



National Secretariat Against Hate and Racism in Canada
(NSAHRC)
Minutes of Meeting
November 26, 2004

Present : Mannie Dick, Anita Bromberg, Margaret Parsons, Sandra Carnegie Douglas, Liz Panighal, Ellen Gabriel

Regrets : Dianne Corbierre, Avvy Go, Michael Kerr, Fo Niemi

1. Review Minutes of Previous Meeting :

The minutes were approved.

2. Appointment of Aboriginal Peoples to the Supreme Court of Canada :

The draft letter was approved as was the strategy for action. The strategy calls for NSAHRC members to :

- Take this issue to their own organizations for support and use the draft letter as a template for their own letter. **Timeframe : December, 2004 – January, 2005;**
- NSAHRC and members send out letters. **Timeframe : February – March, 2005;**
- NSAHRC and IBA seek meeting with Minister of Justice. **Timeframe : January-March, 2005;**
- NSAHRC and members consider buying full-page ad in July, 2005 (Star and/or Globe and Mail);

In addition to these actions, it was suggested that all support letters be copied to the NSAHRC and, further, that the NSAHRC identify a member(s) of Parliament who might act as a champion on this issue. It was also suggested that the NSAHRC with the IBA seek an all-party meeting to discuss this.

Actions required : (1) Members will take actions as agreed above; (2) Members will consider whom to approach as MP champion; and (3) Anita Bromberg offered to discuss the latter issue with B'nai Brith government relations advisor and report back at the next meeting

3. Racial Profiling :

There was agreement to discuss the circulated draft action strategy further and to develop an action plan to ensure the NSAHRC is well-positioned to be an active voice in the review of the anti-terrorism legislation and in the proposed racial profiling legislation introduced by the NDP, Libby Davies.

Members shared information about community roundtables being convened by the Department of Justice to discuss Bill C-36. These were by invitation only and to ethno-racial and faith communities. Aboriginal peoples seemed to be left out of the process. The contact person for these roundtables is Charlene Cardinal (613-957-6374 or charlene.cardinal@justice.gc.ca). Interested members can contact her directly for more information.

Action Required : Specifics of an action plan will be discussed at the next NSAHRC meeting.

4. NSAHRC Communications and Planning for 2005-2006 :

The subgroup that volunteered at the Calgary meeting met on November 25, 2004 to discuss this. They discussed issues in which Aboriginal community leadership is evident and ways of making links by the NSAHRC on these issues. In this context, it is recommended that the NSAHRC take actions to address:

- a) The Stonechild and Ipperwash inquiries as priorities;
- b) Sisters in Struggle;
- c) Health, Child Poverty and Education; and
- d) Core funding for advocacy activities

It was felt that these issues place Aboriginal peoples first but, at the same time, have clear connections to ethno-racial and faith communities.

Action Required : (1) An educational on these issues should be held at the next face-to-face meeting. The purpose of this educational would be to discuss the issue with those currently active on it, identify what is being done and develop an action plan for the NSAHRC to pursue. (2) The framework for the educational will be discussed at the next NSAHRC meeting, including whom to invite to address these issues and put forward possible strategies for action.

In terms of other actions, it was recommended that the NSAHRC conduct an environmental scan every other month. This will allow members to discuss issues they are working on or are aware of and to see how these can be addressed by the NSAHRC. Further, items will be suggested by members for the NSAHRC to communicate through a list-serv of members and, through members, to their organizations.

Action Required : (1) An environmental scan will be part of the agenda for every other meeting. (2) The NSAHRC will operate a list-serv for members only. It is anticipated that NSAHRC members will communicate information from the NSAHRC to their members (individuals and/or organizations). (2) The issue of youth tabled at the Calgary meeting will be placed on the next NSAHRC meeting.

5. Other Issues :

The Toronto District School Board and its collection of race-based data for all students was discussed. It was recognized that while this was an issue that currently affected one school board, it is an important issue to address and to see how it can be raised with other school boards across Canada. In the past, such data has been helpful to argue for special programs for Aboriginal students and students of colour, particularly those of African descent.

Two other issues regarding the need for anti-racism/anti-oppression in educational institutions were discussed : (1) anti-semitic incidents in a private school in Montreal; and (2) homophobia in Toronto schools.

Action Required : (1) The NSAHRC will discuss the appropriateness of sending a letter to the Toronto District School Board on the race-based data. (2) The NSAHRC will discuss what actions to take on these other issues as part of its face-to-face educational/action meeting.

6. Next Meeting and Proposed Face-To-Face Meeting :

Given the holiday season, the next meeting will be at the call of the chair.

It was also suggested that the next face-to-face meeting be held on March 6 to coincide with the IBA/CBA educational on Aboriginal customary law and legal pluralism.