Mexican institutions, the development of training resources on ozone-depleting substances and hazardous waste for environmental and customs inspectors, a strengthening of judicial capacities through exchange of best practices, a trilateral approach to non-compliant imports entering North America, and the engagement of other law enforcement agencies and the recognition of the EWG model for cooperation. ([Complementary presentation.](#))

Minister Prentice thanked the EWG for its excellent work. He noted the reference in the North American Agreement on Environmental Cooperation (NAAEC) to protecting endangered species. He underlined Canada's interest in activities pertaining to wildlife trafficking. He mentioned recent changes in Canada, modernizing penal sanctions for environmental crimes and doubling environmental enforcement resources in the last two years. He suggested that North America can be a leader in combating wildlife trafficking. Regarding cooperative efforts in this regard, he proposed: 1) harmonizing enforcement efforts across the boundaries; 2) cooperation in prosecution and establishing equivalency of sanctions.

Secretary Elvira also reported on improvements at Profepa in recent years that have resulted in an increased budget and a better coordination between the agency and Semarnat, as well as with the federal government. He mentioned Mexico's efforts to strengthen environmental enforcement which have led to the following results: 1) 80 percent reduction in illegal logging in the monarch butterfly's habitat; 2) 100 fishermen arrested while using illegal nets that would threaten the vaquita. Regarding wildlife trafficking, he noted that the work accomplished through the CEC has been critical and has yielded important results. He continued highlighting achievements of Profepa and pointed to the recovery of 800,000 hectares of mangrove swamps. He expressed Mexico's interest in working with the *Comision Nacional del Agua* (Conagua) to target the sources of water contamination. In closing, he recognized the successful coordination among the three countries in border inspection activities, not only in the area of wildlife trafficking but also in the movement of hazardous waste.

Administrator Jackson added her congratulations to the group and reminded everyone that, as a former enforcement official, she was particularly interested in this topic. She added that collaboration with

customs agencies is key to success in controlling the entry of non-compliant imports into North America and she recognized how the CEC has sought the participation of customs agencies in the three countries to ensure that course-training materials for customs officials are useful. She acknowledged the difficulty of having a 100 percent inspection rate and thus stressed the importance of magnifying domestic efforts and increasing effectiveness by sharing information among the three countries regarding non-compliance.

Item 4.5 Trade and Environment Working Group

A member of the Trade and Environment Working Group, Diane Cameron, Deputy Director, Sustainable Development Division, Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada was invited to highlight recently completed work to promote competitiveness and enhance environmental performance in corporate supply chains. The presentation highlighted significant environmental results and economic returns achieved in small and medium-size enterprises (SMEs) in Mexico ([Complementary slide presentation](#).) As part of her presentation, Ms. Cameron also mentioned that an historic letter addressed to the CEC Council had just been signed by the trade ministers of Canada, Mexico and the US, agreeing to explore new opportunities for trade and environment linkages.

Minister Prentice thanked Ms. Cameron for her presentation and commented on the importance of having the working group begin to look at the trade implications of the domestic climate change policies that will be developed in the three countries in the near future and which will likely have implications under the NAAEC. Noting that the confluence of climate change policies and trade will be one of the essential questions over the next 10 years, he underscored the importance of building on the strengths of the CEC in this regard.

Secretary Elvira thanked the Trade and Environment Working Group for its accomplishments in greening supply chains and acknowledged that Mexico needed assistance in this area. Given the large number of SMEs in the country (87% of the private sector), he recognized the need for Mexico to help them improve their environmental performance. He noted that Mexico has taken over and expanded the CEC project since 2008 and that, for each dollar spent, more than two dollars have been saved. In addition, 18 000 tons of CO₂ emissions have been avoided since 2005.

In closing the morning session, Administrator Jackson stated that this project represented a good model illustrating how both environmental and economic benefits can be achieved.

***(In-camera session)* The CEC: Renew, Revitalize and Re-focus**

Item 5 The 2010–2015 Strategic Plan

Item 5.1 Expert presentation on opportunities for a low-carbon economy in North America

Daniel Kammen, Distinguished Professor of Energy and Society at the University of California, Berkeley, was invited to outline the prevailing challenges and opportunities facing North America as each Party strives to accomplish a transition to a low-carbon economy in the years ahead. In his presentation, Professor Kammen set out the key areas in which policy coherence, at a regional scale, may facilitate this transition and, present for consideration, the potential for environmental and related policies to be positive instruments of economic renewal and sustainability ([Complementary slide presentation](#).)

Minister Prentice agreed with the importance of working towards a low-carbon economy. He recognized Canadians were the most consumptive people in the world and that Canada was the second-largest country, with cold winters and an industrial composition characterized by heavy and energy intensive industry. He acknowledged the challenge of creating a low-carbon future while protecting the environment. He pointed to Canada's recent efforts in modernizing motor vehicles standards and moving toward creating a 90 percent non-emitting electricity system. Emphasizing that Canada's hydro electricity was one of the greenest sources of energy and easily accessible for the United States, he expressed concern regarding new US renewable portfolio standards that would exclude hydro electricity from certain markets.

Dr. Kammen explained that most renewable portfolio standards had evolved over time and have been instrumental in facilitating the development of local renewable energy sources. He acknowledged that some hydroelectric technologies were inherently more efficient and that the issue of indirect environmental impacts of new energy technologies represented a contentious issue in terms of regulation and application.

Secretary Elvira commented that Mexico was making efforts moving towards a greener economy and referenced the gradual integration of bio-fuels. He proposed the harmonization of standards in North America, particularly for the auto sector, and suggested the sharing expertise in this area among the three countries. Turning to Mexico's efforts in reducing carbon emissions, he underlined that 150,000 tons of emissions had been avoided this year and suggested that these results be integrated into a regional plan.

Dr. Kammen agreed that a low-carbon economy can be achieved collectively. He referred to exceptional sources of low-carbon energy in each country that are mutually compatible and emphasized the complexity and necessity of international cooperation in the establishment of a *smart grid* spanning North America. He also spoke of smart neighborhood designs and innovative financing for domestic end-users to install renewable and energy saving technology, which could be replicated throughout the region, and said that North America can offer exceptional export models to be exploited.

Administrator Jackson thanked Dr. Kammen and echoed the importance of working cooperatively to be successful. She also noted the need to involve the private sector in the discussions. In response to Canada's query regarding the use of Canada's hydroelectricity by the United States, she explained that both countries had to reach a common definition and work together to move past political discussions to reach the most economically viable decisions. In closing, she emphasized the need for governments to send a strong signal regarding energy sources in order to help the marketplace make sustainable decisions.

Item 5.2. Ministerial discussion on priorities for the future

The Council members were invited by the facilitator, Nancy Curren, to share their domestic environmental priorities and provide insight on future priority areas for the CEC. The Chair reinforced the Council's expectation that priorities emerging from the discussion be implemented at the CEC and reminded everyone that Council will be working hand-in-hand with the new executive director in this regard.

Minister Prentice began by saying this was a pivotal time, given the current global economic context and climate change negotiations. He took the opportunity to commend President Obama for his leadership leading up to the UN Conference on Climate Change in Copenhagen and the recent meeting of the Major Economies Forum on Energy and Climate. Turning to the future of the CEC, he suggested that the Council agree to no more than three priorities for the organization. He stressed the importance of striving for a close alignment with the three countries' domestic priorities and ensuring project outcomes contribute to policy priorities. Noting that the CEC was created under the auspices of NAFTA and that an expansion of trade has occurred in the three countries, he identified trade and environment as a first area of interest for Canada, with a particular focus on the trade implications of climate change policy and legislation relating to energy. As a second topic, he proposed healthy communities and ecosystems, under which could fall management of chemicals and conservation of biodiversity initiatives, such as the ones presented by the SMOC working group and the BCWG during the morning session.

Secretary Elvira expressed support for the topic of healthy communities and ecosystems, stating it would allow working groups to pursue their successful achievements. Under this topic, he proposed a focus on indigenous communities sited in protected natural areas. He indicated the need for these communities to be provided with education and assistance in carrying out their traditional livelihoods while at the same time protecting biodiversity. Secretary Elvira also put forth the topic of climate change. He suggested that the CEC receive a specific mandate to assist the three countries in delivering their international commitments.

Administrator Jackson agreed that healthy communities and ecosystems also represented a priority topic for the United States. She expressed support for Mexico's suggestion to work directly with communities and proposed to also include tribal governments and First Nations. She stressed the importance of bringing environmental justice to communities affected by pollution. She also stated the need to keep reducing threats to children and indicated that pediatric environmental health specialty units were already collaborating with Mexico and Canada on this matter. Finally, regarding climate change, she agreed with comments made by Minister Prentice concerning the importance of harmonization as a focal point for each government. She also noted that climate change was a very broad policy field and her preferred focus was upon how the CEC might support each Party in driving toward a lower-carbon economy. She indicated that the CEC could play an important role in supporting each country's international climate change agenda while assisting the Parties in defining how to balance out the imperatives of economic growth. This could include sub-topics, such as moving to a low-carbon economy, promoting information exchange, and defining areas of innovation.

A third topic brought forward by Administrator Jackson was greening the economy. Under this rubric, she proposed sub-topics such as promoting the sustainable use of materials (3Rs), promoting energy

sustainability, and energy sources, ensuring smart growth, creating green jobs, supporting green technology, and ensuring sustainable use of green products.

Secretary Elvira suggested integrating elements of competitiveness under the topic of greening the economy. He proposed educating citizens to become active players in changing the format of the economy by providing them with information regarding, for example, the “greenest” vehicles or household products to purchase.

As a result of the exchange, it was agreed that the topic of greening the economy could consider both the manufacturing and residential sectors.

Following the Council’s exchange of views and with the assistance of the facilitator, the Council agreed on the three following priorities for the next Strategic Plan (2010–2015):

- 1) Healthy Communities and Ecosystems
- 2) Climate Change–Low-Carbon Economy
- 3) Greening the Economy in North America

Recognizing that these were broad topics and needed further definition, the Council charged the Alternate Representatives to define them more clearly in preparation for the next Strategic Plan.

Item 6 Operational improvements

Item 6.1 Ministerial discussion on considerations for strengthening the CEC

The Chair introduced this item by stating that the operations represent the core of the organization and a stronger organization will emerge from the review process. She shared her conviction that President Obama understands the need for partnership with other countries and believes in effectiveness, transparency and accountability. As a first step, she suggested that the Secretariat re-focus and align with the new priorities to be agreed upon by the Council. Secondly, she expressed the desire to see a reduction of certain expenditures at the benefit of a more effective program implementation. This endeavor, she said, represents a key opportunity to improve the NAFTA side agreement.

Minister Prentice echoed Administrator Jackson’s comments and reiterated the need to renew, revitalize and re-focus the CEC while strengthening its accountability and transparency. He suggested the renewal process begin with the placement of a new executive director and that Canada, in consultation with Mexico and the United States, will be proceeding shortly with the search process. Speaking further on the renewal process, he mentioned specific governance arrangements which were warranted and affected the relationship between the Council and the Secretariat. He also spoke about oversight of the Secretariat’s operations by the Council to ensure a closer alignment with the objectives of the Council. He assured this was an attempt to fulfill the Council’s responsibilities as stated in the NAAEC, and that no criticism was intended.

Secretary Elvira mentioned that discussions among the Parties on the desired transformation of governance will continue in the upcoming weeks. He commended the leadership of Minister

Prentice in generating transformation and expressed confidence that the upcoming changes will be progressive and forward-looking while serving to increase participation of stakeholders and provide a platform for transparency.

The Council agreed to hold monthly calls and charged their officials to develop the blueprint of a proposal for discussion by the Council in mid-July.

In closing, Secretary Elvira suggested that the CEC prepare an analysis of the main results achieved in each country during the last 15 years for information purposes. The Council agreed that a document highlighting the main accomplishments be prepared by the Secretariat.

Item 7 Signing of Council Resolution and Ministerial Statement

The Council adopted Council Resolution 09-01 establishing funding for the CEC for 2010. The final draft Ministerial Statement was also approved by the Council for its release. The chair invited his counterparts to join him in signing both Council Resolution 09-01 and the Ministerial Statement. Following the signing ceremony, the Council members exchanged gifts.

Item 8 Joint meeting with JPAC

Following welcoming remarks by the Chair, the JPAC members were invited to present the outcome of the meetings held on 22–23 June as well as any other issues of interest.

Nelly Correa, the JPAC Chair, referred to the 15-year anniversary of the CEC and suggested it was time to look to the future and build on the strong foundations of the organization. She also expressed appreciation for the nomination of the new JPAC members. Noting that the JPAC's main responsibility is to provide advice to the Council and act as a link between North American citizens and the Council, she assured that this responsibility will be taken seriously. She reminded her hearers that the JPAC works through consensus and in the interest of the North American region as a whole. She shared JPAC's interest in an increased involvement of the Council in the CEC which will allow, she added, for a higher level of decision-making. Noting that human health represents a common issue of concern and pointing out its link to the health of our ecosystems, she applauded the fact that ecosystems and biodiversity will be a priority for the CEC in the coming years. She underscored how understanding the relationship between the environment, the economy, and society represents the only path to sustainable development. Finally, quoting Achim Steiner, Executive Director of UNEP, who recently took part in the Earth Day celebrations in Mexico, "...as we move towards the Copenhagen conference on climate change, it becomes clearer that ecosystems management will play an important role in climate change mitigation." Because of the experience of the CEC in ecosystems management, Ms. Correa stated, North America has the opportunity to show strong leadership in Copenhagen.

Administrator Jackson thanked the JPAC chair for her steadfast work and efforts and invited her counterparts to say a few remarks. Minister Prentice thanked JPAC and welcomed the new Canadian members. He underlined the value of hearing from JPAC and getting their recommendations. Quoting the NAAEC, he reminded that the Council is the governing body of the CEC whose responsibility is to oversee the work of the Secretariat. As such, he assured JPAC that the Council would be very active in providing oversight to the Secretariat and would be convening on a regular basis to speak on

governance matters. He indicated that the Council had agreed to ensure the alignment of the three governments' priorities with the CEC's work program. He pointed to the value of the NAAEC as it identifies a wide range of objectives and major issues the organization can focus on. Yet he stressed the Council's desire that the CEC be focused on three main priorities: 1) Healthy Communities and Ecosystems; 2) Climate Change–Low-Carbon Economy; and 3) Greening the Economy in North America.

Secretary Elvira welcomed the new Canadian members and introduced the Mexican JPAC members. He also echoed Minister Prentice's comments, particularly as they relate to the value and importance of JPAC's involvement and advice.

Finally, Administrator Jackson remarked how Minister Prentice is a voice of transformation for the organization and stressed the need to seek the contribution of experts as the organizational changes are discussed. She explained that the Council had spent time focusing on governance issues to ensure that, as the organization defines new priorities, it can be efficient in responding to emerging challenges.

Rodolfo Lacy reported on the workshop held on 22 June on the topic of "Climate Policy Coherence in North America." He explained that the workshop's objective was to gather opinions and new ideas from citizens, the private sector, and experts on how the CEC can contribute to the climate change agenda. One of the main lessons of the workshop is the understanding that CO₂ emission cuts are essential but not sufficient and that it is important to target in a more effective and aggressive manner black carbon, methane, and hydrofluorocarbon (HFC) emissions. More comprehensive actions are necessary to reduce our vulnerability to climate change and to improve our adaptation to new ecological and economical scenarios. He reinforced the need for the CEC to help maximize the potential benefits of coordinated domestic climate change policies. Some of the actions could include using the CEC as a clearinghouse of information through, for example, the development of a GHG emissions inventory. The different policy and regulation options presented during the workshop included: carbon taxes, more stringent GHG emissions standards, lifecycle approach for new regulations, and the development of an emissions trading system in North America. Special attention should also be given to carbon offsets, particularly through avoiding deforestation and the degradation of ecosystems. Finally, Mr. Lacy presented to the Council the following options for a trilateral climate change agenda: 1) accelerating the deployment of cleaner and energy-efficient technologies; 2) devising strategies to foster green jobs in the region; enhancing institutional capacity for policy development; 3) harmonizing emissions standards and improving enforcement and compliance practices; and 4) putting in place measures to avoid carbon leakage (particularly from the electricity and transportation sectors).

Nancy Southern presented JPAC with recommended follow-up actions that were suggested by the climate change workshop of 22 June. First, as a new JPAC member, she sees the CEC as a unique and valuable vehicle that can be utilized in a strategic fashion for developing a climate framework to complement the domestic efforts of the three countries. She stressed that, in the context of policies that might be considered for GHG reductions, North American competitiveness and sustainability need to be maintained. She submitted the following suggestions for CEC work: 1) a cooperative analysis leading to recommendations on the development of green energy corridors to accommodate the secure delivery of transformational non-emitting electricity [ed: electricity generated by sources that do not emit pollution in the transformation of kinetic or radiant energy into electrical energy] from North to

South and South to North; 2) the development of a continental framework for the flow of legacy and future energy on a transcontinental basis, identifying and mitigating trade barriers arising from climate change policies; 3) the creation of a trilateral working group to recommend common terms and definitions for easing the dialogue and harmonization of future environment and trade policies. Finally, turning to the citizens' submissions process, she imparted JPAC's belief that communications and process improvements were needed to ensure greater accountability of the process.

Dinkerai Desai addressed the Council on the importance of developing new, low-carbon technologies as well as investing in research. He spoke about borderline technologies and alternative energy sources such as solar energy, hybrid engine technology, biomass energy, volcanic energy, coal liquefaction, and carbon sequestration, for which greater investment is needed on the part of governments in order to reduce the carbon footprint.

David Emerson addressed the Council on linkages among energy, the environment, and trade. He commented that these were auspicious times to discuss this topic, given the current global economic crisis with its implications for trade. The ability of North America to compete with China depends on the integration of the North American economy. The key, according to him, rests in the region's capacity to deal simultaneously with environment, energy and trade issues. He gave the example of the renewable energy portfolio, which he believes is currently defined too narrowly. He also mentioned the carbon tax as one issue that is likely to be examined. He cautioned that many of these issues may become protectionist if the areas of environment, energy and trade are not examined jointly.

Gustavo Alanis spoke to the Council about the relationship between the Council and JPAC. He began by drawing attention to the fact that the JPAC's work has been slowed down in recent months due to the absence of Canadian JPAC members. He noted that, as a result, the planned Monterrey meeting on water management had to be cancelled. He then requested that the Council improve the timeliness and effectiveness of its communications with the JPAC and noted that opportunities exist for strengthening the relationship and for increased support and respect between the Council and JPAC. He conveyed JPAC's desire to be perceived as associates rather than obstacles. Regarding the improvement of communications, he encouraged the Council to show commitment to the organization and to recognize the work of JPAC. Although acknowledging the value of the work carried out by the General Standing Committee, he stressed the importance of seeing the Council itself becoming more involved. Finally, he expressed enthusiasm regarding the proposed modernization of the CEC and conveyed the JPAC's desire to participate in the process of selecting the next executive director. He urged the Council to put in place a clear and transparent selection process.

Administrator Jackson thanked the JPAC members for sharing their views and for their dedication. She acknowledged the importance of the relationship between the Council and the JPAC. It is in the best interest of the organization, she added, to see both entities work hand in hand. Recognizing it was incumbent on the Council to engage in every possible opportunity, she indicated she looked forward to the continued work of the JPAC.

Secretary Elvira expressed interest for the summary of the JPAC workshop on climate change. He agreed with the comments made on the vulnerability of the North American region. In reference to the presentation by Nancy Southern and improvements sought with the SEM process, he affirmed Council's interest in reviewing the SEM process. As for Dinkerai Desai's comments on renewable

energy, Secretary Elvira acknowledged the need to continue exchanging expertise on technologies that can assist the countries in reducing carbon emissions. Lastly, in response to Gustavo Alanis, he agreed that the relationship between JPAC and the Council can be strengthened and offered that more frequent interaction take place.

Minister Prentice commented that the interventions made by JPAC resonated well with the three priorities agreed to by the Council. He reiterated the Council's desire to review the SEM process and asked JPAC to provide any suggestions in this regard as well as thoughts on the governance of the CEC. Pointing to the current global context, he indicated there has never been a closer alignment between the environment and the economy. He shared the Council's interest in the trade and environment relationship taking into account energy security issues. Lastly, he indicated that the coming months would provide the opportunity to define the extremely useful work that can be achieved by the CEC.

Item 9 Council public session

Adriana Nelly Correa, JPAC Chair, opened the public session by introducing the Ministers in attendance: US Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Lisa P. Jackson, Canadian Environment Minister Jim Prentice, and Mexican Secretary for Environment and Natural Resources, Juan Elvira Quesada.

Administrator Jackson encouraged the selected public members to make their presentations as expeditiously as possible for the benefit of Minister Prentice, whose travel plans prevented him from attending the entire public session.

Summary of oral interventions in order of appearance:

Reinvigorating the CEC Agenda, by Geoffrey Garver, Environmental Consultant

Mr. Garver urged the Council to use the 15th year anniversary of the CEC as an opportunity to take a fresh look at the current dire ecological circumstances and take advantage of the CEC's mandate to strengthen the agenda for environmental cooperation in North America. He noted that, given the current environmental crisis, the emphasis of a reinvigorated agenda should be placed on moving North America towards an economic and trade regime that both enhances individual and societal well being and ensures that North Americans live within their ecological means. Global statistics on climate change, species extinctions, loss of freshwater resources, ocean dead zones, population growth, deforestation, decimation of ocean fish stocks among others are beyond alarming, he said, noting that this situation calls for exceptional environmental leadership, not only economic leadership measured in GDP. Based on the World Wildlife Fund's Living Planet Report for 2008, Mr. Garver explained that, at 7.6 hectares per person (hpp), the North American average ecological foot print largely surpasses the sustainable rate of 2.1 by over 3.5 times. He underlined that the North American Agreement for Environmental Cooperation (NAAEC) offers the perfect ground for a strong environmental agenda and proposed three main recommendations to the CEC Council: 1) the CEC should do a rigorous calculation of the North American ecological footprint, publicize the results, and develop clear strategies for driving it down; 2) the CEC should develop North American indicators, such as the Genuine Progress Indicator; and 3) the Council should strengthen the voice of the public and civil society by reinvigorating JPAC and the citizen submission process. Unduly

delays in the voting process, he said, reflects the unwillingness of the Parties to subject themselves to truly independent and effective review as sought for by submitters. He called for the Council members to stay on top of their responsibilities by timely appointing JPAC members, taking prompt action to select the new executive director, and voting expeditiously on the citizen submission process.

North American Collaborative Strategies to Develop Renewable Energy to its Full Potential, by Jose Etcheverry, York University

The experience of the first European Union Cap and Trade effort clearly indicates that such initiatives take considerable time and can also fail to result in significant emission reductions, noted Mr. Etcheverry. Furthermore, he said, it is widely accepted by experts that this approach has failed to develop renewable energy projects, which are an essential element of the climate mitigation strategy. Through its successes with renewable energy, the European Union experience provides valuable lessons for the design of new carbon mitigation strategies for North America. As a good example of what could be achieved in North America, Mr. Etcheverry quoted the case of countries like Denmark, Germany and Spain, who have successfully achieved significant greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions reductions through their renewable energy programs, while contributing to job creation. Mr. Etcheverry stated that adopting national renewable energy targets, supported by regional collaborative arrangements, could help North America achieve climate protection, energy security and job creation. He encouraged the Parties to implement a pragmatic process to implement national and trinational agreements aimed at solving the climate change crisis while achieving regional prosperity. He stressed the need for increased collaboration aimed at increasing *know-how* in areas such as lessons learned, train-the-trainers, and policy design, among others. He pointed out that Canada, Mexico and the United States already have many of the structural arrangements necessary to collaborate in these pivotal areas and called for their sustained leadership to create practical commitments to solve the climate crisis.

The Need for an Integrated Policy Including Strong Public Engagement in the Efforts to Reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions Related to Transportation in North America, by Arne Elias, the Centre for Sustainable Transportation, University of Winnipeg

Mr. Elias began his intervention by describing the context of the passenger and long haul freight transportation system, which is facing issues such as GHG emissions, fuel costs, increased road congestions, planning issues and public discontent. Meeting all of these issues is essential for long-term sustainable transportation, he said. There is significant research and investment in new technologies, such as intelligent transportation systems, more appropriate fuels and route design. However, he noted, there is an urgent need for policies and regulatory approaches to support these initiatives. Mr. Elias proposed to work with three fundamental changes: behavioral change, technological change and infrastructural change. He pointed out that one important challenge to overcome is the public misunderstanding of the choices when discussing corridors, in particular, the misconception that the re-organization of corridors will generate more corporate profitability than public benefit, and possibly unnecessary growth and migration. Mr. Elias underlined that the message to stakeholders should be that a sustainable strategy can have large benefits for public, municipalities and other jurisdictions, in job creation, economic renewal, and cleaner environments. According to Mr. Elias, such strategy must consider increased public engagement and shift the debate to emerging opportunities.

Maria de Lourdes Aduna Barba, COPARMEX, the first of two representatives of the public selected by JPAC to report back from the Climate Policy Coherence session, voiced the public's concern over climate change and urged the Council to take prompt action to reduce GHG emissions, to develop adaptive management strategies and vulnerability assessments for the different regions that form North America. Ms. Aduna stated that the CEC is the ideal vehicle to collect, organize and carry out the required analysis that will facilitate decision-making based on sustainable principles. Furthermore, the public recommended the development of a study that will identify clear opportunities to build a trilateral action plan for the mitigation of climate change. Such a plan should include recommendations for cooperative measures to achieve specific objectives. The public at the session suggested the study should also include an assessment of the energy, agricultural, transportation and green building sectors, as well as conservation of biodiversity. The public proposed that the trilateral action plan be incorporated into the CEC's work program to ensure its continued implementation. Ms. Aduna affirmed that the Parties should place emphasis on reducing GHG emissions through collaboration, eliminating concepts such as additionality, and rather continuing to work on the harmonization of policies and developing sustainable development indicators.

At this time, Canadian Environment Minister, Jim Prentice, left the session and was replaced by the Canada Alternate Representative, David McGovern.

On behalf of the North American public, the second representative to report back from the Climate Policy Coherence session, **Mr. Thomas Duchaine, of Equiterre**, summarized the public's strong interest in changing the current economic development model based largely on the over-exploitation of natural resources, to a new paradigm: one that takes into consideration social and environmental externalities. Science, he said, points to the urgency of reducing GHG emissions in the short term if we want to avoid the consequences that an increase in temperatures would cause. The Parties must take into consideration the ecological footprint, a measure of humanity's demand on nature, as a tool to build a sustainable development approach for North America, Mr. Duchaine affirmed. The public should be made aware, he said, of the power that their consumer choices bring to bear, that the re-organization of the economy based on the ecological footprint does not represent a threat to their quality of life and they should be better informed about the multiple opportunities to address the climate change challenge. The public recommended that the CEC, given its unique status as an environmental organization operating under a trade agreement, adopt, as part of its 2010–2015 Strategic Plan, the objective of educating and informing citizens about the importance of factoring the ecological footprint into the economic development equation. This objective should also identify existing solutions on energy efficiency, transportation, land-use change, biodiversity conservation, and sustainable consumption, among others.

The Case of “Metales y Derivados,” Tijuana, Baja California, by Magdalena Cerda Baez, Environmental Health Coalition

On behalf of the *Colectivo Chilpancingo Pro Justicia Ambiental*, Ms. Cerda thanked the CEC for accepting the citizen submission that later resulted in the factual record of *Metales y Derivados*. This, she said, was a turning point, which contributed to the clean-up of a severely contaminated site. The successful clean-up of the site not only contributed to reducing the risks of local residents to the exposure of contaminants, but it also became an example of what can be achieved by organized communities and restored trust in the authorities. She noted that the clean-up process

lasted almost 37 years. Ms. Cerda affirmed that the case of *Metales y Derivados* paved the way for dealing effectively with similar cases in the future. Before *Metales y Derivados* there were no specific laws or regulations or funds to address such cases, and now this course of action can be replicated. Ms. Cerda submitted to the consideration of the Council to publish a case study that recounts the history and the process of *Metales y Derivados*; a document that would assist consultants working on site clean-ups, inform communities about the necessary procedures, and include the associated legal framework and information about the transfer of funds amongst different jurisdictions. Ms. Cerda underlined that such publication would bring hope and reassurance to many communities facing the challenges of de-contaminating a site.

Climate Policy Congruence in North America, by Sandra Leticia Guzmán Luna, Centro de Derecho Ambiental (CEMDA)

Ms. Guzmán advocated strongly on behalf of local communities, especially indigenous communities who reside in key areas for renewable energy projects and whose rights are being challenged by promoters and even local authorities. She called for the Council members, in their position as decision makers and whose actions will have a long-term impact on the lives of many, to take into account the importance of these communities, not only because of their high vulnerability, but also because their active participation in the implementation of sustainable projects can play a pivotal role in the effort to mitigate climate change. These communities, Ms. Guzmán affirmed, have already experienced conflicts with sustainable energy promoters and authorities. This situation has quickly evolved into the rejection of new projects creating further barriers and hampering the achievement of regional goals of increased investment for the production of clean energy. Better coordination among the governments, promoters and local communities is imperative. Ms. Guzmán noted that successful projects can yield important benefits for all involved, creating jobs, securing clean energy, reducing GHG, and creating sources for investment, among others. She asked the Council to consider creating a mechanism for open and inclusive dialogue with these communities, to ensure that project proposals comply with sustainable development principles and bring social, economic and environmental benefits.

Enabling Innovation in Automotive Supply Chain Products through a Common Chemical Assessment and Management Strategy, by Barbara Boroughf, Lear Corporation and Patricia Beattie, GM Corporation

In a joint presentation, Ms. Boroughf and Ms. Beattie elaborated on the commitment of the automotive industry to use environmentally responsible chemicals. Through the Suppliers Partnership (SP) for the Environment, an association of 40 automotive original equipment manufacturers (OEMs), as well as large and small suppliers—the SP developed the *Material Assessment Strategy* (M-A-S) to address a wide range of chemical management challenges and opportunities, critical to the environment in North America. The M-A-S program is intended to level the playing field throughout the supply chain by providing suppliers with a common automated scientifically-based screening system to allow a more proactive and comprehensive assessment of chemicals that go into vehicle parts and products. Ms. Beattie proposed that the CEC support and coordinate, with the SP, an effort to provide a web-based, automated chemical assessment solution, M-A-S and SciVera Lens™, to all automotive original equipment manufacturers and their suppliers in North America for a two-year period. According to the representatives of the SP, the creation of a CEC M-A-S program would provide leadership in the

development of a common chemical assessment and management strategy for the automotive industry in North America.

New Indicators for the New Economy, by John Talberth, Center for Sustainable Economy

Mr. Talberth spoke to the need of adopting a new set of indicators for measuring economic progress to help evaluate the impacts of emerging climate policy and other sustainable development initiatives in Canada, the United States and Mexico. He stressed that traditional economic indicators like Gross Domestic Product (GDP), personal income, and openness indices ignore critical environmental, economic, and social costs associated with depletion of natural capital, global warming pollution, inequality, and economic vulnerability. As sustainable development emerges to the forefront of economic policy objectives throughout North America, new indicators capable of measuring economic, environmental, and social dimensions in a rigorous manner are of the essence. Mr. Talberth noted there are currently a number of important initiatives working on the development of “green” indicators to draw upon and pick a handful of headline indicators for evaluating the performance of the three economies through the “lens” of green development. GDP, he said, fails to account for the enormous economic toll for future generations caused by the depletion of nonrenewable resources, exposing populations to the public health externalities of air pollution and the toll of carbon emissions. He underlined the strong interest of a growing number of organizations that would like the CEC to take on a special sustainability indicators initiative for North America, seeking to replace misleading headline indicators such as GDP, and consider the ecological footprint.

Social Corporate Responsibility, by Ricardo Henkel Reyes, Consejo Coordinador Empresarial del Estado de México

Mr. Henkel’s intervention highlighted the importance of further integrating the concept of Social Corporate Responsibility as an integral part of the economic development of the region. He explained that social corporate responsibility has at its core the observance of human rights, the provision of good labor conditions and a respect for the environment. He further added that providing equal opportunities for women in the workplace, including equal salary, preventing the exploitation of rural isolated workers and bringing to an end the use of child labor are important to achieve responsible social and economic development. He emphasized that a rising number of organizations, corporations, medium and small enterprises are becoming aware of their environmental responsibilities and understand that these do not represent obstacles for growth. Mr. Henkel submitted a petition for the CEC to explore and possibly include in its Strategic Plan, the promotion of Social Corporate Responsibility, considering human rights and including vulnerable minorities such as indigenous people, women, and children. He reiterated that responsible actions taken by the different sectors generate certainty and contribute to the development of strong economies and sustainable markets.

The involvement of schools of higher education in greenhouse gas emissions mitigation and climate change adaptation, by Ariadna Itzel Reyes Sanchez, Instituto Politécnico Nacional and Ruth Reina, Instituto Tecnológico de Monterrey

Ms. Reyes presented a number of recommendations and measures for universities to play a more active role in GHG mitigation and climate change adaptation. In summary, she proposed that they be involved in the following:

- Developing GHG inventories for different levels of government (local, state/provincial, federal) to support strategies aimed at reducing GHG emissions
- Integrating sustainable development principles in all educational curricula, at all levels and across subjects
- Raising awareness of the human ecological footprint, through community programs
- Strengthening society's commitment to sustainable production and consumption through the design and implementation of green products and services, taking into consideration life cycle and green design
- Creating new research centers with the specific mandate to generate information, technology, and tools such as climate prediction models, surveys, and models for prospective pollutants to show their impact on human health, ecosystems and natural resources
- Taking advantage of the platform that universities provide to broaden knowledge and information, inspiring their students to become multiplying agents of change

Replies from the Council members:

Secretary Juan R. Elvira Quesada expressed how impressed he was with the quality and diversity of the presentations, and recognized the relevance of the topics raised therein, including: the ecological footprint, addressing climate change through a special program, sustainable transportation and green building, raising awareness of the success and the lessons learned in the case of *Metales y Derivados*, the need to work more closely with indigenous communities, the importance of using alternative indicators to GDP and promoting environmental education. Secretary Elvira thanked the public for their work as concerned citizens and their contribution to assist the Council in doing a better job.

There were no closing remarks from Canada.

Administrator Lisa P. Jackson also noted the extraordinarily richness of the subjects presented to them. As an incoming member of the Council, she acknowledged the exceptional work done to date and added that throughout the presentations the sense of urgency was clear. Ms. Jackson recognized the expectation and the understanding that at this juncture there is an opportunity for the three countries to take important steps. She informed the audience that many of the concepts highlighted in this session fit well with the new priorities outlined in the Ministerial Statement, which include: Healthy Communities and Ecosystems, Climate Change–Low-Carbon Economy, and Greening the Economy in North America.

She went further, mentioning that during the closed session, the Ministers had discussed the need to ensure considerations of ecosystems include biodiversity, and shared their concern for the fact that sustainability issues should not be lost in any metric, their concern for children, families and the rights of indigenous people, the need to move forward on a low-carbon economy that brings the continent into a leadership role. She recognized that efforts were needed to harness the power of the private and public sectors, to create the jobs and prosperity so vital at a time when the world is dealing with the impacts of the global recession. Other concepts the Ministers discussed included sustainability and greening the economy in general, greening the supply chain, education, collaboration between the three countries, and better communication amongst themselves.

Administrator Jackson confirmed that in an effort to increase opportunities to carry today's work forward, the Ministers have tasked their representatives with reporting back in two weeks on additional opportunities to ensure that the Council remains engaged and continues its dialogue on CEC operations and future priorities. Before concluding, she thanked the JPAC members for their extraordinary effort, passion, concern and advocacy. Lastly, Administrator Jackson thoughtfully acknowledged the staff who worked on the organization of this year's meeting.

Session adjourned.