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JUN 21 2007

Dear [REDACTED]

Re: Our file A-2007-00041 / fa

This is in reply to your request under the *Access to Information Act* which was received on April 25, 2007, for the following:

Requesting the meeting minutes for the Feb 23/07 SPP meeting in Ottawa, in attendance were Peter McKay and Stockwell Day.

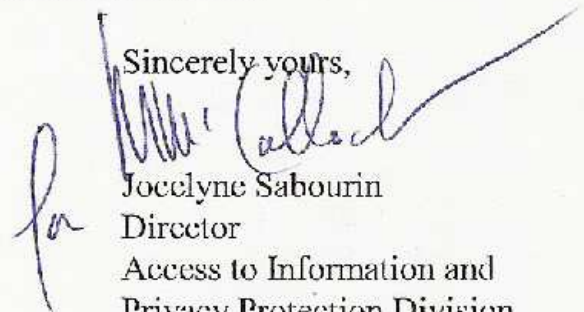
Enclosed are the documents that respond to your request. Please note that some of the information contained in the documents has been exempted under sections 13(1)(a) and 15(1) of the *Act*. A copy of the portion of the *Act* containing the exemptions is enclosed for your reference. Please also note that this department houses and manages a Government of Canada webpage on the SPP at www.spp.psp.gc.ca.

Please be advised that you are entitled to complain to the Information Commissioner concerning the processing of your request within sixty (60) days of the receipt of this notice. In the event you decide to avail yourself of this right, your notice of complaint should be addressed to:

Information Commissioner
Tower B, Place de Ville,
112 Kent Street, 22nd Floor
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 1H3

Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Francine Archambault at (613) 996-0196 or by email at: Francine.Archambault@international.gc.ca.

Sincerely yours,


for
Jocelyne Sabourin
Director
Access to Information and
Privacy Protection Division

Enclosures: 2 pages

Security and Prosperity Ministerial Meeting, 23 February 2007, Ottawa

Summary

Ministers responsible for the Security and Prosperity Partnership (SPP) met in Ottawa on 23 February to prepare for the next North American leaders' summit (to be held in Canada in August) and to review progress on priorities identified at the North American Summit held at Cancun in March 2006. This was the first time that all 9 SPP ministers (foreign affairs, prosperity, security*) had met together and their collaboration in a collective assessment of the SPP was in itself a notable achievement.

Foreign ministers led off the discussions, emphasizing the value of the SPP as a vehicle for closer collaboration. They noted that while many of the issues and topics of interest to North Americans were largely bilateral in character, the emerging trilateral conversation was a reflection of the way the relationship among the three countries is evolving.

s.13(1)(a)
s.15(1)

Ministers issued a joint statement detailing the outcomes of their meeting, available at www.spp-ppsp.gc.ca/progress/02_23_2007-en.aspx

Pace of Progress

Ministers discussed the pace and direction of work on the wide range of objectives and goals associated with the Security and Prosperity pillars. Directing the efforts of 19 separate working groups housed for the most part in different government agencies and departments has been a challenge for coordinators in each of the three countries. Work has progressed slowly -- for a variety of reasons -- and all those speaking concluded that the SPP agenda was overly dense.

s.13(1)(a) s.15(1)

Cancun Priorities

A key part of the meeting was devoted to a review of progress made in responding to the 5 priorities set by Leaders at their summit in Cancun in March 2006: (Strengthening Competitiveness; Avian and Pandemic Influenza; Emergency Management; Energy Security; Smart, Secure Borders). Ministers led off with brief topical presentations and sought comment.

Competitiveness

Ministers noted successes to date (including the completion of the North American Competitiveness Council's (NACC) report see below),

s.13(1)(a)
s.15(1)

Avian and Human Pandemic Influenza Management

Ministers agreed that the coordinating body mandated with preparing the plan for a North American response to an outbreak of avian or pandemic influenza be directed to finalize its report by June, in advance of the leaders' summit in August.

s.13(1)(a)
s.15(1)

Emergency Management

Minister Day (Canada/Public Security) proposed the establishment of a coordinating body on Emergency Management similar to that set up to deal with avian & pandemic influenza. Ministers agreed that a framework for Emergency Management, including the governance structure of a coordinating body, be formalized by June for review at the leaders' summit.

s.13(1)(a) s.15(1)

Energy Security

s.13(1)(a) s.15(1)

Smart, Secure Borders

s.13(1)(a) s.15(1)

North American Competitiveness Council (NACC)

Probably the most dynamic element on the plenary agenda was a meeting with the NACC, the body created by Leaders in 2006 to give the private sector a formal role in providing advice on how to enhance competitiveness in North America. The NACC tabled -- and subsequently made public -- a report containing recommendations focused on three areas: border-crossing facilitation, standards and regulatory cooperation, and energy integration. The recommendations -- which represent trilateral consensus -- focus on indicating where the NACC believes that government intervention would lower business costs and enhance competitiveness.

Exchanges following a formal presentation of the report uncovered frustration relating to the private sector's seeming inability to influence the pace of regulatory change "from the bottom up". Some NACC representatives felt that direct signals from ministers were required if work was to advance at a pace rapid enough to address challenges from more dynamic international competitors -- particularly China. The subtext was clear: in the absence of ministerial endorsement, bureaucracies are unlikely to act on the more challenging recommendations.

s.13(1)(a) s.15(1)

NACC representatives evidently were anxious to ensure ministers understood that the NACC saw this report as only the first in a series of short and long-term recommendations on building competitiveness in North America. The complex and far-reaching nature of the recommendations suggest that governments will need ample time to review and consult internally -- and trilaterally -- but it seems clear that the NACC will be looking for an early commitment to moving forward quickly.

Communications and Consultations

Ministers underscored the SPP's role as a dynamic tool for managing a set of complex issues. They acknowledged that the SPP was largely unknown or misunderstood and needed to be better communicated beyond the officials and the business groups directly involved.

s.13(1)(a) s.15(1)

A Government of Canada webpage on the SPP is housed and managed within DFAIT at www.spp-psp.gc.ca

Next Steps

Planning for the next North American Leaders' Summit, announced for August 2007, has begun. Two years into its existence, officials have had acquired sufficient experience now to undertake a confident review of the SPP's structure, functions and focus and to consider the initiative's place in the broader context of North American institutions; the Ministerial served to help further these reflections. The NACC recommendations took centre-stage at this meeting and, almost immediately, Governments will need to begin assessing the potential impact of adopting recommendations made by the NACC and coordinating their response to the authors of the report.

***Ministers responsible for Foreign Affairs, Prosperity and Security**

Canada: Foreign Affairs/MacKay; Prosperity/Bernier; Security/Day
USA: Foreign Affairs/Rice; Prosperity/Gutierrez; Security/Chertoff
Mexico: Foreign Affairs/Espinosa; Prosperity/Sojo; Security/Ramirez Acuña

13(1) INFORMATION OBTAINED IN CONFIDENCE

13. (1) Subject to subsection (2), the head of a government institution shall refuse to disclose any record requested under this Act that contains information that was obtained in confidence from

(a) the government of a foreign state or an institution thereof.

15(1) INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS AND DEFENCE

15. (1) The head of a government institution may refuse to disclose any record requested under this Act that contains information the disclosure of which could reasonably be expected to be injurious to the conduct of international affairs, the defence of Canada or any state allied or associated with Canada or the detection, prevention or suppression of subversive or hostile activities, including, without restricting the generality of the foregoing, any such information.