



Unity Conference 2002
Conférence Unité 2002

SOLIDARITY IN OUR JOURNEY, UNITY FOR THE FUTURE

Report of the Third National Unity Conference

Fairmont Winnipeg Hotel, Winnipeg
October 18-20, 2002



Public Service Alliance of Canada

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Greetings:

**Sister Nycole Turmel
PSAC National President**

The third PSAC Unity Conference "Solidarity in our Journey, Unity for the Future" provided an opportunity for PSAC racially visible and Aboriginal members from across the country to network and strategize around important issues directly related to their communities, workplaces and Union.

The underlining theme through out the conference was globalization. Globalization has had and continues to have a profound impact on the economic, social and political rights of PSAC members and the world in which we work and live. Our Union needs the input and participation of our racially visible and Aboriginal members on this and all issues if we are to successfully mobilize for change.

The PSAC has made some significant gains within our Union in the last few years. At the 2000 PSAC Triennial Convention, a constitutional change was adopted which resulted in the eight PSAC equity delegates elected to the PSAC Equal Opportunities Committee, including the man and woman representatives for racially visible and Aboriginal workers, being afforded full delegate status at that Convention and all future PSAC Conventions. As well, another constitutional change allowed for resolutions adopted at the Unity Conference to be forwarded directly to PSAC Conventions.

The 2003 PSAC Convention adopted resolutions related to equity and human rights issues including the establishment of an Aboriginal, Inuit and Métis Network and funding for Regional Human Rights Committees. In addition, funding for Equity Conferences for the 2004-2006 cycle has doubled and with delegate participation fully funded.

The Unity Conference provided a valuable forum for the Union and I want to thank the delegates for their contribution at the Conference as well as for their commitment and on-going work in the struggle for equality and justice. I hope that the information, analysis and tools from the Conference have been taken back and shared with the

Locals and human rights committees. I also hope that delegates are taking an active role in their Region to ensure that the Regional action plans developed at the Conference are successfully implemented.

We need an educated, engaged and mobilized membership if we are to successfully achieve good collective agreements, advance our human rights agenda, and celebrate some victories over the next few years. I believe that the Unity Conference contributed to building such a membership and that together we can and will, build a better world for all.

In solidarity,

Nycole Turmel
National President

Greetings from Sister Patty Ducharme and Gerry Halabecki, Regional Executive Vice-Presidents for B.C. and Ontario

The PSAC has done considerable work around equity issues since the first Unity Conference.

The PSAC takes great pride in the achievements and the gains made at the bargaining table, including the PSAC-TBS Joint Learning Program which has developed two courses specifically related to anti-discrimination and anti-harassment. The PSAC continues to be a leader on the issue of employment equity and continues to push employers to fulfill employment equity initiatives. Yet, we know that there is much more work to be done – in our union, in our communities and in our workplaces.

The knowledge and experience of the Unity Conference Organizing Committee contributed to the pertinent workshop topics and plenary sessions at the Conference. Balancing the conference objectives of education, mobilization and politicization while respecting the differences between and within two very different equity communities was at times challenging, but in the end, successfully achieved.

To ensure that both racially visible and Aboriginal members had their own space and voices throughout the Conference, the Organizing Committee ensured that separate caucuses and election process were built into the agenda. At the same time, it was important to build solidarity between Aboriginal and racially visible members and discuss the common issues facing both communities such as racism, employment equity and privatization of public services. Workshops on these issues provided tools to prepare future leaders and to foster solidarity and support between equity groups.

Other highlights of the Conference included the elections of the PSAC Equal Opportunities Committee (EOC) Representatives for racially visible and Aboriginal members, the discussion and debate of resolutions, and the Regional action plans developed in the Regional caucuses to be implemented in all seven regions.

Overall, the Conference was very well received and the objectives accomplished through the collective work of all the delegates, the Organizing Committee, the Resolutions Committee, the Nominations Committee, the Harassment Committee, workshop facilitators, speakers and the PSAC staff.

The PSAC would like to recognize the work that went into organizing the Unity Conference and the leadership of the members of the Organizing Committee for their commitment to ensuring the success of the Conference.

Recognition must also be given to the speakers for their presentations and their time given to share their invaluable experiences and analysis with us.

In addition, the PSAC acknowledges the collective efforts of the PSAC staff from the National and the Regional Offices for their commitments to making the Conference a success. The Regional Office in Winnipeg also organized a demonstration in support of our Statistical Survey Operations (SSO) workers at Statistics Canada which the Unity Conference delegates participated in.

Finally, recognition must go to PSAC activists who freely give their time in the union, the workplace and the communities to push the equity and human rights agenda forward. One such example is Brother Ranjit Perera who was a strong activist for equality for all. He was honoured at the Unity Conference for his contributions.

In conclusion, the Conference was exciting, mobilizing, entertaining and informative that brought many participants together to network and make new friends!

In Solidarity,

Patty Ducharme, REVP – BC

Gerry Halabecki, REVP – ON

Conference Objectives

The objectives of the 2002 PSAC Unity Conference were:

- to mobilize and politicize Racially Visible and Aboriginal members around union, workplace, community and international issues;
- to strengthen the solidarity and build coalitions within these sectors, including strengthening the Racially Visible and Aboriginal committees that exist within the union structure; and,
- to develop regional action plans that will address Racially Visible and Aboriginal issues in the region.

This Conference increased our union's capacity to respond and integrate the needs and issues of our Racially Visible and Aboriginal members.

Conference Agenda

The Conference had a full agenda with plenary sessions, workshops, elections, resolutions debates, caucuses, and entertainment. The Conference had educational, mobilizing and politicizing components. It had motivating guest speakers that assisted in all three components including the opening remarks of Sister Nycole Turmel; plenary sessions on leadership in the union, workplace and community and on globalization and equality; and a presentation on the follow-up from the United Nation's World Conference Against Racism.

There was also a sweatshop free fashion show during the banquet and a reception for Dr. Ranjit Perera, a long time PSAC activist. *(See Appendix A for the full Conference Agenda)*

Elections for the PSAC EOC Equity Representatives for racially visible and Aboriginal members were held during the Conference. In addition, there was discussion and debate on the resolutions and recommendations at the Conference.

Despite the full agenda, there were opportunities for delegates to network during the Conference. There was a banquet on Saturday night where they could informally network. There were also caucus meetings for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender members, women, members with disabilities and youth members. Regional caucuses were also part of the agenda.

The Organizing Committee focused on the objectives of the conference when determining the workshop topics. The following were the workshops offered at the conference:

1. *Employment Equity*

Part I and II: An Introduction of Employment Equity and Employment Equity Committees

This workshop provided an overview of the *Employment Equity Act* and highlighted the employer's and union's role under the *Act*. In addition, the gaps and deficiencies of the *Act* were identified. Also, this workshop outlined the role of employment equity committee under the *Act* and identified strategies to ensure that these committees play an effective function in the development of employment equity plans in their workplace.

2. *Keeping the "Public" in Services*

This workshop provided an opportunity for members to understand the significance and negative impact of globalization on Racially Visible and Aboriginal members and, to strategize effective ways to oppose globalization, privatization and contracting out of our public services.

3. *Making the Links Across Race and Culture*

This workshop examined the new or enhanced realities for Racially Visible and Aboriginal peoples in light of world and national events. This workshop also examined the cultural and racial barriers facing Aboriginal and Racially Visible workers and how they can support issues affecting various equity groups.

4. *Preparing our Future Leaders*

This workshop enhanced leadership skills of our Racially Visible and Aboriginal members who want to pursue equity issues in various forums.

An important feature of the Conference was the elections for the Representatives for Racially Visible and Aboriginal Members and their Alternates to the PSAC Equal Opportunities Committee (EOC). The EOC is a standing committee of the National Board of Directors that acts as an advisory committee on equity issues.

The Racially Visible Members elected the woman representative and the man representative and their respective three alternates for Racially Visible Members.

The Aboriginal Members elected the woman representative and the man representative and their respective alternates for Aboriginal Members.

The term of the elected representatives will be until the next Unity Conference. The following are the elected representatives and alternates:

Sister Terri Lee from the B.C. Region and Agriculture Component was elected the EOC Representative for Racially Visible Members (Woman).

Brother Richard Sharpe from the Prairies Region and Agriculture Component was elected as the EOC Representative for Racially Visible (Man).

Sister Tammy Davidson from the B.C. Region and the National Component was elected as the EOC Representative for Aboriginal Members (Woman).

Brother Andre Paul from the Atlantic Region and the National Component was elected as the EOC Representative for Aboriginal Members (Man).

Sister Lee's Alternates are:

First Alternate:

Sister Theresa Halfkenny from the Atlantic Region and and Canada Employment and Immigration Union Component.

Second Alternate:

Sister Sandhya Singh from the Prairies Region and National Component.

Third Alternate:

Sister Kalpana Gupta from the Prairies Region and National Component.

Brother Sharpe's Alternates are:

First Alternate:

Brother Peterson Leonard from the Quebec Region and Canada Employment and Immigration Union Component.

Second Alternate:

Brother Naresh Prasad from the North Region and the Yukon Employees Union Component.

Third Alternate:

Brother Doug Hill from the Prairies Region and the Union of Canadian Transportation Employees Component.

Sister Davidson's Alternates are:

First Alternate:

Sister Geri Leblanc from the Atlantic Region and the Custom Excise Union Douanes Accise Component.

Second Alternate:

Sister Jamelle Stevens from the Prairies Region and the Environment Component.

Third Alternate:

Sister Lyne Theriault from the NCR Region and the Custom Excise Union Douanes Accise Component

Brother Paul's Alternates are:

First Alternate:

Brother John Couture from the Atlantic Region and the Environment Component.

Second Alternate:

Brother Danial Curotte from the Prairies Region and the Union of Taxation Employees Component.

Third Alternate:

Brother Henry White from the Atlantic Region and the Government Services Union Component

Resolutions Report

Resolutions are a key component of the Equity Conferences. The debate of the resolutions provided an excellent opportunity for delegates to discuss and strategize around equity issues within the union framework and gain valuable skills involved in such union processes.

At the 2000 PSAC Triennial Convention, a resolution was adopted which provides that under the PSAC Constitution, Section 17:

- (6) The Triennial Convention shall:
 - (i) review the report of the Triennial National: Women's, Unity, Pride; and, Access Conferences and vote on recommendations adopted at the Conferences.

Therefore, it was the first time that resolutions that were passed at the Unity Conference went to the PSAC Convention. *(See Appendix B for the Resolutions passed at the Conference by the delegates.)*

Regional Caucuses / Regional Action Plans

In order to ensure that there were opportunities for regional post-conference activities and follow up, the conference incorporated Regional Caucuses to allow for the development of action plans. Regional Executive Vice-Presidents or their representatives chaired these caucuses.

The Regional caucuses provided an important opportunity for participants to meet those who live and work in their own regions and to discuss strategies for change. As well, these caucuses played a crucial role in formulating specific PSAC Action Plans, which can be implemented by region, in light of regional processes, committees and priorities.

Some of the Regions came up with plans which included the following points:

- creating equity committees within their regions, locals and workplaces
- mobilizing equity members around political issues such as privatization of health care and hydro and various elections
- developing communication strategies such creating websites for equity members
- establishing and developing equity networks
- involving youth in equity issues
- engaging in various structures of the union such as area councils, regional councils, women's committee, human rights committees, Components, etc.
- building coalitions with community organizations
- promoting the union at various organizations and functions
- celebrating our gains and equity days

Equity Caucuses

There has been a long tradition at the PSAC to provide space for equity caucuses. The PSAC also recognizes that strength can be derived from our diversity, even within equity groups. The caucuses also served as a space for the development of initiatives and strategies to address their concerns. Optional caucus time was built in for Women, members with disabilities and Gay/Lesbian/Bi-sexual/Transgender members so that they could identify and discuss issues of particular concern to them. An optional youth caucus was also built into the agenda.

These caucuses were closed to those who did not belong to the specific equity group, unless the caucus announced itself to be open.

Summary of Speakers' Presentation

Opening Speakers: Patty Ducharme REVP – B.C. and the Unity Conference Organizing Committee

Sister Ducharme and the Unity Conference Organizing Committee opened the conference with introduction of the conference theme, objectives, agenda, elections and resolutions process and rules of order.

The Committee noted that the conference was important for racially visible and Aboriginal members to come together, discuss and strategize around issues affecting their specific communities. Many gains have been made since the first Unity Conference; however, these gains are under attack by corporate and right-wing agendas of governments. As trade unionists and human rights activists, we must increase our efforts to achieve and maintain the gains made in Canada and around the world.

Greetings from Grand Chief Dennis White Bird of the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs

Grand Chief Dennis White Bird provided greetings from the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs. He commended the importance for discussing equality for racially visible and Aboriginal workers in the workplace and noted the many challenges still ahead in achieving this end. He also stressed the importance of workers taking the message to the government that there is a shared responsibility of government and people in achieving equality. Lastly, he noted the commonality between First Nations peoples – that being their fight for recognition for rights, jurisdiction, land, and the inherent problems contained in the *Indian Act*.

Summary of Speakers' Presentation

KEYNOTE OPENING SPEAKER

Nycole Turmel, President, PSAC

Sister Turmel highlighted some of the achievements made around human rights in our union, communities and workplaces. Some achievements included the constitutional change made at the 2000 PSAC convention which provided convention delegate status to equity representatives in the PSAC EOC and, the ability to forward resolutions to the PSAC Convention. Sister Turmel also noted that there are still many challenges, including the attacks on human rights protections, employment equity initiatives, rights of Aboriginal People and on racialized groups since September 11.

Sister Turmel discussed the politizing of PSAC throughout various union structures.

She noted that PSAC has worked hard over the last two years to build a strong, united, national union with a united vision on human rights, globalization, collective bargaining, staffing and workplace rights.

Sister Turmel emphasized that as trade unionists, we must unite to fight racism in all forms, in Canada and around the world. In addition, we have a responsibility to be engaged in broader social and political issues and make the links between what happens in our workplaces and our communities and what happens to our sisters and brothers in their workplace and their communities around the world. (*Sister Nycole Turmel's Speech is Appendix F*).

Summary of Speakers' Presentation

LEADERSHIP IN THE UNION, WORKPLACE AND COMMUNITY

**Speaker: Hassan Yussuff
(Canadian Labour Congress Secretary-Treasurer)**

Brother Yussuff brought greetings from the CLC.

He discussed the need to make leaders, particularly elected governmental leaders, accountable for their policies and practices.

Brother Yussuff acknowledged the need for Aboriginal workers and workers of colour leadership at the national and local level. Racism is still alive and functioning in our society and is a barrier for both Aboriginal people and people of colour in accessing employment and social services including housing, health care, and education. As well, the lack of equal access to the justice system is systemic, particularly for Aboriginal communities.

Brother Yussuff stressed the importance of providing encouragement, hope and political space to equity seeking communities to develop the leadership to take their rightful place in the labour movement. He noted positive examples both within Canada Labour Congress (CLC) and the PSAC. The CLC has established equity seats on the CLC Executive along with an Anti-Racism and Human Rights department committed to advancing human rights work. The CLC also had the largest Canadian delegation to the United Nation's World Conference Against Racism (UNWCAR) and there is ongoing work being done on immigration and refugee issues. The PSAC has a long history of and also supported the human rights agenda including the fight for pay equity, their support on employment equity initiatives and by holding national equity conferences.

Summary of Speakers' Presentation

UNITED NATIONS WORLD CONFERENCE AGAINST RACISM – THE FOLLOW-UP

Speakers:

Mary Woo Sims (Canadian representative on the Board of International Association of Official Human Rights Agencies, Former President of the Canadian Association of Statutory Human Rights Agencies, and Former Chief Commissioner of the B.C. Human Rights Commission)

Leslie Spillet (Executive Director of Mother of Red Nations Women's Council of Manitoba and Manitoba representative on the Board of Director's of the Native Women's Association of Canada)

Mary Woo Sims and Leslie Spillet shared their experiences at the United Nations' World Conference Against Racism (UNWCAR), Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance which was held in Durban, South Africa in 2001 and the subsequent follow-up. They discussed the outcome of the conference including the conference Declaration. There was an agreement among participating states, to have an action plan, stronger legislation and more assistance to victims of racial discrimination. The Conference recognized that slavery was a crime against humanity and that colonialism had resulted in racism and suffering -- consequences of which are still very much felt today.

Sister Woo Sims linked post September 11 events and the anti-terrorism agenda of the government to racism. Sister Spillet discussed the effects of colonialism and racism on Aboriginal Peoples in Canada. Both noted that NGO's and the labour movement continue to pressure the federal government to develop and implement a Canadian Action Plan. As well, both emphasized the need for coalition building and working in solidarity in order to eradicate racism.

Summary of Speakers' Presentation

PLENARY: GLOBALIZATION AND EQUALITY

Speakers:

- **Joanna Mason**, former CLC Equity Representative for Workers of Colour
- **Monica Urrutia**, PSAC Youth Representative
- **Lawrence Angecone**, co-founder of Winnipeg and Manitoba Native Youth Movement

The three speakers presented globalization from equity lenses, in particular, the impact of globalization on people of colour and Aboriginal people in Canada and the South.

Sister Mason discussed the need for labour to participate more in international solidarity in light of the fact that our governments were giving our rights away to the multinationals without consulting us. She noted that countries in South have been long impacted by globalization long before Canada. She stated that the globalization agenda is a racist agenda - against people of colour and Aboriginal peoples in Canada and the South.

She also noted that transnational corporations dictate whose labour will be used internationally. They pit worker against worker and country against country in a bid for lowest wages. Transnational corporations encourage countries to ignore health and safety, set up free trade zones and sweatshop-like conditions and, hire young women and children.

The globalization agenda does not work for workers; it is designed for transnational corporations' interests. For example, structural adjustments which are free market policies imposed by the World Trade Organizations and the International Monetary Fund on poor countries are meant to encourage foreign investments and profits. The policies include conditions for receiving financial assistance such as currency devaluation, trade liberalization, cuts in social spending, privatization of public enterprises, holding down wages, business deregulation, restriction on credit and higher interest rates.

Sister Mason provided tools in fighting the globalization agenda. She emphasized the important role of consumers in this fight. In particular, workers of colour and Aboriginal workers have knowledge that others don't have because they have the personal connections with people in the South. She emphasized the need for workers of colour and Aboriginal workers' involvement both from a labour perspective and Canadian perspective in influencing policies and positions.

Brother Angecaneb discussed how globalization was a continuation of colonialism. Colonialism and now globalization are based on racist policies. The impact of these policies continues to be felt in the indigenous communities. Some racist policies included: forcible dislocation, disintegration of distinct social and cultural identities, breakdown of families and communities and commodification of cultures.

Brother Angecaneb concluded that globalization has not led to greater democracy or recognition of indigenous peoples' rights and welfare but rather it has led to further institutionalization of inequality, discrimination, oppression and exploitation. He noted that it was a critical point for indigenous peoples in defending their right to self determination and advancing their rights to ancestral domains while, at the same time, fighting against the neo-liberal agenda and globalization.

Sister Monica Urrutia also discussed the racist effects of globalization on people of colour and Aboriginal people. She noted that domestic governmental policies fit into the neo-liberal agenda such as immigration, domestic workers, and multicultural policies. She stressed the importance of people uniting and working in solidarity for social change and to fight against the globalization agenda of multinational corporations.

Fashion Show

At the Banquet, there was a sweatshop fashion show. The objective was to expose the conditions under which clothes are made – some do not meet basic employment standards and human rights.

Summary of Evaluations

Overall, participants enjoyed the plenary sessions and the workshops. Participants felt motivated and encouraged to become more involved in their local unions. Participants also enjoyed the networking opportunities at the Conference. One participant stated that the conference “fueled” the participant’s “passion for change”. Another participant stated that “this is an excellent learning experience... an eye opener and a realization that I have a role to help our brothers and sisters to be heard.” One participant summed their experience as follows: “It was nice to see the awareness was on globalization, international problems, youth involvement and the fashion show...Although we hear about these issues, it is important to reinforce them to truly understand the impacts and affects they have not only on Canadians but the entire World.”

Some participants found the elections process too lengthy and some felt more time would have been useful for the workshops. As well, some participants also felt that the agenda should be flexible to accommodate the changes required for lengthy elections process.

AGENDA 2002 PSAC Unity Conference

Thursday, October 17th

4:30 pm - 8:30 pm	Registration
5:00 pm - 6:00 pm	Racially Visible Workers' Caucus
6:00 pm - 7:00 pm	Aboriginal Workers' Caucus
8:00 pm - 10:00 pm	Meet and Greet

Friday, October 18th

7:30 am - 8:15 am	Welcoming Committee (Coffee and tea)
7:30 am - 8:15 am	Registration
8:30 am - 10:30 am	Greetings Grand Chief Dennis White Bird from the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs Welcome/Business Unity Conference Organizing Committee Opening Remarks Nycole Turmel, PSAC National President United Nations World Conference Against Racism - the Follow-Up Mary Woo Sims and Leslie Spillett
<i>10:30 am – 10:45 am</i>	<i>BREAK</i>

10:45 am - 1:00 pm	Workshops
1:00 pm - 2:15 pm	<i>Lunch</i>
1:30 pm - 2:15 pm	Women's Caucus
2:15 pm - 3:30 pm	Racially Visible Workers' Caucus
2:15 pm - 3:30 pm	Plenary - Leadership in the Union, Workplace and Community Hassan Yussuff of the Canadian Labour Congress and Michèle Audette of the Québec Native Women's Association
3:45 pm - 5:00 pm	Aboriginal Workers' Caucus
3:45 pm - 5:00 pm	Plenary - Leadership in the Union, Workplace and Community Hassan Yussuff of the Canadian Labour Congress and Michèle Audette of the Québec Native Women's Association
5:00 pm - 7:00 pm	<i>Dinner Break</i>
5:30 pm - 6:15 pm	Young Workers' Caucus
7:00 pm - 8:30 pm	Regional Action Plan Development North B.C. Prairies Ontario NCR (<i>with translation</i>) Quebec Atlantic (<i>with translation</i>)

Saturday, October 19th, 2002

7:30 am - 8:00 am	Welcoming Committee (Coffee and tea)
8:00 am - 8:20 am	Announcements / Plenary
8:30 am - 10:45 pm	Workshops
<i>10:45 am-11:00 am</i>	<i>Break</i>
11:00am -12:30 pm	Resolutions
<i>12:30 pm - 2:00 pm</i>	<i>Lunch</i>
12:45 pm - 1:30 pm	Workers with Disabilities Caucus
2:00 pm - 3:50 pm	Elections for the Equal Opportunities Committee (EOC) Racially Visible Representatives
2:00 pm - 3:50 pm	Plenary – Globalization and Equality for Aboriginal Members Joanna Mason, Monica Urrutia and Lawrence Angecone
<i>3:50 pm - 4:10 pm</i>	<i>Break</i>
4:10 pm - 6:00 pm	Elections for the Equal Opportunities Committee (EOC) Aboriginal Workers’ Representatives
4:10 pm - 6:00 pm	Plenary – Globalization and Equality

for Racially Visible Members

Joanna Mason, Monica Urrutia and
Lawrence Angeconeb

6:15 pm - 7:00 pm

GLBT Workers' Caucus

7:00 pm - 7:30 pm

**Reception and cocktails
in Honour of Dr. Ranjit Perera**

7:30 pm - 10:00 pm

**Banquet and Sweatshop Fashion
Show**

Sunday, October 20th, 2002

7:30 am - 8:15 am

Welcoming Committee
(Coffee and tea)

8:30 am - 8:45 am

Announcements / Plenary

8:45 am - 12:00 pm

Resolutions

12:00 pm - 12:30 pm

Closing Remarks

Unity Organizing Committee Member
EOC Representatives
Paulette Barker, PSAC Activist
Patty Ducharme & Gerry Halabecki,
REVPs

**2002 PSAC UNITY CONFERENCE
RESOLUTIONS REPORT SUBMITTED TO THE
2003 PSAC TRIENNIAL CONVENTION**

The following resolutions were adopted in order of priority at the 2002 PSAC Unity Conference:

**RESOLUTION 7A
FUNDING FOR NATIONAL UNITY CONFERENCES**

WHEREAS the PSAC Constitution Section 17, Sub-Section 6 (i), recognizes the existence of the Triennial National: Women's; Unity; Pride and Access Conferences; and

WHEREAS it is important to ensure that these conferences are adequately funded; and

WHEREAS PSAC equity conferences are a means of educating and mobilizing the membership; and

WHEREAS the full participation of members across Components and Regions is necessary for the success of the PSAC equity conferences;

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the PSAC fully fund all equity delegates to the National Unity, Access and Pride conferences based on a model similar to the National Women's Conference.

**RESOLUTION 5
REGIONAL EQUITY COMMITTEE DELEGATE STATUS
TO PSAC CONVENTION**

WHEREAS PSAC Equity Committee's, such as, Women, Aboriginal, Racially Visible, Persons with Disabilities, and Pride are duly constituted bodies pursuant to the PSAC Constitution (see section 15); and

WHEREAS Equity Committee's are entitled to send delegates to the PSAC Regional Conventions (e.g., Atlantic, BC Regions), but they do not have delegate status at the PSAC Triennial Convention; and

WHEREAS Women, Aboriginal, Racially Visible, Persons with Disabilities, Gay lesbian Bisexual and Transgender Committees should have every opportunity to put their issues forward at the PSAC Triennial Convention:

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Women, Aboriginal, Racially Visible, Persons with Disabilities, Gay lesbian Bisexual and Transgender Committees each be entitled to send, with full delegate status, one delegate per Regional Women, Aboriginal, Racially Visible, Persons with Disabilities, Gay Lesbian Bisexual and Transgender Committee to the PSAC Triennial Convention.

**RESOLUTION 13
PSAC PRIDE CONFERENCE**

WHEREAS gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered members from across all regions need a voice within the PSAC; and

WHEREAS the PSAC would benefit from an integrated, strategic approach to challenge the human rights violations that our GLBT members face in their workplaces; and

WHEREAS the PSAC does not have an equity conference for our GLBT members:

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the PSAC hold a Triennial National Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgendered Equity Conference; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT any resolutions adopted by PSAC members in attendance at this conference be sent directly to the appropriate body; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the GLBT delegates in attendance at the Pride Conference elect their National Equity Representatives, (see PSAC Constitution Section 19, sub-section 7).

RESOLUTION 21

WHEREAS there are atrocities to people globally that are crimes against humanity; and

WHEREAS the Public Service Alliance of Canada members have no access to funds to support these members and their communities; and

WHEREAS most unions have funds that assist in responding to basics such as poverty, racism and discrimination:

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Public Service Alliance of Canada establish a solidarity fund based upon at least 2 cents per member per month.

**RESOLUTION 26
EDUCATION STRATEGY ON GLOBALIZATION**

WHEREAS the impact of globalization has a profound effect on our members and working people around the world; and

WHEREAS PSAC members would benefit in the struggle for international solidarity through integrating issues of globalization within the PSAC National and Regional Education Plans; and

WHEREAS PSAC members want to develop the skills and tools to create a comprehensive strategy concerning globalization:

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the PSAC develop National and Regional Education Plans that include the integration of information on globalization in existing PSAC courses; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the PSAC develop a weekend course on The Impact of Globalization and Strategies for International Solidarity; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the PSAC make the course on Globalization available in all Regions.

**RESOLUTION 16
STRUCTURE OF PSAC EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES
COMMITTEE**

WHEREAS the PSAC has a long and demonstrated commitment to human rights; and

WHEREAS the strength of the PSAC is in its diversified structure; and

WHEREAS the PSAC has evolved to encompass a strong component and regional structure; and

WHEREAS the composition of the PSAC Equal Opportunities Committee (EOC), has not effectively kept pace with the changes in the PSAC structure:

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AEC strike, and properly resource, a committee, composed of equity, component and regional representatives, to develop options for the effective restructuring and financing of the EOC; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT these options be presented to the AEC and PSAC Equity Conferences.

**RESOLUTION 14
STRUCTURE OF PSAC HUMAN RIGHTS COMMITTEE**

WHEREAS the PSAC is a leader in the struggle for human rights, justice and equity for all its members; and

WHEREAS a fundamental union principle recognizes that we are as strong as our most vulnerable members; and

WHEREAS the strength of our union is in our membership and in our structure, a structure that is nimble and able to react strategically and effectively on issues such as human rights; and

WHEREAS the current structure of the PSAC Equal Opportunities Committee (EOC) is severely limited by meeting only twice a year due to budget limitations:

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the PSAC EOC be fully funded for three, three-day meetings a year.

**RESOLUTION 2
REGIONAL EQUITY CONFERENCES**

WHEREAS PSAC National Equity Conferences, have represented an opportunity to bring equity group members together across all Regions and Components to build an effective and proactive human rights strategy across the PSAC; and

WHEREAS the strength of the PSAC is in its diversified structure; and

WHEREAS the PSAC has evolved to encompass a strong regional and component structure; and

WHEREAS the strengthening of this structure necessitates creating an opportunity for equity group members to come together from across their Region to develop effective, proactive strategies on human rights that builds and fosters regional initiatives:

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the PSAC hold Regional Equity Conferences for all Equity group members in the next convention cycle; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the PSAC Regional Equity Conferences for all Equity group members be funded by the PSAC on a model such as the Regional Women's Conferences.

RESOLUTION 4

WHEREAS members of visible and aboriginal committees have no funding to send delegates to the Unity Conference; and

WHEREAS members of visible and aboriginal committees find difficulty in obtaining funding from other sources:

BE IT RESOLVED THAT all active racially visible and Aboriginal committees receive the right to send two delegates, considering gender parity, to the Triennial Unity Conference; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the two delegates receive full funding to the Triennial Unity Conference.

RESOLUTION 10

WHEREAS the work of Women's Groups in the Public Service Alliance are funded in the regions; and

WHEREAS the work of Visible and Aboriginal committees in the regions promote the work of the National Equal Opportunity Committee; and

WHEREAS all work done by Visible and Aboriginal Committees promote the principals of equity both in the union and the workplace:

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the PSAC fully fund the work of all active racially visible and Aboriginal committees in the regions; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the funding of the said committees be at 3 cents per member per month.

**RESOLUTION 27
EQUITY AND HUMAN RIGHTS TRAINING ON
EMPLOYER TIME**

WHEREAS equity group members, after being hired by the employer, find themselves facing further challenges and barriers in the workplace; and

WHEREAS education of workers with regard to equity hiring and human rights would assist in building a more inclusive environment for these members, and in fact all members; and

WHEREAS we, as an organization, need to ensure that equity group members are supported in the workplace after they have been hired:

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the PSAC negotiate with employers to deliver equity and human rights training, and that the PSAC negotiate with employers to provide for attendance to equity conferences on employer time.

RESOLUTION 6A

WHEREAS Aboriginal self-governments are assuming more and more public services of the nature that members of the PSAC have traditionally provided; and

WHEREAS a constitutional debate is currently raging, where Inuit organizations and First Nations self-governments are actively challenging the right of their employees to form unions and bargain collectively; and

WHEREAS aboriginal workers, organized into a national aboriginal workers union through the PSAC, should have an equal voice in this debate; and

WHEREAS the outcome of this debate could have far reaching impacts on the rights of all workers, aboriginal or not;

WHEREAS of all trade unions in this country, the Public Service Alliance of Canada represents the highest percentage of Aboriginal membership; and

WHEREAS PSAC Policy #30, adopted by the 1994 PSAC Triennial Convention in Montreal, affirms our commitment to the rights of aboriginal people; and

WHEREAS this policy states that: *“the Alliance will undertake to facilitate the development of a strong network of Aboriginal members to advise the union about issues of particular interest to them.”* ; and

WHEREAS it is imperative that, to fulfill the intent of this policy, the Network of Aboriginal Workers, members of the PSAC, have equal status with other political bodies within the union:

BE IT RESOLVED THAT our Aboriginal members establish a National Aboriginal Network;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the National Aboriginal Network select a National Vice-President representing Aboriginal members to sit with full voice and vote on the National Board of Directors (NBoD); and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT this selection process be approved by the Alliance Executive Committee (AEC) and completed in time for the Fall 2005 NBoD meeting.

RESOLUTION 20

WHEREAS the economy is moving towards a global agenda; and

WHEREAS the global agenda marginalize all members of the five equity groups; and

WHEREAS all members of the five equity groups face financial hardships and health crisis because of the corporate agenda:

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Public Service Alliance of Canada engage in a campaign to protect all members against the corporate agenda; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the Public Service Alliance of Canada strengthen links with organizations that are engaged in the fight against the corporate agenda.

Resolution 25

WHEREAS some Public Service Alliance of Canada Components such as the Union of Northern Workers do not have an Employment Equity Policy for staffing; and

WHEREAS the Components should abide by the principles and policy of the Public Service Alliance of Canada's commitment to Employment Equity:

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Public Service Alliance of Canada lobby and work with all its Components to ensure that they adopt and abide by the principles and policy of the Public Service Alliance of Canada's internal Employment Equity.

RESOLUTION 28

WHEREAS the push for the global agenda is on the rise; and

WHEREAS the global agenda is infiltrating workplaces and promoting racism and sexism and homophobia:

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Public Service Alliance seek language in all collective agreements to protect all members of equity groups; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the Public Service Alliance of Canada seek to have training in all workplaces on human rights, racism, sexism and discrimination; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the Public Service Alliance of Canada seek to have this training entrenched in all Collective Agreements.

RESOLUTION 22

WHEREAS racially visible members are under represented in the Federal Public Service; and

WHEREAS the Embracing Change Task Force Report identifies benchmarks for the achievement of goals regarding racially visible members:

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Public Service Alliance of Canada conduct a survey of racially visible members in the Public Service Alliance of Canada to start immediately, that relates to the Embracing Change benchmarks, and conduct follow-up sessions across the country on regarding results; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the Public Service Alliance of Canada institute an appropriate action plan to address the inaction of departments/managers concerning “a reasonable effort” under the Employment Equity Act.

RESOLUTION 19

WHEREAS a desired goal of the Public Service Alliance of Canada is to build on the strength of our union by increasing the participation of racially visible and Aboriginal members in all levels of the union activities; and

WHEREAS courses offered through the Public Service Alliance of Canada Education Program are essential to enabling the participation of new members in various levels of the union:

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Public Service Alliance of Canada provide additional resources to actively conduct recruiting sessions , in order to increase the participation of racially visible and Aboriginal members in the education programs.

Breakdown by Region and Component

Delegates at Conference

8	Guest
11	Observers
26	PSAC Staff

Breakdown by Region

20	Atlantic
17	B.C.
11	NCR
10	North
22	Ontario
36	Prairies
8	Quebec
124	Total

Breakdown by Component

4	Agriculture (AGR)
18	Canada Employment and Immigration Union (CEIU)
9	Customs Excise Union Douanes Accise (CEUDA)
3	Environment Component (ENV)
4	Government Services Union (GSU)
26	National Component (NAT)
1	Nunavut Employees Union (NEU)
10	National Health and Welfare Union (NHWU)
0	Natural Resources Union (NRU)
2	Union of Canadian Transportation Employees (UCTE)
11	Union of National Defence Employees (UNDE)
7	Union of Northern Workers (UNW)
2	Union of Postal Communications Employees (UPCE)
3	Union of Solicitor General Employees (USGE)
16	Union of Taxation Employees (UTE)
6	Union of Veteran's Affairs Employees (UVAE)
2	Yukon Employees Union/ (YEU)
124	Total

**Breakdown by Equity & Youth Group
Based on Self-identification**

81	Women delegates
74	Racially Visible delegates
54	Aboriginal delegates
21	Delegates with disabilities
3	GLBT delegates
7	Youth delegates

Conference Participants

Organizing Committee Members

- ☞ *Patty Ducharme* - REVP-B.C., chair ☞
- ☞ *Gilbert Daye* - Atlantique - National ☞
 - ☞ *Tom Ellis* – Prairies – CEIU ☞
- ☞ *Joan-Ann Gravesande* – Ontario – NHWU ☞
 - ☞ *Zarina Khan* – NCR – UVAE ☞
- ☞ *Renée-Paule Loriston* – Quebec – CEIU ☞
 - ☞ *Ethel Ridler* – B.C. – CEUDA ☞
- ☞ *Warren Schofer* – North – UNW ☞

Resolutions Committee Members

- ☞ *Gerry Halabecki* - REVP-Ontario, chair ☞
- ☞ *Dorothy Boulin* – NCR – National ☞
- ☞ *Dexter Bruised Head* – Prairies – CEIU ☞
 - ☞ *Terri Lee* – B.C. – Agriculture ☞
- ☞ *Henry White* – Atlantique – GSU ☞

Workshop Facilitators

- ☞ *Sue Christianson* – North – YEU ☞
- ☞ *Danial Curotte* – Prairies – UTE ☞
- ☞ *Mary Jane Ellis* – Prairies – USGE ☞
- ☞ *Theresa Halfkenny* – Atlantique – CEIU ☞
- ☞ *Romeo Jackson* – Ontario – CEUDA ☞

Election Nominations Committee

☞ Joane Ursino – B.C. – National ☞

☞ Aileen Duncan - Ontario – UTE ☞

Participants

Last Name	First Name	Region	Component
Ahmad	Khalid	Prairies	UTE
Alaie	Gholam	Prairies	ENV
Ali	Sadaqat	North	NEU
Amaya Garcia	Edwin	Prairies	NHWU
Anwar	Samina	BC	CEIU
Asham	Bob	Prairies	UTE
Attawar	Sachitha	Prairies	CEUDA
Bains	Satinder	Prairies	USGE
Barker	Paulette	NCR	UNDE
Bath	Pam	BC	CEIU
Begg	Margaret	North	UNW
Bellevue	Sonia	Québec	NHWU
Bennett	Karen	Atl	UNDE
Bergeron	Shawn	Prairies	UTE
Best	Sandra	Atl	UNDE
Birch	Karen	Québec	UVAE
Bishop	Alexander	BC	CEUDA
Boulin	Dorothy	NCR	NAT
Brant	Terrylynn	Ontario	NAT
Brooks	Brenda Lea	Atl	UCTE
Bruised Head	Dexter	Prairies	CEIU
Buckley	Zelma	NCR	UNDE
Castro	Gloria	NCR	NAT
Chan	Alice	Prairies	UPCE
Chan-Lau	Selena	Prairies	CEIU
Channer	Alice	Ontario	NAT

Appendix E

Charette	Mireille	NCR	NAT
Chaudhry	Abdul	Ontario	NAT
Chief	Glenda L.	Prairies	UTE
Chima	Sargy	BC	CEIU
Christianson	Sue	North	YEU
Chu	David	Prairies	NHWU
Clarke	Lisle	Atl	UVAE
Clayton	Joy	Atl	UNDE
Cormier	Elaine	Prairies	NAT
Couldwell Torres	Angela	BC	UPCE
Couture	John	Atl	ENV
Cruz	Maureen	Prairies	CEIU
Curotte	Danial	Prairies	UTE
Davidson	Tammy	BC	NAT
Daye	Gilbert	Atl	NAT
Desmarais O'Bomsawin	Jean-François	Québec	NAT
Dhaliwal	Cynthia	BC	NAT
Dodsworth	Elizabeth (Betty)	Prairies	UNDE
Dubuc	Danielle	Québec	CEUDA
Duggal	Monika	Prairies	NAT
Duncan	Aileen	Ontario	UTE
Ellis	Mary Jane	Prairies	USGE
Ellis	Tom	Prairies	USGE
Fauni	Arnel	Prairies	UVAE
Findlay	Wilma	NCR	GSU
Giga	Saleem	BC	UTE
Gowans	Maureen	North	UNW
Grant-Thompson	Doreen	NCR	CEIU
Gravesande	Joan-Ann	Ontario	NHWU
Guay	Virginia	BC	UTE/
Gupta	Kalpana	Prairies	NAT
Halfkenny	Theresa	Atl	CEIU
Hill	Doug	Atl	UCTE
Hoyt	Narima	BC	USGE
Jackson	Romeo	Ontario	CEUDA

Appendix E

Javellana	Gilda	Prairies	NAT
Jeffrey	Carol	Prairies	NAT
Jones	Don	Prairies	GSU
Kang	Jinder	Ontario	CEIU
Kassouf	Ghassan G.	Atl	UVAE
Khan	Rasheda	Ontario	NAT
Kirton	Charlene	Atl	NAT
Kwan	Edmond	Ontario	NHWU
Lafond	Lois	Prairies	UTE
Lannon	Karlene	Atl	UTE
LeBlanc	Geri	Atl	CEUDA
Lee	Terri	BC	AGR
Lee	Lan Cheu	Ontario	UTE
Léonard	Peterson	Québec	CEIU
Loo	David Kai	NCR	CEIU
Loriston	Renee-Paule	Québec	SEIC
MacMullin	Carol Ann	Atl	NAT
Maitland	Janet	Ontario	UNDE
Mangat	Gurbaksh	BC	UTE
Maracle	Kim	Ontario	NAT
Maracle-McIntee	Joyce	Ontario	CEIU
McGillivray	Carolyn	BC	CEUDA
McKay	Darlene	Prairies	NAT
Melvin	Gail J.	Atl	UNDE
Mesidor	Yvon	Québec	UVAE
Miranda	Roberto	NCR	NHWU
Napier	Marilyn	North	UNW
Ng	Stella	Ontario	NAT
Paul	Andre	Prairies	NAT
Pollard	Loretta	Atl	UNDE
Portelli	Adalia	Ontario	NHWU
Powder	Darlene	North	UNW
Prasad	Naresh	North	YEU
Ramos	M. Elena	Ontario	GSU
Rasheed	Safia	NCR	CEIU

Appendix E

Rasiah	Premila	North	UNW
Reekie	Julia	Atl	AGR
Reid	Patricia	BC	UTE
Resendes	Rerie	Prairies	NHWU
Ridler	Ethel	BC	CEUDA
Robert	Donald	North	UNW
Rodrigue	Christiane	Prairies	NAT
Sampson	Cassandra	Atl	CEIU
Saunders	Robert	Atl	UNDE
Schofer	Warren	North	UNW
Sharpe	Richard	Prairies	AGR
Shortt	Paul	Ontario	UVAE
Shukla	Raj	Québec	UTE
Singh	Sandhya	Prairies	NAT
Smith	Jacqueline	Ontario	CEIU
Snow	Patricia S	Atl	UNDE
Somerville	Leona	Ontario	NH&WU
Stevens	Jamelle	Prairies	ENV
Stina	Elaine	Ontario	CEIU
Tan	Johann	Prairies	CEUDA
Therault	Lyne	NCR	CEUDA
Thivierge	Elvis	Prairies	UTE
Valencia	Oliver	Prairies	UTE
Varney	Jerome	Ontario	NAT
Vermette	Linda	Prairies	UTE
Wardlaw	Barbara	Ontario	NAT
White	Henry	Atl	GSU
Wong	Sidney	BC	AGR

Observers

- ☞ *Manon Cloutier* – Québec - CEUDA ☞
- ☞ *Valerie Denesiuk* – Prairies – GSU ☞
- ☞ *Terry Dupuis* – Prairies – UTE ☞
- ☞ *Maha El-Kalaani* - NCR - NAT ☞
- ☞ *Joyce Hendy* – Ontario - NAT ☞
- ☞ *Jan Liberty* – Ontario – NHWU ☞
- ☞ *Pat Maxwell* – BC - UNDE ☞
- ☞ *Joanne Ursino* – BC – NAT ☞
- ☞ *Bruce Clark* - BC – CEIU ☞
- ☞ *Geoffrey Sutherland* – Prairies – NHWU ☞
- ☞ *Richard Goyette* – NCR – USGE ☞

Guest Speakers

- ☞ *Nycole Turmel* ☞
- ☞ *Grand Chief Dennis White Bird* ☞
- ☞ *Dr. Ranjit Perera* ☞
- ☞ *Mary-Woo Sims* ☞
- ☞ *Leslie Spillett* ☞
- ☞ *Hassan Yussuff* ☞
- ☞ *Carol Wall* ☞
- ☞ *Michèle Audette* ☞
- ☞ *Joanna Mason* ☞
- ☞ *Monica Urrutia* ☞
- ☞ *Lawrence Angeconeb* ☞

Keynote Speech to the Unity Conference

by Nycole Turmel, National President

October 18, 2002

Good Morning Brothers and Sisters.

It is an honour for me to be here today and I want to thank the Organizing Committee for inviting me to speak to you this morning. I will be here for the next two days and look forward to spending that time with you.

I also want to thank the Organizing Committee for their on-going commitment and hard work over the last several months in putting together this Conference. As you all know, Delegates to the 2000 PSAC Convention established a \$150,000 budget for the Unity Conference, and I acknowledge the challenge this has presented the Organizing Committee and the entire Union. The AEC provided some additional resources to the Unity Conference and our REVP's, Regional Councils and many Components did what they could to fund additional delegates. Still, the task has not been easy and I want to thank you again for all your efforts.

Our experience with national Conferences over this Convention cycle indicates that more money needs to be budgeted for the next round, and I am committed to doing so. But there is a balance between budget and objectives, and as the National Board of Directors concluded a few weeks ago, the objectives of the conference must be defined prior to the development of each conference budget. I know that there are several resolutions on this subject, that this issue will be passionately debated, and your direction and input clearly articulated.

I also want to take this opportunity to thank Sister Patty Ducharme and Brother Gerry Halabecki for their leadership, and all the staff of the PSAC who have worked so hard to make this event a success.

This is the PSAC's third Unity Conference and this one is particularly historic. At the May 2000 PSAC Convention, delegates voted

overwhelming for a Constitutional change which resulted in eight members from equity-seeking groups, including Aboriginal members and Racially Visible members, being seated as delegates at that, and all future Conventions of the PSAC. Those who attended that Convention likely still remember the heartfelt debates that occurred and the realization that a historic step forward had just been taken. It was a great moment for our Union.

Over the course of this weekend, the Racially Visible caucus will elect two members to represent Racially Visible members on the PSAC Equal Opportunities Committee. The Aboriginal caucus will do the same. These four members will also represent Aboriginal and Racially Visible members at the PSAC Convention next year. This is also the first time the Unity Conference has had the ability to forward resolutions directly to the PSAC Convention. The resolutions you debate and adopt will provide invaluable direction and input – this is unquestionably another historic step forward for our union.

Many of us have worked hard over the past two years to build a strong, united, national union.

A union with a united vision on human rights. A union with a united vision on globalization. A union with a united vision on collective bargaining. A union with a united vision on staffing and workplace rights. And so much more.

A union where there is a place for everyone. A union with a mobilized membership. A union that is racism-free. A union that respects our differences and builds on our diversity.

In what will be a short speech, I want to talk about our union – on some of the equity gains we have made and on some of the challenges before us. I also want to talk briefly about the upcoming PSAC Convention and our effort to politicize it and make it more dynamic than past conventions.

- *As I just mentioned, one of the most recent and significant internal equity gains was the constitutional change made at the last PSAC convention which provided convention delegate*

status to the elected Aboriginal and Racially Visible members of the EOC. And, the ability to forward resolutions directly to the PSAC Convention.

- Another was the Joint Learning Program negotiated in the last round of Treasury Board collective bargaining. It provides for a \$7 million dollar fund dedicated to the co-development and co-delivery of joint education in areas where both the union and the employer have roles and responsibilities, and for which the employer does not already have a legal obligation to provide training. Courses focus on a variety of topics including employment equity; anti-harassment; and, anti-discrimination and respecting differences.
- A Supreme Court decision in 1999 broadened the definition of accommodation requiring employers to build equality into workplace standards. The duty to accommodate is usually thought of in relation to disability, but it relates to a broad range of needs within the workplace, including culture, religion, family status and so on.
- *Our collective agreements continue to become more inclusive and some recent gains include language on bereavement leave that recognizes different cultural practices; language ensuring that employers accommodate requests from members with respect to taking time off in order to meet religious obligations; and clauses recognizing Aboriginal Day on June 21, Treaty Day, and Customary Aboriginal Marriage Ceremony leave.*
- Last but not least, the PSAC played a significant role at the CLC Convention in June of this year in electing two workers of colour to two of the four top labour leadership positions in Canada. Brother Hassan Yussuff, who will be one of our guest speakers at the Unity Conference, was elected Secretary Treasurer, and Sister Marie Clarke-Walker was elected as Executive Vice-President. Brother Yussuff, Sister Clarke-Walker and Sister Barb Byers ran together on a platform emphasizing the strengths of working in coalition, building community labour solidarity and taking collective action. They

are a dynamic leadership team that will work to unite and strengthen the labour movement, will forward the human rights agenda, and will hold government and employers to account.

We also have some challenges ahead of us:

- The federal government will be making substantive and procedural changes to the Canadian Human Rights Act in the near future. The PSAC provided initial comments and recommendations. One of our major concerns is that members covered by the PSSRA do not have direct access to the grievance procedure if their grievance is related to a human rights issue covered under the CHRA. We must continue to pressure the federal government to ensure that all of our members have this right.
- It has been two and a half years since the release of "Embracing Change", a Task Force Report on the Participation of Visible Minorities in the Federal Public Service. The report included a series of recommendations to assist the government in improving the representation of racially visible members in the federal public sector. A benchmark of one in five was identified as being achievable for the recruitment of racially visible people into the federal public sector as a whole by 2003. The PSAC must continue to ensure that the government departments and Agencies implement the Task Force recommendations, and other employment equity initiatives.
- The Indian Act is currently under review by the Federal government. While we know that some Aboriginal organizations have chosen not to participate in the consultative process, including the Assembly of First Nations, we must carefully monitor the process and outcome of this review to ensure that Aboriginal Rights are not compromised.
- The Employment Equity Act is also under review. And we would like to see a number of changes made to strengthen and

improve this Act. For example, under the current Act, the bargaining agent does not have the right to trigger workplace audits by a CHRA compliance officer when there are concerns about the workplace. We want that right. As well, employment equity plans should be the subject of negotiations so that the Union would have the ability to seek recourse in the event that the Employer fails to implement the plan. The PSAC has been participating in this review process and will continue to do so.

- The findings of the Joint PSAC-Treasury Board Term Study indicate that Racially Visible, Aboriginal and women in the federal government are more represented in the term population than in the indeterminate population. Consultations with focus groups also found that many term employees feel that managers are abusing term employment by hiring racially visible and women workers for term positions to improve their statistics on compliance with the Employment Equity Act. The PSAC must continue to ensure that recommendations to correct this over representation in the term population are implemented as outlined in the study.
- We know first hand how globalization and privatization have impacted the public services we deliver as workers and the public services we use in our own communities. And we know that for racialized workers not under federal jurisdiction, there needs to be a campaign to have Employment Equity legislation enacted and enforced. We know as well, that Aboriginal people are often hardest hit because of the systemic structures globalization reinforces. The PSAC must continue to work in coalition with our labour and social partners to oppose the privatization of our public services and mobilize to fight for public, accessible and quality education, health care and housing. These basic human rights must not be privileges afforded only to the wealthy.
- And then there are the right wing governments in BC, Alberta and Ontario. I know that one of our guest speakers, Sister Mary Woo-Sims will detail for us the trail of destruction Campbell's liberal government has left since their election last

year - pay equity and child care legislation repealed; the Human Rights Commission closed; a sickly biased province wide referendum on Aboriginal Treaty Rights; thousands of public sector jobs gone; lower environmental and labour standards; massive cuts to health care and education. The list goes on and on and on. If we want to stop the Campbell government's agenda or for that matter, any agenda which targets working people and their families, the poorest and most vulnerable in our society – we need strong unions – and - we need a strong and vibrant social movement. The PSAC must continue our on-going efforts to do just that.

- There were a number of resolutions submitted to the National Women's Conference and to the Unity Conference on the subject of the PSAC's Equal Opportunities Committee. Generally, these resolutions called for changes in structure and size of the committee, better resourcing and for the committee to meet more than twice a year. It will be an interesting discussion and debate. The objectives, goals, and representation of all Standing Committees of the NBoD should be regularly reviewed to ensure that they are relevant to the changing needs and vision of the Union – and the EOC as a Standing Committee of the NBoD should be no different. We need an EOC that is strong, dynamic, that is well connected to the equity structures at all levels of our Union, and, that can effectively contribute to a forward moving human rights agenda.
- The first equity gain I mentioned was the constitutional change providing delegate status to the EOC Racially Visible and Aboriginal members. This is a crucial step, however the PSAC must strengthen its commitment and take bold steps to improve representation of equity group members at all levels of our union – at the local, regional, component level and national level. As well, we need to foster strong, mobilized and dynamic RVACs, Human Rights Committees and Aboriginal Networks. And more work needs to be done to ensure that all of our members see equity issues as their issues too.

- And of course, since September 11th, the federal government has passed legislation which has a discriminatory and adverse effect on racialized groups. State powers can impede on fundamental civil and human rights such as the right of freedom of association, freedom from unreasonable detention, the democratic right to protest, mobility rights to travel of racialized groups and legitimizes racial profiling.

I want to talk a little more about the impact of September 11th on our world. I talked about this at the National Women's Conference and at the last National Board of Directors meeting, and I think it is appropriate to do the same here.

Since September 11th, racism has gained a stronger foothold in what were before considered to be tolerant and progressive communities.

War, officially sanctioned, has raged in Afghanistan. War without borders has raged in the Middle East, and may soon be the plight of the people of Iraq.

Yet again, women and children will suffer. Children will be orphaned, and women will be left to pick up the pieces and try, without adequate resources, to care for the injured, the sick, the elderly, and rebuild society.

Seconds after the second plane flew into the World Trade Centre in New York 366 days ago, I, on behalf of all PSAC members, suspended our legal strike against the government of Canada. It was the right thing to do.

Minutes after we suspended strike action, PSAC members returned to work providing services to countless Canadians and thousands of airline passengers from Europe and around the world. It was the right thing to do.

Days later, we pleaded for racial tolerance in a world that was quickly losing perspective. It was the right thing to do.

Weeks later, we joined forces with many groups in society to challenge the loss of freedom articulated in the Canadian government's anti-terrorist legislation. It was the right thing to do.

As trade unionists, we must pledge to combat racism in all its ugly guises, we must defend individual and collective freedom at every opportunity, and we must work to ensure a better world for all people. A world where the people of Canada, Afghanistan, the United States, the Middle East and elsewhere can live in peace.

At times some of the challenges facing us seem insurmountable but together in solidarity, we can make a difference. I am proud to say that the PSAC has become a more relevant and dynamic force within the labour movement and within Canadian society. We have re-engaged in some important political and social debates and will continue to do so in our commitment to ensuring a better world for all people.

We were there at the World Women's March in 2000, demanding an end to violence against women and poverty. I was with some of you on the streets of Québec City in April 2001, demonstrating against the Free Trade Agreement of the Americas. We were there in Calgary earlier this year, to show our outrage at the selling off of our public services to multinationals at the G8. We've joined other workers and community members in various activities in Seattle, Vancouver, Windsor, Ottawa, and other communities from coast to coast to coast. Why? To tell governments that we won't put up with their willingness to sell off our public services and our jobs to multinationals, and that we won't tolerate putting profits before people. To tell them that we believe a better world is possible and that everyone deserves to be treated with dignity and respect.

We were engaged at Burnt Church as well. When the long standing dispute over the Lobster fishery erupted in the late summer of 2000, we faced the potential for a serious division between our members employed as fishery officers and our members employed by the Burnt Church Band Council.

From my perspective, our response to the situation at Burnt Church at the PSAC, Component and local levels was an early illustration of change within our Union. Where before, we would have been inclined to sit on the side-lines and remain silent when confronted by a controversial issue that had the potential to divide our members, we worked to protect our members within the Environment Component and the Burnt Church community and took a strong stand with the government along the way.

I firmly believe that as trade unionists, we have a responsibility to be engaged in these broader social and political questions. We must make the links between what goes on in our workplaces and our communities, and what happens to the rights and working conditions of our Sisters and Brothers here in Canada and around the world. In a world where the local is global and the global is local, the saying ‘an injury to one is an injury to all’ takes on a whole new and very real meaning.

At every opportunity, I have talked about how the PSAC is intent on politicizing our Convention cycle as part of the process of revitalizing our union and making it stronger and more united. That’s because our members – you – have signaled to us that that’s where we need to go. And the content of the Unity Conference reflects this as well – in the workshop themes, topics of the guest speakers, the fashion show and the subject of the resolutions themselves.

The National Board of Directors made the decision to move in this direction last fall, and we quickly produced a series of discussion papers on security in government, collective bargaining, privatization, human rights, globalization and local development. Various papers have been discussed in some form at each of the Regional Conventions and have been incorporated into all of the PSAC national conferences.

Creating space for a debate on these issues will change the PSAC Convention. A decision by the NBoD about exactly how these topics will be presented or incorporated has not been finalized but there will still be lots of time for a serious debate on finance and structure. That being said, our commitment to making our National Convention

a dynamic event that will enable us to frame the future of our union on issues like human rights and globalization is viewed as equally important. And so the work that you do at this conference will contribute to that effort as well.

Again, I look forward to talking to you over the next two days and thank you for your commitment and contribution to the union and the larger social movement.

Have a great conference!

Thank you.