

CEP-CAW New Union Discussion Process Protocol & Timetable

January 24, 2012

Whereas CEP and CAW have agreed to jointly investigate and determine the need and potential for a new Canadian union, and to identify the main principles and characteristics of such a union, the National Executive Board of each union hereby mandates the following New Union Discussion process:

The goal of this process is to report to the respective conventions of CAW in August, 2012 and of CEP in October, 2012.

During this period, CEP and CAW shall consult their membership and leadership bodies according to the democratic requirements and the constitutional authority of each union.

It is the purpose of the New Union Discussion process to develop and agree upon the main principles of a new Canadian union, with a new identity and structure.

This process will elaborate, critique and make concrete the principles set out in the discussion paper "*A Moment of Truth for Canadian Labour*" towards the goals of greater collective bargaining strength, an organizing model for growth and activism, and more political influence for progressive social change.

CAW and CEP shall each appoint representatives to a "Proposal Committee" which shall discuss the issues related to the establishment of a new Canadian union, and make proposals regarding its main principles and structures.

The Proposal Committee may agree as needed on an external facilitator to assist the committee, and to ensure that a report to conventions is drafted by July 15, 2012.

This process must be transparent with frequent reports to our members and democratic debate within each union. Where possible, joint meetings of CEP and CAW members should also be convened to discuss the work of the proposal committee and the principles of a new union.

In the event that other Canadian unions wish to engage in this process, the Proposal Committee will have the mandate (on mutual agreement) to provide information and to include representatives of other unions in their discussions as appropriate.

CEP and CAW commit to ensure that this process has the priority and the resources to achieve its goals.

The following timetable will serve as a guide to this process, but may be amended as needed by the National Officers of each union and the Proposal Committee.

January	Develop joint protocol on a New Union Process. Submit to NEBs of both organizations for approval in late January. Organizations nominate members to the Proposal Committee.
February	Initial working session of the Proposal Committee to identify items for investigation and decision; map out a plan of work; and establish sub-committees to work on particular topics. This initial session will also feature a workshop to develop the principles of the earlier discussion paper (“ <i>A Moment of Truth...</i> ”) and elaborate what a new union could/should accomplish (including innovative practices and structures that could be reflected in a new union). The workshop may invite selected resource people (organizing specialists, academics, union renewal experts) to review, critique, and add value to the vision. The discussion paper may be redrafted and expanded following the workshop.
February-March	After the process is approved by each union’s NEB, a joint staff meeting will be convened to review the protocol, clarify the process ahead, and engage the staff of both unions.
March - June	Proposal Committee sub-committees work to map and compare current CEP and CAW practices, identify differences and similarities, and list key items for decision. Specific key subjects will include: identity and role of a new union; representative structures; bargaining and sectoral structures; local union structures; finances; services and departments; politics and political action; organizing and community base; constitutional issues. The full Proposal Committee will meet at least once more (and additionally, as needed) to confirm agreement on key principles and recommendations.
February-June	Communications: A high degree of transparency is required in this process to ensure membership support. Regular public updates will be provided after each meeting of the Proposal Committee. A special web site will be developed (linked to both union sites) to post documents. The Committee will consider the role of interactive / social media capacities.
February-June	Regional / sectoral delegates and leadership meetings will be organized as appropriate in each union (and where possible joint meetings may also be held), to update local leaders of the process and encourage discussion.
July	Completion of report of the Proposal Committee to be delivered to each union convention, including communication materials.
August / October	Presentation, discussion, and adoption of report at each union’s convention.

If the CAW and CEP conventions both approve a recommendation for the establishment of a new Canadian union, it is the intention of CEP and CAW to then constitute a New Union Committee to prepare the constitution and other founding documents for such an organization, and to prepare special constitutional conventions in 2013 (which would be followed by a founding convention of the new union).