



Canadian Labour Congress

Congrès du travail du Canada

**WOMEN'S AND HUMAN RIGHTS REPORT**  
**to the**  
**CLC EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

**February 11 & 12, 2008**  
**OTTAWA, ONTARIO**

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**Women's Economic Equality Campaign**

Following the October Executive Council meeting, the CLC has moved rapidly to design the Women's Economic Equality campaign to be launched on March 8, 2008. The campaign will focus on the wage gap and highlight, throughout the next year, a range of related core priority issues such as child care, pay equity, the union advantage, pensions, unemployment insurance, the manufacturing crisis and violence. Please refer to separate campaign agenda item in this Executive Council binder. Many thanks to Andrea Peart for her work to date on the campaign.

**CLC National Women's Committee**

The CLC National Women's Committee met on December 11 - 12, 2007 at the new CLC headquarters building. Sister Peart presented the campaign layout, and the committee provided useful feedback which has now been incorporated into the overall design. A subcommittee was established to help ensure affiliate and federation of labour involvement at all stages of the campaign. Minutes of the meeting are available from the Women's and Human Rights Department.

A CLC National Women's Committee meeting has been scheduled for March 25 & 26, 2008 at CLC headquarters.

## **Status of Women Canada**

In our last departmental report to Executive Council, we reported on our meeting with Clare Beckton, coordinator of Status of Women Canada (SWC), on August 27, 2007 regarding our concerns about policy direction and funding cuts to women's organizations and at SWC itself.

We have also, finally, received a response to many requests for a meeting with Josee Verner, Minister responsible for the Status of Women. A meeting with her office will be held in the near future. We look forward to discussing with her staff the Women's Economic Equality campaign and the impact of federal government policy on the issues.

## **CLC Convention, May 2008**

Departmental staff have been preparing for the upcoming convention in a number of ways. We have begun discussions with our relevant committees about the Women's Forum, on the Monday evening - which we anticipate will focus on the Women's Economic Equality campaign - and the Anti-Racism department in relation to the Human Rights Forum on the Sunday evening.

## **Disability Rights**

A CLC Disability Rights Working Group meeting has been scheduled for March 13 & 14 at the new CLC national headquarters. Minutes of the October 2007 meeting of the working group are available from the department.

The main discussions will centre on on-going planning for the next CLC National Disability Rights Conference which will be held in Montréal at the Queen Elizabeth Hotel, November 15 - 18, 2008. The theme of the conference will be on **'Decent Work for People with Disabilities'**. The Working Group continues to work with the Education and Women's and Human Rights Departments on the development of a CLC Disability Rights Course to be piloted this year.

In commemoration of the International Day of Persons with Disabilities, December 3, the CLC released a statement which, like the upcoming conference, focused on the urgent need for a comprehensive and

complimentary jobs agenda for people with disabilities at all jurisdictional levels. The statement is available on the CLC website under 'Equality/ Disability Rights' section.

We also worked closely with the disability rights movement to ensure that a rally associated with END EXCLUSION, on November 22, was a success. END EXCLUSION is a yearly initiative of the community which brings hundreds of activists to Ottawa to present the federal government with a political agenda for progress for people with disabilities. Part of this agenda includes a jobs strategy.

### **Solidarity and Pride**

The Solidarity and Pride Working Group will be meeting at the CLC headquarters March 10 & 11, 2008. Minutes of the last meeting are available from the department.

### **Employment Equity**

The department is helping to coordinate the CLC response regarding the 2007 (legislated) review of the federal Employment Equity Act. At this stage, the government's intentions are not known, but the CLC, our affiliates and federations are continuing strategic discussions and preparations of written briefs.

The Solidarity and Pride Working Group is also working to update educational materials to be shared with affiliates and labour councils.

### **Ad Hoc Coalition for Women's Equality**

The CLC continues to work with the coalition which has just produced a '**Cooking for Equality Cookbook**'. This is an excellent popular education tool, packed with useful organizing tips, facts and arguments and fun too. Anyone interested in ordering the book can contact the Women's and Human Rights Department.

