

**PRTRS IN THE AMERICAS****S. Hart<sup>1</sup>, J. Rosenberger<sup>2</sup>**<sup>1</sup>*Innovative Environmental Solutions (IES), Quebec, Canada*<sup>2</sup>*Pollution Data Branch, Environment Canada, Gatineau, Canada*

One of the best international instruments for management of chemical wastes is Pollution Release and Transfer Registers (PRTRs). Most developed countries have PRTRs in place: developing countries and those with economies in transition should consider instituting them. PRTRs provide for transparency in that the registers are made public and developed through partnership between industry, government and the environmental community. Additionally each country retains the flexibility to develop a PRTR that uniquely satisfies its needs. The United Nations Environmental Commission for Europe (UN/ECE) has developed a PRTR protocol under the Aarhus Convention targeted at all European countries. This protocol is also available to non-UN/ECE countries. The protocol is now under the process of ratification. In 2002 Environment Canada initiated a program designed to encourage all countries of North, Central and South America to develop PRTRs, which would be compatible to each other. A partnership was developed between Environment Canada and UNEP Chemicals to complete this program which consisted of: a) Informative visits would be made to countries with no knowledge of PRTRs, which were completed in 2002. b) Three two day regional workshops were conducted in Kingston, Jamaica, (English speaking Caribbean), Sao Paulo (South America) and Cost Rica (Central America and Spanish speaking countries). These workshops were completed in December 2003. A final PRTR Conference of the Americas (PRTR/COA) was held April 21-23/2004 in Mexico City. The proposed paper will provide more detail on the process, and the results of the PRTR/COA.