

October 2022

The Ministries of WAGE and Global Affairs Canada

Dear Ministers,

In anticipation of the upcoming sixty seventh session of the Commission on the Status of Women, the National Council of Women of Canada (NCWC) appreciates your overall engagement with civil society in the context of CSW during the most trying of times, the COVID pandemic. We also recognize that, in addition to the difficulties of addressing the challenges of the pandemic and social unrest, the ongoing war in Ukraine is an added challenge to our government and civil society alike.

To show our appreciation, the NCWC is taking the initiative of inviting you to a meeting to discuss the challenges, opportunities, and solutions with respect to the preparations for CSW67 with a particular focus on the understanding of the functions of Commission, Methods of Works, Zero Draft, and the final document - the agreed conclusion. As the NCWC has the experience and expertise to address these very important elements, we invite you to join us in ensuring civil society has the necessary input during the negotiation process, which will result in a very successful CSW.

In addition, we would also like to kindly refer to the new amendments to the existing Methods of Work adopted by the Commission, wherein the NCWC has been an active contributor. These amendments are in reference to governments actively engaging with civil society in a meaningful way by consulting with us prior to the beginning of the session as well as during the session.

In accordance with the following paragraphs, it has been decided:

9. That the consideration by the Commission of the Priority

Theme shall focus on ways and means to accelerate the implementation of commitments in the context of current challenges, through not more than two interactive expert panels or other interactive dialogues to identify key policy initiatives and strategies in order to accelerate its implementation on the basis of an exchange of national, regional, and global experiences, lessons learned, good practices, and new insights based on evidence, research, and evaluation with a further emphasis on results achieved, and to strengthen dialogue and commitment for further action, and that the expert panels could include experts from Governments, the United Nations system, civil society, and other stakeholder groups that work on the theme under consideration;

12. That ahead of each session, the schedule of informal consultations of the session outcomes should be set according to a clear timetable, giving due consideration to working hours, which allows for consultations and coordination in order to reach a timely and substantial outcome;

17. That all Member States invite meaningful involvement with civil society organization and other relevant stakeholders in preparatory processes for the work of the Commission, including through considering holding consultations with them at the national level on the Priority Theme and the Review theme;

24. That, in view of the traditional importance of non-governmental organizations in the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, and in accordance with Council resolutions 1996/6 of 22 July 1996 and

1996/31 of 25 July 1996, such organizations should be encouraged to participate, to the maximum extent possible, in the work of the Commission and in the monitoring and implementation process relating to the Fourth World Conference on Women, and requests the Secretary-General to make appropriate arrangements to ensure full utilization of existing channels of communication with non-governmental organizations in order to facilitate broad-based participation and the dissemination of information;

25. Also, that to continue to strengthen existing opportunities for non-governmental organizations, in accordance with Council resolutions 1996/6 and 1996/31, to contribute to the work of the Commission, including by allocating time for them to deliver statements on themes relevant to the session during panels and interactive dialogues and at the end of the general discussion, considering geographical distribution.

Taking the above into consideration, the NCWC has made appropriate recommendations, via a proposed action plan, relating to the opportunities provided by our government for meaningful engagement and contribution of civil society in the input for the negotiations of the aforementioned documents. The proposed action plan was agreed upon in the last meeting of CSW65 as it has been observed that many of the participating NGOs did not have the necessary information related to the CSW process, Methods of Work, official documents, and expertise. Therefore, the NCWC has provided a position statement asking for Equitable and Sustainable Methods of Work specifically related to civil society meaningful participation.

We trust that you will find our initiative constructive toward achieving a meaningful relationship between our government and civil society.

In the spirit of collaboration and cooperation, the NCWC is looking forward to hearing from you at your earliest convenience.

Sincerely,

Patricia Leson, President
National Council of Women of Canada

The National Council of Women of Canada (NCWC) works in the spirit of truth and reconciliation, acknowledging Canada is the traditional territory of Indigenous and Metis People. We are grateful to join with others in peace and hope, advocating for an improved quality of life for women, children, families, and society.