

Country-Specific Questions: Mexico and Labour

QUESTION

What is the Government's response to last week's submission by Canadian unions on allegations of intimidation and violence at Echlin plants in Mexico?

SUGGESTED REPLY

(General re: labour side accord in NAFTA)

- Canada has been a strong supporter of the objectives of the North American Agreement on Labour Cooperation (NAALC) and of the Labour Secretariat. We are committed to ensuring that expansion of trade under NAFTA includes labour concerns.
- The NAFTA side-agreements on both labour and the environment have enabled citizens to draw attention to what they see as instances of lack of enforcement of domestic legislation in NAFTA countries.
- The Canada-Chile Free Trade Agreement has similar labour and environmental side-agreements that have given citizens an important new forum for their concerns.
- These side-agreements with our two free trade partners in the hemisphere demonstrate Canada's commitment to these issues.

Specific re: Echlin plant complaint

- The Canadian administrative office for the NAALC has received the union's submission and is reviewing it.
- This is the first Canadian submission to the Commission and the Canadian administrative office will respond to the submission within the next 60 days, as mandated by the NAALC.
- The public submissions process is an integral element of the labour side agreement. It allows citizens to air their concerns about alleged non-enforcement of labour laws in NAFTA countries.