
Understanding the Differences

A Working Paper Series on
Higher Education in Canada,
Mexico, and the United States

Working Paper #8

The Vancouver Communiqué Revisited: An Assessment

by

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Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education

The Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE) is a public interstate agency established to promote and to facilitate resource sharing, collaboration, and cooperative planning among the western states and their colleges and universities. Member and affiliate states include Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oregon, South Dakota, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming.

WICHE's broad objectives are to:

- Strengthen educational opportunities for students through expanded access to programs,
- Assist policymakers in dealing with higher education and human resource issues through research and analysis,
- Foster cooperative planning, especially that which targets the sharing of resources.

In 1993, WICHE, working in partnership with the Mexican Association for International Education (AMPEI), developed the U.S.-Mexico Educational Interchange Project to facilitate educational interchange and the sharing of resources across the western region of the U.S. and with Mexico. In 1995, the project began a trilateral focus which includes Canada, with the goal of fostering educational collaboration across North America. In 1997, the project changed its name to the "Consortium for North American Higher Education Collaboration" (CONAHEC). The "Understanding the Differences" series was developed as a resource for the initiative and was created under the direction of WICHE's Constituent Relations and Communications and Policy and Information Units.

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- Working Paper #3: *The Educational Systems of Mexico and the United States: Prospects for Reform and Collaboration* (Publication Number 2A263)
- Working Paper #4: *Higher Education's Responsiveness in Mexico and the United States to a New Economy and the Impacts of NAFTA* (Publication Number 2A264)
- Working Paper #5: *The Role of Technology in Higher Education in North America: Policy Implications* (Publication Number 2A291)
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PREFACE

The concept of a North American community has gained considerable support over the past ten years. Energizing new impetus for such cooperation was generated by the Wingspread conference in 1992, and an ambitious agenda for future trilateral undertakings was created by the Vancouver Symposium in 1993. The concept of trilateral cooperation quickly expanded beyond collaboration between institutions of higher education in the three countries to include businesses, governments, and other organizations concerned with transnational issues in North America. A critical third meeting on higher education, research and training collaboration took place in Guadalajara in 1996. Now, two years after that conference and five years after the landmark Vancouver Communiqué was issued, the Consortium for North American Higher Education Collaboration (CONAHEC) has convened a conference (at the University of British Columbia, Vancouver—"Vancouver Revisited: Moving To The Next Stage," September 17-19, 1998) to assess the progress in trilateral collaboration.

As prelude to that conference, as a starting point for analysis and discussion, and as a crucial assessment of trilateralism, CONAHEC has invited three distinguished experts in the field of international education—John Mallea, Salvador Malo, and Dell Pendergrast to offer their evaluations of the current status of trilateral cooperation in higher education in North America. In the pages that follow, they have undertaken to provide, first of all, a critical assessment of the progress in trilateral initiatives. They have also analyzed the impediments to such cooperation, the forces that facilitate cooperation, and the prospects for future success in collaborative enterprises. They examine the present state of trilateral higher education cooperation in the light of the Vancouver Communiqué, and they reflect, in illuminating ways, on the directions future collaborative projects might usefully take.

"The Vancouver Communiqué: An Assessment" is the ninth in a series of reports that analyze educational practice and policy in Canada, the United States, and Mexico. All have been designed to highlight both differences and similarities, with the goal of fostering educational collaboration across our borders by building understanding and mutual respect of our diverse educational systems in North America.

The series, entitled "Understanding the Differences," was initiated in 1994 in an effort to provide information on educational policy issues affecting Canada, Mexico and the United States, particularly in a comparative context. It was undertaken with the encouragement of The Ford Foundation's Representative for the Office for Mexico and Central America, Norman Collins, and The Ford Foundation's Vice President of Education, Arts and Culture, Alison Bernstein. The series analyzes the major policy issues and differences in each country, to promote meaningful discussions among higher education leaders and policymakers.

"Understanding the Differences" is an important component of the Consortium for North American Higher Education Collaboration (CONAHEC), an initiative developed to remove the obstacles to North American educational interchange and increase understanding and opportunities for collaboration in Mexico, Canada, and the United States. The series includes:

- Working Paper #1: *Policy Approaches to Evaluation and Incentive Funding in U.S. and Mexican Higher Education*, by Peter Ewell and Rollin Kent.

- Working Paper #2: *Higher Education Faculty in Mexico and the United States: Characteristics and Policy Issues*, by Cheryl Lovell and Dolores Sánchez Soler.
- Working Paper #3: *The Educational Systems of Mexico and the United States: Prospects for Reform and Collaboration*, by JoAnn Canales, Leticia Calzada Gómez and Néllyda Villanueva.
- Working Paper #4: *Higher Education's Responsiveness in Mexico and the United States to a New Economy and the Impacts of NAFTA*, by Elizabeth Santillanez.
- Working Paper #5: *The Role of Technology in Higher Education in North America: Policy Implications*, by Glen Farrell, Sally Johnstone, and Patricio López del Puerto.
- Working Paper #6: *The BORDER PACT REPORT: A Region in Transition: The U.S.-Mexico Borderlands and the Role of Higher Education*, by Beatriz Calvo Pontón, Paul Ganster, Fernando León-García, and Francisco Marmolejo.
- The main comparative report: *Understanding the Differences: An Essay on Higher Education in Mexico and the United States*, by Judith I. Gill and Lilian Alvarez de Testa.
- Working Paper #7: *Teaming Up: Higher Education-Business Partnerships and Alliances in North America* by Guillermo Fernández de la Garza, Bertha A. Landrum and Barbara Samuels.

WICHE and CONAHEC thank Alison Bernstein, Janice Petrovich, Jorge Balan, and especially Norman Collins of The Ford Foundation for their generous support of CONAHEC and for their recognition of the importance of policy studies in North American higher education.

WICHE and CONAHEC also acknowledge the trilateral team of authors of this working paper, who freely gave of their time to share their expertise with others. The authors eagerly worked through language barriers, cultural differences and logistical obstacles, in the spirit of true cross-border cooperation and exchange, which should characterize a project of this nature. We hope their cooperative efforts will inspire other researchers to pursue future binational and trilateral collaborations.

This working paper was written to serve as a basis for the discussions of the September 17-19, 1998 North American Educational Leadership Seminar, hosted by the University of British Columbia. The seminar was entitled "Vancouver Revisited: Moving to the Next Stage. Integrating Global Trends into North American Higher Education." We would also like to take this opportunity to thank the members of the 1998 Planning Committee for their many insights that helped form this paper. They include: Al Atkinson, Victor Arredondo, Rebecca Ambriz, Sally Brown, Alfredo de los Santos, Jocelyne Gacel, Augustine Gallego, Keith Gray, Madeleine Green, Jaime Gutierrez, John Hansen, Ivan Head, Richard Lorenzen, Frank Medeiros, Elvia Palomera, Andrew Petter, Juan Carlos Romero Hicks, Julio Rubio Oca, Olav Slaymaker, Larry Sproul, and Walter Uegama.

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WICHE and CONAHEC hope that this series will foster improved understanding of significant higher education issues in Canada, Mexico, and the United States, and, over time, lead to new cooperative efforts to increase educational opportunities across North America.

August 1998

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INTRODUCTION

The idea of trilateral cooperation in higher education in the three countries of North America has steadily gained currency in the last decade. The Wingspread¹ conference in 1992 provided new impetus for collaborative enterprises. Then in 1993, the international symposium on higher education and strategic partnerships held in Vancouver² charted an ambitious, forward-looking agenda for trilateral undertakings.

This paper assesses the progress of trilateral cooperation in higher education in North America since Vancouver from the three country perspectives (Canada, Mexico, and the United States). It not only reviews the progress but also raises some fundamental questions. Does an emphasis on trilateral cooperation still make sense? What forms has it taken? What successes and failures have been experienced? What lessons have been learned? What might comprise a working agenda for the future? In examining these questions, the authors of this paper specifically address the expectations engendered by the Vancouver Communiqué, the programs undertaken in response to the Communiqué, the general impediments to trilateral cooperation, and the directions for future enterprises.

THE VANCOUVER COMMUNIQUÉ

The participants of the 1993 Vancouver conference reaffirmed the spirit of Wingspread. It is difficult to say how much of what has been accomplished is a consequence of the Vancouver '93 initiatives, since much of what has been done—even the Vancouver meeting itself—was influenced by outside forces, actors, and circumstances. In assessing the impact of the higher education collaborations announced in Vancouver, we must consider several actions and programs not formally linked to the Vancouver Communiqué. Nevertheless, Vancouver, together with Wingspread, represents the beginning of an organized trilateral movement favoring a closer collaboration in higher education. The Vancouver Communiqué has come to symbolize the materialization of the Wingspread *spirit*; it signals the active, concerted effort to create a *North American dimension* in higher education, and marks the true starting point for trilateral collaboration.

¹ In September 1992, leaders from Mexico, Canada and the United States spent three days at the Wingspread Conference Center in Racine, Wisconsin, to develop a course of action for higher education collaboration in North America. See the appendices for the Wingspread Statement. Full proceedings are located on the WWW at <http://elnet.org>

² In September 1993, some 300 leaders from Canada, Mexico and the United States came together to create an agenda to increase North American cooperation in higher education, research and training as a follow-up to the initial 1992 Wingspread meeting. Complete proceedings for the Vancouver International Symposium are located on the WWW at <http://elnet.org>

The participants at the Vancouver 1993 meeting attempted to translate the guiding principles developed at that conference into practices and projects. They proposed that the following initiatives be undertaken³ :

- THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A NORTH AMERICAN DISTANCE EDUCATION AND RESEARCH NETWORK (NADERN), a consortium to facilitate access to information and to support education, research and training among participating institutions;
- THE FORMATION OF AN ENTERPRISE/EDUCATION TRILATERAL MECHANISM to examine issues relating to mobility, portability and certification of skills, and consider common interests and approaches in technical, applied and life-long career education;
- THE ESTABLISHMENT OF PROGRAMS TO ENABLE FACULTY AND ADMINISTRATORS FROM ALL THREE COUNTRIES TO MEET with colleagues to explore and develop trilateral higher education collaborative activities in priority areas of concern;
- THE ESTABLISHMENT OF AN ELECTRONIC INFORMATION BASE in each of the three countries, with coordinated sharing of information on initiatives and resources relevant to trilateral cooperation;
- THE STRENGTHENING AND EXPANSION OF NORTH AMERICAN STUDIES PROGRAMS to promote trilateral linkages in support of research and curriculum development; and
- THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A PROGRAM TO SUPPORT INTENSIVE TRILATERAL EXCHANGE, RESEARCH AND TRAINING FOR STUDENTS.

This agenda was bold and ambitious. Just as some skeptics question NAFTA, others wonder if the higher education initiative crafted in Vancouver oversold the benefits and misjudged the problems. Inspired by lofty idealism, it minimized important differences among the three countries, and it underestimated the impediments to North American educational cooperation.

Yet in a world with instantaneous human communication and increasingly porous national borders, a retreat to insular, detached educational castles is not an alternative. The countries of North America are destined by technology, history, and geography to an intensified, more intimate relationship. By assessing how well the six initiatives have fared, we can begin—five years later—to reformulate the initiatives to make them more realistic and to develop new initiatives for the future.

³ For a complete version of the Vancouver Communiqué, please refer to the appendices of this paper.

THE VANCOUVER INITIATIVES REVISITED

The implementation of the Vancouver Communiqué has been uneven. Clearly, some initiatives have advanced significantly, while others have lagged.

INITIATIVE #1. THE ESTABLISHMENT OF NADERN has not fared well, largely because of the rapid growth in the use of the Internet for cross-border communication and information-sharing. Although some institutions (particularly in the case of Mexico) were not technologically ready for such networking at the time, their capabilities have been expanded, via such avenues as Mexico's Fund for the Modernization of Higher Education (FOMES).

INITIATIVE #2. THE FORMATION OF A MECHANISM TO FACILITATE TRILATERAL ATTENTION TO CERTIFICATION AND CAREER LEARNING has advanced slowly, if at all. One obstacle has been the differences in the certification structures in the three countries. Another was the fact that the accreditation and evaluation agencies in Mexico were either recently created or undergoing development, resulting in many questions regarding their role and authority in relation to post-secondary institutions. The Canadian and U.S. accrediting and evaluation systems were long-established and well developed in comparison to the Mexican structure. Nonetheless, within Mexico a number of significant new actions, such as the creation of a Labor Competencies, Normalization and Certification Council, have occurred.

INITIATIVE #3. THE CREATION OF PROGRAMS FOR THE TRILATERAL EXCHANGE OF IDEAS AMONG FACULTY AND ADMINISTRATORS has been fulfilled to a minor degree. The Program for North American Mobility in Higher Education (NAMHE) and the University Affiliations programs have generated substantial faculty/administrator partnerships. CONAHEC, institutional networks, and other informal linkages have yielded considerable North American faculty contact and collaboration.

INITIATIVE #4. THE ESTABLISHMENT OF AN ELECTRONIC INFORMATION BASE WITH DATA RELEVANT TO TRILATERAL COOPERATION has been fulfilled through the creation of EL NET,⁴ administered by WICHE/CONAHEC. Perhaps of the six initiatives, this outcome comes closest to matching the original expectation.

INITIATIVE #5. THE DEVELOPMENT OF NORTH AMERICAN STUDIES has not yet been fully realized. Some individual institutions within a country have notable programs in North American Studies, such as the Center for North American Studies at the National University of Mexico (CISAN), but trilateral linkages have not developed fully.

INITIATIVE #6. THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A PROGRAM TO SUPPORT TRILATERAL EXCHANGE FOR STUDENTS has made important progress. The three countries allocated considerable money to the NAMHE trilateral student mobility program. Through NAMHE, a substantial number of Canadian, U.S. and Mexican students have studied in the other two North American neighboring countries. Nonetheless, the future of the program is uncertain at this time.

⁴ The EL NET Web site is located at <http://elnet.org>

DEVELOPMENTS SINCE VANCOUVER

In April of 1996, a third trilateral conference was held in Guadalajara.⁵ The conference was well attended by delegates from the higher education sectors of the three countries; business and government sectors were represented, but not in large numbers; the professions and their associations were not in evidence. Participants hoped at the outset that trilateralism would now take off in a definitive way. However, what transpired at Guadalajara, just three years after the Vancouver Communiqué, was a clear indication of new regional circumstances. No concrete follow-up initiatives were endorsed. A change of momentum in the dynamics of North American higher education collaboration thus became evident, and it precipitated among many a new sense of pessimism.

But that gloom obscured some very significant—and encouraging—facts. First, Mexico managed to organize the meeting just a year after experiencing its worst financial crisis of the century. Second, more than 700 people from the three countries attended. Third, the meeting reiterated the desire for trilateral collaboration.

Perhaps the most positive outcome of the conference was the signing of a number of inter-institutional agreements. The meeting grappled with the question of how best to structure future collaboration, and that led to the issue being included in a survey commissioned by the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, Canada. This survey of all stakeholders reached out in particular to businesses and foundations. However, the subsequent recommendations reflected continued uncertainty over whether: a) businesses and foundations were truly essential to future trilateral activity and, if they were, whether influential leadership committed to the endeavor could be identified and recruited; and b) if not, how the higher education community and the three governments might best proceed.

The survey report laid out four possible alternative actions: 1) the establishment of a North American Clearing House, based on Internet activity; 2) the creation of a new and stake-holder-representative body with a secretariat; 3) the establishment of a NAFTA⁶ Commission (like those on Labor and Environment) in the area; and 4) the continuation of things as they have been—on a project by project basis. To date, things are continuing as before, and it seems unlikely that a new structural framework for North American cooperation in higher education will emerge in the near future.

Trilateral activity has been varied and ongoing since Vancouver. The activities fit into three categories: activities promoted by government agencies and supported with public money; activities undertaken by either post-secondary education institutions or associations; and, activities organized or promoted by still other groups and organizations.

Important government-funded projects include the Program for North American Mobility in Higher Education (NAMHE), the USIA's University Affiliations program, and the Regional

⁵ See the Appendices for the concluding addresses presented at the Guadalajara conference on May 2, 1996. The electronic proceedings are available at <http://elnet.org>

⁶ The North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA).

Academic Mobility Program (RAMP) organized by the Institute of International Education (IIE). Recently, the Trilateral Steering Committee⁷ (TSC) provided funds for the upgrade of the Consortium North American Higher Education Collaboration's (CONAHEC) EL NET, as well as for the creation of North American Institute's (NAMI) Alliance for Higher Education and Enterprise in North America. The Alliance is intended to promote business-higher education collaboration and to build new strategic alliances between these sectors.

At the present time, the TSC is considering three new projects. The first is a proposal from the University of Texas at El Paso to bring together university presidents from Canada, Mexico, and the U.S. to consider the feasibility of creating a membership-driven accrediting body to examine program and institutional accreditation in North America. The second is a proposal to organize a conference on the creation of an effective curriculum for a North American Studies program. And the third is the suggestion that an institutional linkage be developed by the American Council on Education (ACE), the Mexican National Association of Higher Education Institutions (ANUIES), and the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada (AUCC).

OBSTACLES TO PROGRESS

Progress has been inconsistent in implementing the Vancouver mandate because encountered obstacles were either overlooked or inadequately recognized five years ago. As we take the trilateral initiative into the 21st century, we will be sensitive to these systemic problems which complicate, but do not necessarily preclude, North American partnership in higher education. Expectations at Vancouver were probably too high. Some of the numerous obstacles to progress are discussed below.

A TROUBLED NAFTA: A BAD NAME BY ASSOCIATION

The perceived linkages between collaboration in North American higher education and NAFTA may well have stifled enthusiasm in the academic community. NAFTA was—and is—a contentious issue. Observers on both sides of the issue can agree on only one thing—that the jury is still out on its long-term benefits. A similar situation is observed with respect to the general process of economic globalization. Trilateral collaboration seems to many to be a part of this process, yet it, like NAFTA, remains suspect. Some critics emphasize the baleful influences of economic globalization; others speak of its inevitability; and still others believe it will lead to greater prosperity for all. Here, too, the jury is out, and so support for trilateral cooperation often seems to wilt.

⁷ Established in 1991, the Trilateral Steering Committee consists of three high level governmental/educational authorities from Mexico (SEP—Secretaría de Educación Pública), Canada (DFAIT—Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade), and the United States (USIA—United States Information Agency). The Committee's role is to create and guide the trilateral process. For a current list of representatives, visit <http://elnet.org>

COMPETITION, NOT COOPERATION

While both Wingspread and Vancouver envisioned ever-escalating cooperative enterprises in North American high education, the dominant paradigm in North America over the past ten years has been competition, not cooperation. This paradigm has influenced the thinking of governments and institutions of higher education as well as corporations.

COMPETITION FOR FUNDING

Trilateral collaboration in higher education had to contend with broader interpretations of internationalism, and it had to compete for funds with programs aimed at other forms of transnationalism. In Canada, for instance, North American collaborative programs had to vie with programs like the Canada-European program.

The availability of government resources to support international education initiatives has declined in all three countries. There was substantially less government funding for the North American initiative than it was wished or planned five years ago. It seems that no matter the country, support can be found for North American academic collaboration only to the degree that it is perceived to be in alignment with national policy objectives. The outlook for the period ahead will not improve without an unequivocal, public commitment at the national policy-making level.

GOVERNMENTS IN FISCAL RETREAT: COMPETING WITH DIVERSE NATIONAL POLICY AGENDAS

Perspectives on North American cooperation in higher education differ in Canada, Mexico, and the United States. It is important to recognize that these perspectives are shaped by the larger national policy contexts. In addition, unanticipated escalating budgetary pressures on the three national governments have further limited public funding of trilateral programs.

In Canada for example, initial discussions of North American cooperation in higher education occurred during a major review of foreign policy in general. This review identified education and culture as important pillars of Canadian foreign policy. In implementing its new policy, the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT) has placed great emphasis on international trade in education services, and a number of concrete steps have been taken to prepare for the export of education. Canadian Education Centres (CECs), representing over 250 institutions have been established. High level "Team Canada" regional trade missions, led by the Prime Minister, with representatives from business and education, have visited Asia and Latin America. As a result, provincial systems and institutions of higher education have sought to generate revenues from international students and projects.

Mexico and the United States also have their national priorities and funding constraints. Mexico's key initiatives include its National Program for Faculty Development (PROMEP) and an intense push to create a nation-wide system of technological universities which are considered critical to the country's economic development. In the U.S., the agency primarily responsible for

overseas educational programs, the USIA, absorbed a 25% reduction in its exchange budget during the past four years, while shouldering additional major policy-driven priorities in the Middle East, Africa, Vietnam, and China.

CENTRALIZED VERSUS DECENTRALIZED LEADERSHIP

Differing views shape the perception of the way in which collaboration should be implemented, who should lead it, and who should be the responsible participants. For those in Canada and the U.S.—both of which have highly decentralized educational systems—leadership and the responsibility for progress lie mainly with institutions. On the other hand, it is natural for those in Mexico, where there is a heavily centralized educational system and a long tradition of centralization, to assume that the federal government will signal the preferred course of action and provide the support to implement that action.

FAILURE TO RECOGNIZE A KEY PLAYER: THE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

At its earliest stages, the trilateral initiative emphasized four-year institutions and neglected the vast network of community colleges. This was particularly evident at Wingspread, and although efforts were made to redress the balance in Vancouver, it may have been a case of too little, too late. This might be attributed in part to the fact that the Mexican equivalent of the community college was not highly visible five years ago, though these new technological short-cycle post secondary institutions are now a top priority for the government and regarded as a crucial tool to promote Mexico's development. Despite the above, the two-year institutions in Canada and the United States frequently see themselves as being at least as actively engaged in international projects as their university counterparts.

PULLING AND KEEPING IT ALL TOGETHER

Organizational difficulties have also hindered progress. The absence of a more representative planning and decision-making body to oversee trilateral collaboration has posed problems. It has been difficult to make the process of trilateralism easily understood and to increase participation in trilateral projects. Changes in the membership of the Trilateral Steering Committee also created difficulties. Finding committed leadership among all sectors has proved troublesome.

INTEGRATION OR COLLABORATION

There is general agreement that trilateral collaboration is useful in furthering understanding, in cultivating tolerance, and in developing and uniting North America. However, there is no single, commonly shared view of the best process by which to achieve such collaboration. In general, Canadians view the development of North American collaboration as an integrated, extensive, and orderly process, not unlike that taking place in Europe, in which all the different education models have a place and uphold reasonably high standards. For Americans, given the

size and varied character of their own system, collaboration represents a movement to strengthen cross-border contacts that will deepen mutual understanding without jeopardizing the decentralized, diverse quality of North American education. Mexicans, on the other hand, view collaboration as a process through which the models of the three nations will come closer together, and one in which Mexican models and structures—although significantly altered—will preserve a number of their distinctive features.

BI- OR TRI- LATERALISM

Higher education institutions, like governments, are usually most comfortable working in a conventional, one-to-one institutional relationship. Institutions working with a single foreign partner can more easily identify similar goals and approaches, and the administration of bilateral programs is less unwieldy and more efficient. Those in favor of collaboration who do not believe in ultimate integration think that what matters is simply having institutions cooperate. Since a single, trans-regional educational identity is not their goal, they believe that trilateralism often hinders rather than fosters cooperation.

On the other hand, those holding an integrationist view of collaboration feel that bilateral projects do not make much sense; rather, such projects represent “more of the same,” only repeating what has, in one form or another, been going on for years. They believe that bilateral projects do not contribute to the creation of a single identity for higher education in the region. Although some productive trilateral programs developed, higher education institutions in North America generally continue to favor bilateral programs.

ASYMMETRIES

Deeply rooted differences of culture, education, history, fiscal resources, and government separating the three North American countries were underestimated. These asymmetries among the three countries generate equally different views of the objectives and forms of collaboration. The asymmetries pose difficulties in themselves for implementing collaborative programs, but they also create conceptual differences that, in turn, create further obstacles to collaboration. The higher education system and academic culture in each country are unique, and they are not easily blended with those of the other countries. The largest North American partner, the United States, itself contains a vast, diverse often-unwieldy universe of 3,000 colleges and universities. Different leadership styles and legal systems in the three countries also complicate trilateral program administration.

INSTABILITY AND DECLINE OF COMMITMENT

Trilateral collaboration since Vancouver has been pursued during a period of instability. Collaborative policies, programs, and actions have all been affected by the following: the financial instability that has characterized the period; the changes that have naturally occurred in the presidencies, as well as in the top positions of several institutions and organizations; and the political shifts that have brought changes in government and in the TSC membership.

The three countries have not always seemed to have a full commitment to the process of trilateral collaboration. There is a perception that national governments' interest in the trilateral waned over the past few years. Caution on the part of government officials in regards to specific issues has also often been perceived as a lack of interest, despite their ample support to various proposals and their enthusiasm in initiating the trilateral process from its earliest stages.

INSTITUTIONAL RELUCTANCE TOWARD A NORTH AMERICAN VISION

With relatively few exceptions, college and university administrators in the three countries did not respond to the North American initiative with enough commitment and enthusiasm. Part of the problem has been the intractable difficulty of launching new, interdisciplinary programs in the balkanized academic culture and competing for resources with existing area studies. North American Studies does not yet command the visibility—or the resources—of Asian, African, and other high-profile international programs. Institutional leaders have been absorbed with the broader financial problems of declining public funding and soaring costs. Higher education administrators have been reluctant to spend their political or budgetary capital to support North American Studies. Mexican universities have a predictably stronger focus on institutional and faculty development than do their Canadian and American counterparts, and this can lead to asymmetrical approaches to trilateral exchange activity.

In the early Wingspread stages, North American universities were intended to be the main setting for trilateral collaboration. But post-secondary institutions in all three countries, especially at the top administrative levels, are not yet fully convinced of its importance. Furthermore, much remains to be done if their response to the vision of a cooperative North American community is to be realized.

UNREALISTIC EXPECTATIONS OF CORPORATE SUPPORT AND INVOLVEMENT

In the trilateral initiative's formative stages, the NAFTA/higher education linkage encouraged the seductive assumption that North American corporations would be active partners with post-secondary institutions and governments. This expectation has not been fulfilled. Corporations have not assumed a leadership role in trilateral education initiatives. Faced with their own stiff financial and competitive pressures, North American companies have made limited educational commitments, and the ones they have made often focus on narrow, very explicit corporate objectives. Individual firms may fund programs closely associated with their interests, but corporate readiness to participate in a larger North American education/corporate initiative has been negligible.

Corporations have also failed to back up the rhetoric of globalization with visible efforts to recruit graduates with international experience. Despite the increased importance of overseas markets, no concrete studies show that major companies purposefully seek out individuals who elected to study and live outside their home country. This failure to hire those with foreign study creates an obstacle to expanded participation in North American student exchanges.

LESSONS LEARNED

It is quite obvious that progress has been made in collaboration on higher education in North America. Today there are many more institutions involved in cooperative enterprises, many more collaborative projects, and many more linkages than there were five years ago. It is also evident that we need to continue the progress—to increase the forms of collaboration as well as the number of participants.

The lessons of the past can provide the tonic for the future. The experience since the 1993 Vancouver meeting features instructive, sobering lessons that can help to define a trilateral strategy through the new millenium. What has been learned since Vancouver? Detailed answers to this question probably await further research. In the interim, however, a number of points come to mind. Perhaps they will serve as cautionary guides for future cooperation.

SYNCHRONIZING WITH NATIONAL POLICY AGENDAS

Trilateral cooperation, if it is to bear lasting fruit, needs to be based on well-grounded analyses of current developments in international higher education, both within and between the three countries. (This approach was adopted at Wingspread but not at Vancouver.) In addition, the planning and implementation of future trilateral initiatives need to take more fully into account existing trends in political, economic, and foreign policy. It is increasingly clear that the three countries are willing to participate in the trilateral process as much as it contributes to their national priorities. Proponents of trilateral initiatives need to recognize the significant influence that existing trends in institutional policy in the three countries will have on their efforts. And, perhaps most importantly, trends in international trade in professional services have important implications for trilateral initiatives in the areas of initial, continuing, and professional education.

LEADERSHIP AND INSTITUTIONAL OWNERSHIP

Collaborative projects are often only as successful as their leaders are committed, energetic, and talented. Excellence in leadership is crucial in trilateral undertakings in higher education. We must seek out the most dedicated leaders in all areas of trilateral endeavor: educational institutions, governments, and corporate organizations. Five years ago the Wingspread/Vancouver process was directed primarily by governments. In the future, we will need more forceful, visible leadership by the higher education communities in the three countries. Universities and other post-secondary institutions hold the keys to the progress now critical for the trilateral initiative: curriculum change; administrative efficiency in working with foreign partners; degree/credit recognition; faculty/student mobility; and increased interdisciplinary cooperation. Governments can continue valuable facilitative support, and they can reiterate foreign policy priorities. But the North American initiative's success now rests primarily with the institutions themselves, particularly their readiness to accept an active leadership role. If North American collaboration in higher education, research, and training is to be successful, the identification of sustained and committed leadership is essential.

ADVOCACY: PROMOTING TRILATERALISM

However apparent the manifold benefits of collaboration in higher education in North America may be to us, we need to realize that for many the purpose and advantages of trilateralism are still not clear. We have learned that we need to document the results of successful linkages, effective organizations, and model projects, and then promulgate them in order to convince more people, institutions, organizations, and businesses of the value of collaboration. An advocacy strategy should be developed by representative organizations of higher education, including those in each country involved in international education, in order to lobby governments and the private sector more effectively. We must persuade officials in government and executives in foundations that it is important to support collaborative programs in North America.

UNEQUAL PARTICIPANTS, DIFFERENT BENEFITS

Considerable asymmetry exists between the three nations, their systems of higher education, and their institutions. This fact needs to be taken more fully into account in planning future cooperative activities. The diversity of participants and interests in higher education collaboration in the region create at least three levels of potential benefits: the continental, the national, and the institutional. Each of these levels has two modalities: the general—that is to say, the public, social or cultural; and the specific—that is, the private, economic, or direct. Within this framework, the incentives for the stronger institutions to collaborate with the weaker are usually found in the first level and the first modality. On the other-hand, less-developed institutions more frequently operate at the second and third levels and through the second and third modalities. We have learned to recognize these differences and to adjust programs accordingly.

AN INCREMENTAL APPROACH

We should favor a strategy of varied, deliberate, incremental steps to strengthen North American partnership in higher education. The proliferating pressures on governments, institutions, foundations, and corporations probably preclude any major, large-scale initiative. Leaders and participants in the process of North American cooperation need to adopt a more realistic set of expectations. The development of cooperative partnerships between different stakeholders takes considerable time, effort, and sensitivity on the part of all concerned, and such partnerships are more likely to succeed if they are focused on specific projects. By building upon the already existing trilateral projects (for example, the Regional Academic Mobility Program, NAMHE, and the University Affiliations Program) and organizations already working directly on trilateral issues (such as CONAHEC) contacts can be fostered through EL NET and a series of concrete problem-solving conferences, to create a steady expansion of the trilateral higher education network.

THE RESOURCE IMPASSE

North American partnership requires more than lofty rhetoric and good will. A creative, aggressive fundraising approach to multiple patrons will be essential. Facing severe budgetary constraints, the national governments are less able to offer significant funding, and only an explicit, high-level political endorsement will reverse this trend. State/provincial governments should be increasingly engaged. Foundations and other non-profit organizations working on North American-specific issues (for example, the environment, climate, agriculture, and immigration) are sources which should be explored more vigorously. Corporations may support trilateral projects tailored to their specific, individual objectives. But uncertainty shadows the central, unanswered questions: will colleges and universities themselves make the tough choices to put North America at the top of their international education agenda? Are higher education institutions prepared to mobilize their internal infrastructures as well as their political influence with governments and their connections with the business sector to support the North American initiative?

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

The agenda promoted five years ago in Vancouver had mixed results, but this effort should not be just another competing player on the international education field. The telling difference is that Canada, Mexico, and the United States are in the inescapable grip of geography and economics. These countries are linked to each other as they are to no other part of the world. The distinction between domestic and foreign increasingly blurs in the relationships among these countries. The critical social and economic problems and issues spill across North American borders. A focus on expanding trilateral higher education partnerships now has a priority and indeed an urgency even more pressing today than in 1993. We need to invigorate the North American Agenda for the 21st century.

It is important for future trilateral projects to take into account current trends in the international context. Ties between the three North American economies will strengthen as a result of the growth of regional markets. Trade liberalization will increase, as will the number of bilateral and trilateral group trade agreements with Latin American nations. International trade in educational and professional services is expanding rapidly and will continue to do so. This expansion will offer many opportunities for higher education institutions to collaborate with both public and private sector organizations.

It seems almost certain that in the long run a more global market for North American personnel and products in education, training, and retraining will emerge. The creation of a continental educational and training market will require the development and application of international quality standards. Such a market will also call for the greater modularization of current course offerings and the expansion of credit systems. Emphasis in the future is likely to be placed on demonstrable outcomes, skills and competencies, portability of diplomas, mandatory updating and upgrading of professional qualifications, and creation of international accreditation mechanisms.

All of these are areas in which North American cooperation in higher education has much to offer. And all of them are areas in which higher education institutions will be expected to assume a direct, hands-on leadership role.

Many trilateral projects have taken place since Vancouver 1993. Nonetheless, we need to recognize that at present the main objective of collaboration is to increase it. That is, the priority for the future is to multiply and extend the forms of collaboration. To achieve this, we need to:

- Take advantage of all that has proved successful, from groups and organizations to procedures and mechanisms to specific projects. The 1993 Vancouver Communiqué has provided a solid base for us to build upon.
- Review the original initiatives and modify or add new ones on the basis of past experience and present realities. This must be done with the help and guidance of those most involved.
- Recognize that it is imperative to coordinate these efforts and to explore the possibility of creating a trilateral organization.
- Ensure, finally, the continuation of meetings like this one (Vancouver 1998), in which we can discuss trilaterally the problems, objectives, and tasks awaiting us in higher education cooperation in North America and identify ways to master them through collaboration.

Recognizing the importance of North American collaboration is only a prelude for the commitment to specific actions which advance the process. The unfinished business of Vancouver might be reconsidered if leadership exists in the three countries to work on these projects. But we also should explore new ways and approaches to breathe life into the North American higher education initiative. Among practical initiatives that could be pursued immediately are to:

- Expand in-state/province reciprocal tuition privileges to encourage cross-border student mobility.
- Create formal agreement to codify and enrich the working relationship among the three national higher education umbrella organizations: ACE, AUCC, and ANUIES.
- Support, with government funding, a major CONAHEC-sponsored conference on “North American studies” to share experiences on the widely varying curriculum approaches and to improve networking among these programs. Development of a North American Studies Association might be a concrete outcome of this meeting.
- Develop two broad areas of overlapping potential growth which can be identified relating to NADERN: first, the delivery of short- and long-cycle degree programs at a distance; second, continuing education for the professions.

- Sponsor a meeting of presidents of universities and higher education institutions and educational associations, as well as professional associations, to assess the possibility of creating a North American accreditation mechanism and to strengthen degree/credit recognition among higher education institutions in the three countries.
- Promote aggressive lobbying efforts by universities and educational associations with national, state, and local authorities to mobilize the political support for North American partnership. This is important because the North American initiative has never had an explicit, high-profile endorsement by the top leaders of the North American countries. It is time for the three governments to renew their commitment to the trilateral process.
- Renew Canadian and Mexican funding of the NAMHE program, which has been a highly successful centerpiece of trilateral university cooperation.

This agenda is intentionally modest and limited. A deliberate, pragmatic strategy of short-term steps is more appropriate than ambitious, long-range projects that have rhetorical flair but lack leadership and resources. Our objective should be to build incrementally on the progress that has already been made. The lessons learned since the 1993 Vancouver Communiqué clearly invite realistic, practical measures to address the thorny issues of student and faculty mobility in North America. And, ultimately, the higher education community itself must decide to put this initiative among its highest priorities—and not wait passively to follow government bureaucracies. We cannot overstate the influence of committed, articulate educators in galvanizing support for North American partnerships, both inside and outside the universities.

In the 21st century, trade and commerce will flow across North American borders on a scale impossible to envision today. There is no greater international education priority than to make North America not only a marketplace for products and services but a harmonious neighborhood of mutual understanding, respect, and support in coping with our shared destiny. The experience since the Vancouver Communiqué sharpened our awareness of the problems, but the overarching goal of North American partnership remains. Future generations of Canadians, Mexicans, and Americans depend on our commitment and actions during these last moments of the 20th century. North America and its 390 million people have too much at stake. We cannot afford to stumble or vacillate.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

JOHN MALLEA is President Emeritus of Brandon University and is a senior consultant to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the World Bank (African Virtual University), and the Centre for Higher Education Research and Development, University of Manitoba. He is currently preparing a monograph, in association with two American and Mexican colleagues, titled, *"Globalization, Free Trade and Higher Education in North America."* His most recent publications deal with the internationalization of higher education and the professions, and international trade in education and professional services. In 1977, he received the University of Toronto's "Distinguished Educator Award" and the Award of Merit for contributions to international education from the Canadian Bureau for International Education.

SALVADOR MALO currently serves as Vice-President for Planning at the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (UNAM). He has a long career in science and higher education, and was a member of the Mexican Task Force Group for Collaboration in Higher Education in North America. With a degree in physics from UNAM and a doctorate in physics from Imperial College at the University of London, he worked for three years at the International Atomic Energy Agency in Vienna, Austria. Malo conducted surface science research for several years at Mexico's Instituto Mexicano del Petroleo (an oil industry-related technical and research center), where he held several positions, including Vice-President of Research. He later joined the Mexican Department of Education and initiated several programs to promote development of the sciences in Mexican state universities, including the well-known "Sistema Nacional de Investigadores". His past positions at UNAM include Professor in the School of Sciences and UNAM's Center for University Studies, as well as and Secretary General and Vice-President of Administration.

DELL PENDERGRAST served as a career Foreign Service Officer for 32 years and is now an independent consultant in international education and public affairs. From 1994-1997, he was the Deputy Associate Director at the United States Information Agency (USIA) responsible for worldwide educational and professional exchange programs. While Minister-Counselor at the U.S. Embassy in Ottawa from 1990-1994, Pendergrast was actively involved in the launching of the North American higher education initiative. His previous Foreign Service assignments include: Zagreb and Belgrade, Yugoslavia; Saigon, Vietnam; Brussels, Belgium (U.S. Mission to the European Communities) and Warsaw, Poland. He has degrees from Northwestern University and Boston University.

APPENDIX A: WINGSPREAD STATEMENT

**STATEMENT
OF
THE CONFERENCE ON
NORTH AMERICAN HIGHER EDUCATION COOPERATION:
IDENTIFYING THE AGENDA
HELD AT
THE WINGSPREAD CONFERENCE CENTER
RACINE, WISCONSIN
ON
SEPTEMBER 12-15, 1992**

PARTICIPANTS FROM CANADA, MEXICO AND THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA AT THE WINGSPREAD CONFERENCE AGREE THAT⁸:

- 1) INTERNATIONALIZATION OF HIGHER EDUCATION⁹ IS THE KEY TO THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION AND RESEARCH, THE STANDARD OF LIVING OF THE CITIZENS AND THE OVERALL QUALITY OF LIFE OF OUR COUNTRIES, AS WELL AS TO A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF OUR RESPECTIVE DISTINCTIVE CULTURES AND IDENTITIES.

⁸ This conference on trilateral education issues was supported in part by The Johnson Foundation.

⁹ Higher education and higher education institutions encompass universities engaged in research-based teaching, postsecondary establishments of education and training which offer courses of varying duration, regardless of the dissemination vehicles, and of a general or specialized nature leading to qualifications at the postsecondary level.

- 2) BETTER UNDERSTANDING AND ACCEPTANCE OF OUR DISTINCTIVE REALITIES ARE ESSENTIAL COMPONENTS OF STRONGER
- 3) PARTNERSHIPS, GREATER ACCESS TO THE VAST NORTH AMERICAN POTENTIAL AND EFFECTIVE DEVELOPMENT OF OUR COUNTRIES' GROWING RELATIONSHIPS.
- 4) ENHANCED TRILATERAL COLLABORATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION BUILDS UPON EXISTING RELATIONSHIPS AND BENEFITS OUR THREE COUNTRIES. THIS STATEMENT IS MADE WITH FULL RECOGNITION OF AND RESPECT FOR THE NATIONAL SOVEREIGNTY OF OUR RESPECTIVE COUNTRIES, THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF OUR DIFFERENT JURISDICTIONS, AND THE AUTONOMY OF OUR HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS.
- 5) ENHANCED COLLABORATION PROVIDES ADDITIONAL IMPETUS TO GREATER COOPERATION WITHIN OUR RESPECTIVE COUNTRIES AND SUPPORTS BILATERAL RELATIONS WITH THIRD COUNTRIES AND RELEVANT MULTILATERAL ORGANIZATIONS.

IN STATING THE AFOREMENTIONED AGREEMENTS, WE TAKE NOTE OF THE NORTH AMERICAN FREE TRADE AGREEMENT NEGOTIATED BY OUR RESPECTIVE GOVERNMENTS AND WE AFFIRM THAT ENHANCED TRILATERAL COOPERATION HAS MERIT IN ITS OWN RIGHT.¹⁰

WE COMMEND THIS CONFERENCE STATEMENT, AT THIS DEFINING MOMENT IN OUR HISTORY, TO THE URGENT CONSIDERATION OF OUR RESPECTIVE AUTHORITIES AS A CONSTRUCTIVE TRILATERAL CONTRIBUTION TO THE DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF APPROPRIATE PUBLIC POLICIES THAT SUPPORT AND PROMOTE THE INTERNATIONALIZATION OF HIGHER EDUCATION.

ENHANCED TRILATERAL COLLABORATION AIMS AT THE FOLLOWING SET OF RELATED AND MUTUALLY REINFORCING OBJECTIVES. WE COMMIT OURSELVES TO THE FOLLOWING OBJECTIVES AND THEIR PROMOTION IN

¹⁰ We acknowledge the substantial contribution made to the successful outcome of this conference by the authors of the four discussion papers as well as the overview and context provided on Sept. 12 during the first conference session. The four papers dealt with: mutual understanding and cultural identity; exchange of information/data base; mobility; optimizing complementarities. Each of the papers, along with the overview and context, were the subject of extensive discussions by the participants and was instrumental in achieving the broad consensus, reflected in this conference statement. Summary reports on the discussion of each of these agenda items and papers are appended to this conference statement.

OUR RESPECTIVE COUNTRIES, AND TO PURSUING, WHERE APPROPRIATE, THE AGREED UPON SET OF RECOMMENDATIONS AND STEPS TO BE UNDERTAKEN:

OBJECTIVES

- 1) DEVELOPMENT OF A NORTH AMERICAN DIMENSION IN HIGHER EDUCATION;
- 2) PROMOTION OF EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION ON COMMON ISSUES OF CONCERN AND ON EXPERIENCES OF COMMON INTEREST;
- 3) PROMOTION OF COLLABORATION AMONG HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS;
- 4) FACILITATION OF STUDENT AND FACULTY MOBILITY;
- 5) INCREASING AWARENESS OF AND MUTUALLY SATISFACTORY REMOVAL OF IMPEDIMENTS TO MOBILITY;
- 6) PROMOTION OF STRONGER COLLABORATION AMONG OUR RESPECTIVE INSTITUTIONS/ORGANIZATIONS AND PUBLIC AUTHORITIES, BUSINESS AND OTHER ORGANIZATIONS THAT HAVE A STAKE IN THE QUALITY OF HIGHER EDUCATION;
- 7) EXPLORATION AND EXPLOITATION OF THE FULL POTENTIAL OF CURRENT AND EMERGING INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND TRANSMISSION TECHNOLOGIES IN SUPPORT OF OUR STATEMENT OF OBJECTIVES.

WITH THESE AGREED OBJECTIVES IN MIND, THE PARTICIPANTS AT THE WINGSPREAD CONFERENCE MAKE THE FOLLOWING RECOMMENDATIONS TO OUR RELEVANT PUBLIC AND PRIVATE AUTHORITIES AND ORGANIZATIONS, AND HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS:

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1) THAT PRIORITY CONSIDERATION FOR TRILATERAL COLLABORATIVE ACTIONS IN HIGHER EDUCATION BE GIVEN TO:
 - INVENTORYING EXISTING PROGRAMS AND RELATIONSHIPS;
 - INCREASING THE CAPACITY AND ENHANCING THE CAPABILITIES OF INSTITUTIONS AND ORGANIZATIONS WITH SPECIAL EMPHASIS ON FACULTY DEVELOPMENT IN OUR THREE COUNTRIES;
 - ELIMINATING OBSTACLES AND REDUCING BARRIERS TO ENHANCED TRILATERAL COLLABORATION IN THE FIELD OF HIGHER EDUCATION;
 - DEVELOPING COLLABORATIVE PILOT PROJECTS WHERE THERE EXISTS ALREADY STRONG MUTUAL INTEREST, SUCH AS DISCIPLINES DIRECTLY RELATED TO THE MANAGEMENT OF OUR EVOLVING TRADE RELATIONS; SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT; PUBLIC HEALTH; NORTH AMERICAN AREA STUDIES AND TRAINING IN LANGUAGES;
- 2) THAT WE TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE USE OF MODERN INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND DISSEMINATION TECHNOLOGIES SUCH AS DISTANCE LEARNING, COMPUTER COMMUNICATIONS, INTERACTIVE VIDEO CONFERENCES, ETC., WHERE APPROPRIATE, IN SUPPORT OF THE FOREGOING INITIATIVES;
- 3) THAT ENHANCED USE BE MADE OF PEOPLE-TO-PEOPLE EXCHANGE PROGRAMS;
- 4) THAT FACULTY MEMBERS, UNIVERSITY ADMINISTRATORS, AND STUDENTS BE INCLUDED IN THE INTERPRETATION OF THE SPECIAL TREATMENT IN THE ISSUING OF VISAS TO BUSINESS PEOPLE, TECHNICIANS AND CONSULTANTS IN THE CHAPTER ON TRADE IN SERVICES IN THE FINAL DRAFT OF NAFTA;
- 5) THAT MEASURES BE TAKEN IN PARTICULAR, TO DISSEMINATE SUCCESSFUL COLLABORATIVE EXPERIENCES THROUGHOUT THE NORTH AMERICAN HIGHER EDUCATION COMMUNITY.

- 6) THAT ACTION BE TAKEN TO INCREASE AND EXPAND STUDENT ACCESS TO INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES.

IN ADDITION, WE UNDERTAKE TO ACCOMPLISH THE AGREED UPON INITIATIVES THAT FOLLOW:

ACTION INITIATIVES

- 1) A WINGSPREAD CONFERENCE REPORT INCORPORATING THIS
- 2) STATEMENT, A SUMMARY OF THE DISCUSSION PAPERS, HIGHLIGHTS OF THE CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS AND THE LIST OF PARTICIPANTS WILL BE PRODUCED AND WIDELY DISSEMINATED TO THE APPROPRIATE DECISION MAKERS AND ORGANIZATIONS IN OUR THREE COUNTRIES.
- 3) AN INVENTORY OF EXISTING RESOURCES AND PRIORITY NEEDS WILL BE CREATED WITHIN 9 MONTHS AND DISTRIBUTED WITHIN 12 MONTHS.
- 4) A TRILATERAL TASK FORCE (CANADA, MEXICO, AND THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA) ON NORTH AMERICAN HIGHER EDUCATION COLLABORATION, WILL BE ESTABLISHED IMMEDIATELY, WITH MEMBERSHIP TO BE APPOINTED NO LATER THAN NOVEMBER 10, 1992. THIS ACTION-ORIENTED TASK FORCE WILL BE EXPECTED TO UNDERTAKE, AMONG OTHER THINGS, THE FOLLOWING:
 - DEVELOPING A PROPOSED STRATEGIC PLAN;
 - SUPPORTING AND MONITORING PROGRESS ON THE ABOVE INITIATIVES;
 - INITIATING RESEARCH PAPERS AND RECOMMEND SPECIFIC ACTION PLANS;
 - ORGANIZING AN IMPLEMENTING TRILATERAL CONFERENCE WITHIN THE NEXT 12 MONTHS, IN VANCOUVER, IF THE TASK FORCE REPORTS SUFFICIENT PROGRESS WITHIN 9 MONTHS.

APPENDIX B: VANCOUVER COMMUNIQUÉ

**Vancouver Communiqué
Vancouver, British Columbia
September 10 - 13, 1993**

In reaffirming the spirit of Wingspread, the participants in the Vancouver Symposium call on our colleagues in teaching, research and training institutions, as well as those in business, government and other concerned organizations, to join us in forging new partnerships for sharing knowledge across traditional boundaries.

We view Canada, Mexico and the United States, along with the other regions of the world, as poised on the threshold of the new century, a century in which higher education, research and training cooperation will be central to innovation and human resource development, essential to achieving our goals for social, economic and cultural development.

We recognize that our countries cannot fully prosper in all the ways that matter if they remain no more than trading partners. A new sense of a North American community, made up of our 360 million people, should be forged, one which will provide impetus to greater cooperation among and within our countries, support our relations with countries outside the region, enhance our distinct cultural identities and acknowledge our asymmetries.

The compelling vision of Wingspread has motivated the participants in this Vancouver Symposium to take concerted actions to enhance the mutual-well being of the countries of North America and beyond. Current economic, social and cultural forces reshaping our three societies and the rich diversity of our cultures - from the native peoples to the most recent immigrants - have created a climate in which the North American community can flourish.

The expansion and strengthening of intellectual links and academic collaboration across the continent are fundamental to North America's vitality. They underpin the stability, civility and respect for human rights and freedoms necessary to democratic societies. They are fundamental to genuine sustainable development.

Wingspread and Vancouver have revealed the vast opportunities which trilateral collaboration offers to build on existing programs and activities and to stimulate new thinking about the directions of education, research and training.

We accept the challenge now to go beyond the defining of shared conceptual goals and broad objectives. We have developed concrete strategies to implement the Wingspread objectives through increased contact and collaboration among students, researchers, administrators and partners in business and government, and other institutions. The variety of trilateral partnership projects announced at the Symposium, those currently being designed, as well as those envisioned during the meeting, are evidence of significant momentum. The conclusions summarized below point the direction we should take together to expand the higher education, research and training components of the deepening North American relationship.

We have concluded that the following initiatives should be undertaken immediately:

- 1) The establishment of a North American Distance Education and Research Network (NADERN), a consortium to facilitate access to information and to support education, research and training among participating institutions. This symposium gratefully acknowledges the work of three members of the Task Force subgroup on distance learning and requests that they carry forward this proposal through broad consultation with all interested institutions and organizations.
- 2) The formation of an Enterprise/Education trilateral mechanism to examine issues relating to mobility, portability and certification of skills, and consider common interests and approaches in technical, applied and lifelong career education. Responsibility for carrying forward this proposal should be undertaken by the appropriate national associations and relevant authorities.
- 3) The establishment of programs to enable faculty and administrators from all three countries to meet with colleagues to explore and develop trilateral higher education collaborative activities in priority areas of concern.
- 4) The establishment of an electronic information base in each of the three countries, with coordinated sharing of information on initiatives and resources relevant to trilateral cooperation. This electronic information base is to be developed in such a way as to be easily accessible by the academic community, business, governments, foundations and other concerned organizations. It should contain the most relevant, timely and concise information.
- 5) The strengthening and expansion of North American studies programs to promote trilateral linkages in support of research and curriculum development.
- 6) The establishment of a program to support intensive trilateral exchange, research and training for students.

For further consideration and action in 1994:

- 1) The establishment of a North American Corporate Higher Education Council comprised of senior representatives of the corporate and higher education communities from the three countries to act as advocates, within the two communities and across North America, for further partnering in the realization of mutually agreed objectives. It would engage a broad dialogue with all concerned institutions and organizations in support of trilateral cooperation.

The creation, by this council, of a consortium of North American Business for Trilateral Research, Development and Training to operate for an initial period of, say, seven years. The consortium's objective would be to secure private sector funding, through the membership of individual corporate citizens of the

three countries, to be used to implement research and training initiatives of value to both the corporate and higher education communities.

- 2) As part of the long-term operations of NADERN, the development and implementation of a plan for a consortium to broker access to recognized graduate distance education courses and to develop a mechanism for awarding degrees for such composite programs.
- 3) Continuing and enhanced support by research granting agencies, foundations and other partners for trilateral collaborative research programs and research networks.

We, the participants at the Vancouver Symposium, commend these conclusions and proposals as a constructive contribution to the development and implementation of appropriate policies that support and promote the internationalization of higher education, research and training.

APPENDIX C: GUADALAJARA CLOSING PLENARY SPEECHES

(AS DELIVERED, UNEDITED)

**Guadalajara, Jalisco, Mexico
April 28-30, 1996**

CANADA

Presented by Mr. Robin Higham, Director General, International Cultural Relations Bureau,
Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade.

Committee members are all public servants so you will doubtless hear from us a summing up of your discussions which tends to reflect the priorities and mandates of our respective governments and Ministries.

In the case of Canada and the Department of Foreign Affairs, our priorities and our mandate for issues touching on internationalisation of Education and on the NAFTA are hardly subtle. For us it is absolutely clear that:

- 1) we are to re-allocate our diminishing departmental resources in ways which respond to opportunities and problems generated by the knowledge/technology revolution,
- 2) to prepare Canadians to operate in the increasingly interdependent global community (35% of Canada's GNP, is traded internationally, that is about three times the share of Japanese or United States GNP going to international markets), and,
- 3) to consider the internationalisation of Higher Education in Canada as a top shelf priority.

In that broad policy context, our duties are made even more specific by an overlaying "NAFTA priority" and in particular the instruction from government is for us to focus energies on, as one Minister put it, "putting a human face on the NAFTA".

Rationale for these priorities has been articulated with much eloquence over the past few days and there is no need to elaborate on them now. If we needed further convincing the comments of the spokesman of the European Union regarding the Erasmus, Leonardo, Socrates, and the importance of these issues Tempest I and II Programs, were highly persuasive.

Those priorities define our perspective on the subjects under discussion here. During the past two days, we have heard from many experts who agree that in the face of budget constraints in academic institutions as well as in business and government, we must jointly or individually deal with the following circumstances:

- 1) Increasing demands for more, better and more relevant Higher Education,
- 2) Increasing need for an "international overlay" across all academic disciplines, all faculty, all students and in all institutions. We heard that all universities and colleges must become "international organizations",
- 3) There is an urgent need to protect the North American academic research base and "research relevance", and, that both those objectives can be addressed by sharing research with business and sharing internationally,
- 4) Increasing need for improved cultural and language awareness or "cultural accommodation", in order for the NAFTA to survive and to flourish, and to enable the three member states to anticipate, and to deal with, the inevitable NAFTA conflicts, as our economic interdependence evolves,
- 5) Increasing need for academic institutions to "show the way" in dealing with the cultural backlashes some expect, as societies deal with a level and intensity of internationalization which outstrips their absorptive capacity for change. (Delivering and developing the "diversity is strength" argument),
- 6) Increasing need for colleges and universities to co-opt business and for businesses to co-opt the academics, in order to co-operate in the pursuit of their respective, and complementary, objectives,
- 7) Finally, the explosion of opportunities and challenges for information sharing and gathering and access to information created by the new technologies ...the borderless academic promise which looks destined to be the forerunner of the fall of many other borders, communications, culture, social and political, as well as academic.

Canadian business and academic participants here today, as well as we representing the government of Canada, are delighted with the Wingspread, Vancouver, Guadalajara (WVG), process as far as it has taken us, and, we are impressed by the concrete results, as well as the growth of interest, in the six short years since Wingspread. We believe that Canada has some extremely interesting niche areas of leadership of expertise to be developed and exploited, and, we believe that the NAFTA group has even more potential if it can be made to work effectively. Canadians do not want to lose that lead, and we believe that we cannot afford to lose it.

So the conclusion from the Canadian side is: "YES", we will likely seek to institutionalize in some fashion the consultative process launched by the last three sessions. (By "institutionalise I want it to be clear that I do not necessarily mean to create another NGO) In any case, we are not yet ready to declare how we might proceed from here, we will need a little more time than is

available this afternoon for reflection and assessment ...we want especially to have a closer look at the score card to date, where we have hits and where we have misses.

Our next step in Canada will be to draw up a post-Guadalajara discussion paper which will catalogue our own observations and evaluations, and conclude with a listing of process options for the future. Our options list will most probably be drawn from a positive assessment of the need and a neutral assessment of the mechanics.

In the spirit of the "WVG", we intend, of course, to share our discussion paper with our NAFTA partners and to invite them to prepare parallel statements for discussion. We would subsequently compare notes, compare levels of willingness, and interest in going ahead together, assess the resources we have available to do so, and propose a game plan for the future. At this stage it may well be necessary to recruit some outside help to bring an objective assessment to the transitional process we envisage. Some WVG veterans have perhaps, and I suppose understandably, had enough of the current process, just as other participants in the process, may demonstrate too much zeal for creating a new permanent NGO or, worse yet, a government-based bureaucratic industry.

From the Canadian perspective it is increasingly evident that we cannot afford to walk away from the problem of agreeing on process. Nor do we accept the implications that more talk is incompatible with action or should be viewed as an alternative to "getting on with it" as some have said. From what I have seen in my first year on this file, remarkable and concrete progress has already been made and made as a direct result of talking about it.

From observing the reactions over the past few days to the Guadalajara catalyst, we have confirmation once again that the Medium is the Message, or perhaps more appropriately, that in the very special atmosphere generated by our Mexican hosts, it is indeed possible for the Process to be a substantial part of the Product. Our enthusiasm remains intact.

Thanks to guidance and dedication of Canadian Task Force Members Doug Wright, Tom Wood, Anne Marrec, Don Rickerd (Clarence Chandran, Northern Telecom).

UNITED STATES

Presented by Mr. Donald R. Hamilton, Minister Counselor for Public Affairs, U.S. Embassy in Mexico

Please permit me to begin by conveying the regrets of USIA Director Joseph Duffey and Associate Director John P. Loiello for their absences today as well as Secretary of Education Richard Riley. Both Secretary Riley and Director Duffey had previously committed themselves to attend next Monday's Binational Ministerials in Mexico City and found it impossible to come to Mexico twice in less than one week. As you know, Dr. Loiello was here earlier and had to return urgently for Senate hearings on the USIA educational exchanges budget.

Thus, this conference has but your humble servant to represent the United States Government at this closing plenary. Even so, I am happy to say that my country is amply represented, with representatives from the Chamber of Commerce and the NGOs and Academic Organizations, like the Institute for International Education, the Accreditation of Engineering and Technology, ABET; the Association of American Universities and the Ford Foundation. Thank goodness our country does not consist solely of our Government.

This Conference represents three great countries, and three cultures: The United States, Canada and Mexico. As well as three elements within each of those countries: the government, the academy and the business communities. The increased participation each year shows that the Government's catalytic role in funding, in beginning this process, has certainly succeeded.

As stated by Dr. Loiello on Sunday, the Government's role is ample as a focuser as well as a provider of resources, a catalyst and a facilitator as well as a funder. In researching among participants in this meeting, we were surprised and delighted to find how many projects we hadn't known about at all. There is no actual register of the good, specific, tangible projects which have arisen recently as result of this process.

Our best guess, maybe an informed guess, but still only a guess, is that there have been about 120 specific activities as a result of the process was initiated at Wingspread and then advanced at Vancouver and here. We all vaguely feel that the most important part of these meetings is what takes places on the margins and I think these 120 projects certainly sustain that view.

The goal of previous meetings was to encourage the development of alternative sources of support for Universities. Presentations from various Foundations, including specifically the Ford Foundation, showed that the goal has indeed been realized. Another goal is to encourage Business and University relationships. As we have seen, these relationships have progressed to the point that Universities and Businesses now see each other as partners in the common goal of training and educating productive citizens and furthering the development of our Nations, our Hemisphere, and our Commerce.

Steve Kerr from IBM noted stereotypes in his presentation on how Universities and Businesses see each other and how these stereotypes create road blocks in cooperation and they both have to work to overcome stereotypes in order to reach the common goal. I think progress is being made, as has been evident these past few days.

The applications of technology and the impact of the Internet, for example, cannot be ignored. Many, if not most, have now become used to the net now. This instrument, this technology, which is fast becoming simply another appliance, like a toaster or a telephone, has become indispensable for those of us fortunate enough to have the access. Use has become so routine that we hardly notice it I do not know if we can continue thinking about the net as a new technology—it is the way many of you registered and gathered the information on this conference.

I don't know if we would be able to continue to meet face to face in the same format and circumstances as in the past, but there seems to me a little doubt that the technology will be there to keep this as an essential element of what is been going on until now. Indeed, we are very pleased that our Governments and WICHE are going to maintain the Web site that has been set up for this conference, keep it open and make it available for the solicitation of comments.

Indeed, the comments of all of you about this conference and your suggestions and ideas about where this process should go are most welcome at the Web site, and we hope that you would forward them and make them available. I think that would help give the Steering Committee a reasonable sense of what is the common will, with regard to how this process should continue, and frankly, it is the most effective way I think to have this done. Naturally, faxes and "snail mail" are also available to send in this information.

But, I think that the era of cooperation and the casual intimacies which are developing among and between our Nations, are most important and significant for us. It seems to me that we are part of the process which has established itself and which is irreversible, and that our task is indeed to facilitate things and to move them along with the least sand in the gears as possible. But sand in the gears or not, you know this is going to go forward. Geography and the logic of history tell us that it will.

The United States Government, through USIA has issued an invitation to the Steering Committee to meet in September. We will host that meeting, at which point we will try to sort through the input and comments that we had received from all of you, or as many as you choose to share. We will try to arrive at the best way to channel the energy and direction which already exist and to encourage and to get it to the right place.

We feel strongly, that Trilateralism is here to stay. And, we look forward to learning more about what has happened and we really hope that, in addition to offering you specific suggestions, if you could offer a catalog and the arrangements you have arrived to further Trilateralism, and post them on the WEB, that would be most helpful for us.

Mindful of the hour, I would bid you farewell at this point.

Thank you.

MEXICO

Presentado por Dr. Víctor A. Arredondo Alvarez, Director General de Educación Superior

Comentarios Finales

La Tercera Reunión General ha llegado a su fin. Esto es, sin duda, motivo de alegría y descanso para muchos de nosotros, pero también de compartir algunas reflexiones finales. Aquí se han expresado los diferentes logros de la reunión y los aspectos que podrían considerarse para hacer más eficaz, pertinente e incluyente a la colaboración en América del Norte.

Se ha reportado aquí un número significativo de proyectos y acciones de colaboración trilateral emprendidas desde que, en 1992, los tres países decidieron estrechar lazos, más allá de lo comercial, para mejorar lo más valioso que tenemos: nuestros recursos humanos. También se han expresado nuevas ideas y líneas posibles de cooperación, así como los ajustes necesarios para algunos de los programas en operación. Todo esto, con el objeto de ampliar y fortalecer las perspectivas de nuestra agenda de trabajo futuro.

Queda claro que este proceso seguirá creciendo, diversificándose y, por tanto, beneficiando a un mayor número de estudiantes, profesores, investigadores y administradores. Aunado a lo anterior, los beneficios de esta colaboración se amplían a las empresas, las organizaciones no gubernamentales a cargo del desarrollo comunitario y, por ende, a nuestras respectivas sociedades. El alcance y la magnitud del beneficio dependerá, en todo caso, de la orientación y calidad del trabajo y del convencimiento que se logre para sumar nuevas y múltiples fuerzas en esta importante tarea.

Permítanme referirme a algunas ideas que aquí se han formulado:

Parece fundamental, continuar construyendo un paradigma de relaciones entre la educación superior, las empresas, el gobierno y las organizaciones no gubernamentales orientadas al desarrollo comunitario. Las experiencias de Canadá y Estados Unidos en la materia serán de gran utilidad, no obstante, México necesita afrontar un reto dual: crear mecanismos que propicien una vinculación entre estos sectores, congruente con su realidad, así como desarrollar y fortalecer tales enlaces en un marco de trilateralidad.

Como lo mencionó el Dr. Daniel Reséndiz, en su intervención del día de ayer, México cuenta con un Programa de Desarrollo Educativo del que se derivan prioridades nacionales claras que orientan nuestras acciones de colaboración. El mejoramiento del personal académico mediante los estudios de posgrado, la innovación y flexibilidad académica, el fortalecimiento de las opciones de estudios técnicos, el reforzamiento de la capacidad de investigación y transferencia tecnológica, así como el reentrenamiento de la fuerza laboral son prioridades que pueden beneficiarse de la colaboración trilateral.

Podemos decir que existen ya algunas bases sobre las que podemos crecer y otras que será necesario crear. Entre éstas últimas, me parece muy relevante la propuesta de construir redes de excelencia académica, en tópicos de importancia estratégica trilateral, que operen de manera innovadora sin necesidad de estructuras administrativas pesadas y rígidas con financiamiento diverso proveniente de múltiples fuentes. Esta situación es aplicable también al concepto de educación y capacitación a distancia, donde el potencial de eficiencia, cobertura e impacto es impresionante.

Con respecto a la pregunta sobre cómo organizar el trabajo futuro, hay una total coincidencia con lo dicho aquí por mis colegas de Canadá y Estados Unidos. Es evidente la necesidad de repensar los mecanismos de coordinación para la siguiente etapa. Esto debe hacerse con cuidado y con tiempo suficiente. Se desea contar con medios que faciliten y propicien la multiplicación de esfuerzos de colaboración sin recurrir a estructuras pesadas y costosas, estimulando las iniciativas individuales e institucionales, dentro de un marco general de orientación. Esto es, necesitamos estimular la creatividad en la operación de iniciativas y atender las prioridades de cada sector de los tres países y de la región en su conjunto.

Para lo anterior, será fundamental el trabajo de cada uno de los grupos de interés y temáticos que ya vienen operando y que habrán de operar en el corto y mediano plazo. El apoyo de Internet en este proceso será de gran utilidad. Es bienvenido el anuncio de que WICHE mantendrá el Home Page que utilizamos para anunciar y organizar esta reunión general. Mediante este servicio se dispondrá de un vehículo eficaz para intercambiar información, puntos de vista y documentos que aprovechen el momentum alcanzado y que permitan fortalecer y ampliar las redes y grupos de trabajo establecidos.

Deseo concluir con el profundo agradecimiento de las autoridades de la SEP a todos ustedes:

Al Gobierno de Canadá, y en particular a la oficina de Robin Higham, por el apoyo en la convocatoria de los participantes canadienses, la coordinación con su oficina fue esencial. También reconocemos su doble aportación financiera para operar esta reunión.

Al Gobierno de Estados Unidos por su apoyo en la coordinación de las invitaciones a los representantes estadounidenses, así como su aportación financiera.

Al Gobierno del Estado de Jalisco, por su hospitalidad y generosa contribución para hacer de la estancia de todos nosotros una agradable experiencia. A las autoridades municipales cuyo apoyo logístico permitió que la reunión se desarrollase de manera fluida.

De manera especial a la Universidad de Guadalajara y a la Universidad Autónoma de Guadalajara, así como al Instituto Tecnológico de Estudios Superiores de Occidente, a la Universidad del Valle de Atemajac, a la Universidad Panamericana, al Instituto Tecnológico y de Estudios Superiores de Monterrey, Campus Guadalajara y al Instituto Tecnológico de Ciudad Guzmán, así como a los más de 250 voluntarios de esas instituciones, que hicieron posible celebrar una reunión como la que hemos tenido la oportunidad de disfrutar.

Al personal de la Subsecretaría de Educación Superior e Investigación Científica que colaboró en la organización de este evento y, en especial, a quienes integran las áreas coordinadas por Ricardo Mercado y Arath de la Torre, que mostraron un profesionalismo y dedicación excepcional.

Por último, a todos ustedes que con su participación lograron que las diferentes sesiones se desarrollaran en un marco propositivo y auténticamente favorecedor de la colaboración trilateral.

Muchas Gracias.