

# COMMON FRONT 2015

## ENSURING THE LONGEVITY AND SURVIVAL OF OUR PUBLIC SERVICES

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Reference Document



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# COMMON FRONT 2015

# ENSURING THE LONGEVITY AND SURVIVAL OF OUR PUBLIC SERVICES

Last March 16, the CSN, the SISF (that groups together the CSQ, APTS and SFPQ) and the FTQ publicly announced the creation of a Common Front in view of the upcoming 2015 public sector negotiations. Between now and the end of 2014, the Common Front will have to table all its bargaining proposals to the Government. These proposals should reflect as best as possible the aspirations of the more than 400,000 workers who work in the Province's health and social services, education and higher education sectors, as well as in the Province's Public Service.

This is why we are presently undertaking a vast consultation process with our members by way of general meetings being held in all our Unions. Of course, a whole series of proposals will be submitted. The latter will then have to be debated, analyzed, indeed amended: which is the very nature of our union democracy.

But before we formulate these bargaining proposals, the Common Front organizations first wished to share a joint analysis of the political, economic and social situation in which we find ourselves today. What are the challenges we will have to face over the next few years? What are the problems that we will have to resolve during the next round of bargaining? What are the expectations of our members *vis-à-vis*

the foregoing? The following text invites us to reflect upon these thoughts and fundamental considerations.

## THE MAJOR CHALLENGE OF RENEWING THE WORK FORCE

For a few years now, our public systems have had to deal with growing problems of personnel shortages and worker scarcity. Barren recall lists, difficulties in filling vacant positions, recalls of retirees back into the workplace, recourse to personnel placement agencies: just some of the many signs that translate the difficulties of attracting and retaining personnel, which characterize Quebec's public sector.

When one analyzes demographic projections, it's clear that this situation will only be getting worse. Over the next few years, about 35% of public sector employees will become eligible to retire. We will have to deal with the most extensive work force renewal in the history of our public services.

This work force renewal will be occurring during a period where the pool of available workers in the Province of Quebec will be getting smaller, and this, in all job sectors taken together as a whole. In 2020, Quebec will be reaching a historical threshold: barely 80% of the people who retire from the work force will be compensated by the arrival of young people into the job market. By way of comparison, in 1989, there were

twice as many young people coming into the job market as those who were leaving it to retire.

We're thus entering a period where employers will be fiercely competing to attract personnel into their respective sectors, whether it be private or public (provincial, municipal and federal). If Quebec's public sector is not in a position to offer interesting working conditions to these people, who will still want to go to work in the Province's public sector? Without workers, the longevity and very survival of our public services are clearly and directly in jeopardy. By persistently ignoring the deterioration of working conditions in the public sector, the Quebec State is helping to open the door to the private sector to enable them to deliver the services to which the population is entitled.

As union organizations, we share this responsibility with the Government, namely, to ensure that working conditions in the public sector remain attractive. And to this effect, a serious shot in the arm must be given right away. This is why we believe that in the course of our upcoming negotiations, we should be pursuing the following two objectives in order to improve the public sector's capacity to attract and retain the necessary personnel: improve our salary conditions and the conditions under which we exercise our professions.

## BUDGET AUSTERITY AND CHANGES TO THE TAX SYSTEM

The numerous waves of cutbacks that have rolled over Quebec's public services are the result of political choices made by the Quebec State: namely, that of forgoing certain sources of revenue. Over the past 20 years, Quebec has experienced a profound transformation of its tax system. In terms of personal income tax, a reduction in the number of taxation levels, an increase in their thresholds and a reduction in the tax rate have diminished tax revenue by some \$4 billion. In terms of companies, the abolition of the tax on capital alone deprives our public finances of some \$1.5 billion. To partly mitigate these revenue losses, the Government made the unfortunate choice of increasing certain taxes (a two-point increase of the QST) and has accelerated the charging of fees for various public services (contribution to the health services fund, increase in electricity rates, etc.).

Overall, the transformation of Quebec's tax system has led to structural losses of about \$4.6 billion in the State's coffers. And then we're told that public finances do not provide a way to reinvest in our public services? We respond that the Government has made the political choice to deprive itself of needed revenue.

The quest for a zero deficit, debt repayment and budgetary austerity have a direct impact upon our public services, as well as upon the conditions under which we exercise our professions: cuts in program spending, growth in services that do not match the growth in needs, non-replacement of people who retire, etc.

Whether it be in the education and higher education system, the health and social services sector or in various Government Ministries and agencies, the members of the Common Front observe and experience the direct impact of the austerity policies imposed by one Government after another: abolition of programs, swelling waiting lists, reduction of services provided to users, etc. The numerous waves of budget cutbacks have had substantial effects upon the deterioration of the public services provided to our fellow citizens.

Meanwhile, the social cost of the underfunding of our public services is likewise an inescapable fact.

## IMPROVING THE CONDITIONS UNDER WHICH WE EXERCISE OUR PROFESSIONS

These repetitive cuts have also had a negative impact upon the quality of life at work for public sector workers. Workloads keep growing and the various processes that re-engineer their work, all too often, only seek to accelerate the pace of work even more. The propagation of despondency in our workplaces is not unrelated to the increase in the number of cases of burnout and absenteeism in the workplace. Rather than attempt to rectify this situation by collaborating with our union organizations to introduce long-lasting solutions to despondency and work overloads, our employers have resigned themselves to bearing the growing costs of this absenteeism. Indeed, the cost of absenteeism to the State is astronomical: no less than \$362 million in 2012, in the health and social services system alone. About 44% of this amount can be attributed to mental health problems, as revealed by data from the Health and Social Services Ministry.

And, our public services do not only suffer from underfunding, but also from being badly managed. Today's headlines and media sadly provide us with far too many examples of the waste of our public funds in the form of collusion, corruption and cronyism. The effects of subcontracting, the concession of public-private partnership contracts and the recourse to personnel placement agencies have all been well documented: the loss of expertise within our systems, the deterioration of the quality of services provided to the population and an increase in the costs for the State.

The poorly managed funding of our public systems likewise manifests itself in the proliferation of senior managers compared to that of the number of employees. The transplantation of private sector management approaches into the public sector has in fact led to an

explosion in the bureaucracy and all kinds of accountability measures and procedures. The introduction of new public management into our systems has given rise to a multitude of administrative controls over the work performed by employees. In some cases, up to a third of a person's workday is devoted to compiling statistics and filling out a plethora of reports. So much work time that is just not being devoted to providing direct services to the population. In such a situation, is it any surprise that our members are increasingly numerous in condemning the loss of their professional autonomy? This feeling of being taken for granted and downgraded has direct consequences on our quality of life at work.

When we observe the consequences of this underfunding and poor management of funds in our public services, can we truly believe that public sector workers are able to exercise their profession to the maximum of their capacities? Asking the question is answer enough. This is why the Government and the employers, in co-operation with the union organizations, must identify and find solutions to these problems in order to improve the quality of life in the workplace and the organization of work.

## IMPROVING OUR SALARY CONDITIONS

The personnel of the Quebec State has paid the price for several years now of the poor management of our public finances. Anaemic salary increases consented to along with salary freezes and decrees of our collective agreements have given rise, slowly but surely, to a growing disparity between our salaries and those paid in the private sector, as well as those paid in the federal and municipal Public Services. Last November, the Institut de la statistique du Québec determined that the total compensation<sup>1</sup> granted in the Province's public sector was 8.3% behind what was being paid to all other Quebec employees. This gap was only 2.9% a mere five years ago. For a comparable job, an employee in the public sector receives on average 8.3% less than what someone will earn in other job sectors.

We should not lose sight of the fact that women represent 75% of the work force in the public sector. With that in mind, it's not totally inaccurate to point towards the existence of gender-based salary discrimination, when one compares the total remuneration of public sector employees with that of other job sectors.

It is imperative to not only rectify this salary gap, but also to ensure that pay equity is maintained over the course of our next collective agreement. This is how we can recuperate our purchasing power, which has substantially deteriorated over the past few years.

By disregarding the appropriate remuneration of its own employees, the Quebec State continues to undermine its own capacity to attract personnel. And by allowing their purchasing power to deteriorate in this fashion, the Government shows contempt for their contribution, as consumers, to turning around the economy and partaking in collective enrichment.

Historically, union organizations have asked to share in the collective enrichment of society. If the economy progresses, if the revenues of the State increase, it is entirely legitimate that those parties who produce the wealth and who provide the services ask to enjoy their fair share of said enrichment. The evolution of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) measures the growth of the Quebec economy. However, this indicator does not measure... who is benefiting from this growth.

As is the case with numerous Quebecers, public sector workers are paying the price of the unequal distribution of income in our society. Over the past 30 years, in constant dollars, the club of 1% of the richest Quebecers has seen its average after-tax earnings grow by 86%, compared to 12% for the rest of the population. This clearly demonstrates that the growth of Quebec's collective wealth has not translated into the equitable sharing of this wealth, given that the 1% of the richest people amongst us have monopolized much much more than their fair share.

Meanwhile, we're constantly being served the altogether false argument regarding the job security of public sector employees, while the status of some 190,000 employees is precarious and their jobs contingent, as they work on a temporary or casual basis. These contingent workers, who represent some 35% of public sector employees<sup>2</sup> earn, on average, less than \$25,000 per year.

One out of every three public sector employees has to deal with job insecurity, some even live in poverty: we cannot sit idly by in view of this situation. That is why we are demanding that the Government take meaningful measures to reverse the process of making more and more jobs contingent.

For all these reasons, we are proposing that our salary demands be based upon the following three principles:

- > **Catch-up pay:** remove the disparity in terms of total remuneration that exists between public sector jobs and those in other job sectors;
- > **Pay equity/protection against an increase in the cost of living:** ensure that the wage gap does not recur over the course of our next collective agreement;
- > **An improvement to our living conditions,** especially for low-paid employees and those employees with contingent employment status.

## MAKING ROOM FOR CONSULTATIONS AND MOBILIZATION

The two goals elaborated in this document are obviously a proposal in view of our upcoming negotiations. This proposal must now be heard and debated by our members: now's the time for consultations. Over the next few weeks, the general meetings of our Unions must have this recommendation presented to them. Does it meet the aspirations of our members? Does it respond to the problems experienced in our workplaces? Should it be amended, improved? We want to hear from all our members. We cannot repeat it often enough that pre-negotiation consultations are the very essence of our union democracy.

It will also be necessary to share the postulates of this consultation as extensively as possible within the rank and file. It goes without saying that the working groups that are set up during the latter, namely, the improvements to our salary conditions and the conditions under which we exercise our professions, must be explained and popularized. The "fat cat" myth associated with the public sector has not only contaminated wide swathes of Quebec society, but a healthy segment of public sector workers, as well. An effective mobilization will only be successful if we ensure that our members are well informed and made thoroughly aware of the various problems that we have identified.

While the last 18 months have been marked by a certain degree of political instability in the Province of Quebec, owing to the presence of a minority Government, this situation has now been resolved: we will be negotiating the renewal of our collective agreements with a Liberal majority Government. What attitude will Premier Couillard adopt with regard to our negotiations? How attentive will the Government be regarding our demands? We may have our doubts, certain reservations, but it's still too early to definitively answer the foregoing questions.

And, regardless of the answers to these questions, no progress will be possible without a major and effective mobilization of our members. Certain people, who are at times bitter about the last round of bargaining, are likely to remind us that regardless of how much we do, the results run the risk of being disappointing seeing as we have no choice but to deal with an employer-legislator. We'll have to combat this defeatist attitude by pointing out that the history of the trade union movement has indeed been marked by many major victories, notably in the public sector. Some of them, like what was won in the area of parental rights or pay equity, for example, also ended up benefiting all Quebec workers.

Our clout and our leverage, however, do not rely solely upon our capacity to mobilize all our public sector workers. Once again, our forthcoming negotia-

<sup>2</sup> When one adds part-time employees, this percentage jumps to 52% of public sector employees, earning an average annual salary of \$28,035.





**FRONT COMMUN 2015**

**BARGAINING PROPOSALS  
SUBMITTED FOR CONSULTATION**

Over the past few months, the political decision making bodies of the Common Front member organizations have met together on several occasions to try to identify the key demands that need to be addressed at the central bargaining table. The foregoing must now be submitted to everyone for discussion.

### SALARY DEMANDS

The proposal that is being submitted to you responds to three objectives:

- > **Catch-up pay:** remove the disparity in terms of total remuneration that exists between public sector jobs and those in other job sectors;
- > **Pay equity/protection against an increase in the cost of living:** ensure that the wage gap does not recur over the course of our next collective agreement;
- > **An improvement to our living conditions,** especially for low-paid employees and those employees with contingent employment status.

#### A. Catch-up pay

Every year, the Institut de la statistique du Québec measures salary disparities, for comparable jobs, between the total compensation granted in Quebec's public sector and that of other job sectors. Here is the evolution of these disparities over the past few years:

YEAR	DISPARITY
2008	-2,9%
2009	-3,7%
2010	-5,6%
2011	-6,1%
2012	-6,1%
2013	-8,3%

Catch-up pay with regard to other Quebec employees must be at the heart of the next round of bargaining. Although the gap varies depending upon different personnel categories, it is clear that this disparity affects the entire salary struc-

ture in the public sector. This explains why we are proposing that this catch-up measure take the form of a percentage increase and that it be implemented gradually over the course of the three-year agreement.

#### B. Pay equity/protection against an increase in the cost of living

In order that our catch-up pay objective genuinely lives up to its true meaning, we must ensure that the disparity doesn't reappear with regard to other employees at the end of our agreement. Our demand would not only provide a way to secure the same salary increases as other employees in the Province of Quebec today, but it would also provide a way to protect our purchasing power, because the average salary increases to be negotiated would be within the range that the Bank of Canada has determined in terms of controlling the rate of inflation, in other words, approximately 2%.

#### C. Improvement of living conditions

When the economy progresses, the workers who contribute to said growth in the collective wealth should be able to enjoy some of it as well. However, we observe increasing income inequality all around the world, including in Canada.

Unions have always been an agent that has worked to foster the redistribution of wealth. This is why one of our traditional demands, namely, securing our fair share of collective enrichment, remains ever relevant. If one relies upon the most recent projections made by the Quebec Ministry of Finance and Economy, real GDP<sup>3</sup> growth would be as follows:

2013	1,2%
2014	1,9%
2015	1,9%
2016	1,8%
2017	1,7%
2018	1,6%

<sup>3</sup> We are proposing to use the rate of real GDP growth, rather than the nominal rate of GDP growth, because the former indicator better reflects the notion of growth of collective wealth. Indeed, the nominal GDP calculates the value of production based upon market prices. So, supposing that the only change in the economy is an increase in the price of goods and services, we would thus be witnessing growth in the nominal GDP, without their being any growth in the collective wealth.

The formula that we employ in our bargaining proposal stipulates that at the beginning of each salary increase period, every hourly wage rate would be adjusted by an amount equal to 0.5% of the average hourly wage and if the real GDP in the Province of Quebec increased by more than 1% during a single year, which constitutes a modest but real progress for the economy, there would have to be an additional salary adjustment.

We are proposing that this adjustment consist of a fixed amount added to the average hourly wage, which would constitute an initial gesture of solidarity between the highest and lowest-paid public sector employees.

The employment status of about 35% of all public sector employees is precarious, as they occupy contingent positions that are either occasional, supernumerary or on call. In some cases, their earnings are so low and uncertain that many employees are questioning whether they have a future in the public service. The Common Front believes that it is important to reverse the process of transforming jobs into contingent employment and instead make these positions more stable and increase the income earned by these employees, and this, regardless of the job status at issue or the number of hours that people may be working, the whole, it being understood that any eventual application mechanisms and final decisions would come under the aegis of the sector-based tables. This is why the Common Front is asking that penalties be imposed upon employers whose work organization gives rise to too many employees occupying precarious or contingent job positions. The Common Front is also asking to prohibit all forms of discrimination with regard to working conditions based upon an employee's job status, a measure that should also be extended to cover all workers in the Province of Quebec.

## PROPOSAL 1

That the Common Front demand:

### **A gradual catch-up salary increase:**

- › 2% per year;
- › A residual increase at the end of the agreement to eliminate any remaining disparities identified by the ISQ.

### **Pay equity/protection against an increase in the cost of living:**

- › 2% per year. An annual adjustment equal to inflation, should the Consumer Price Index in the Province of Quebec exceed 2%.

### **An improvement to living conditions, especially for low-paid employees and those employees with contingent employment status:**

- › An annual correction of 0.5% of the average salary in the public sector, granted as a fixed amount and integrated into the wage rates and salary scales;
- › An additional correction equal to that portion of the growth of real GDP that exceeds 1%, granted as a fixed amount and integrated into the wage rates and salary scales;
- › The introduction of articles into the collective agreement that reverse the process of transforming jobs into contingent employment and that could serve as a model for all of Quebec society.

To sum up, a three-year collective agreement with the following salary increases:

April 1<sup>st</sup> 2015: 4.5%

April 1<sup>st</sup> 2016: 4.5%

April 1<sup>st</sup> 2017: 4.5%

To be added to these increases variable amounts that would depend upon the evolution of the economic and social situation.

## SALARY INCREASES ON THE SAME DATE FOR EVERYONE

In contrast to all the public sector workers who receive their salary increases on April 1st of every year, CEGEP teachers only receive them two months later. In order to correct this incoherence, we submit the following recommendation to you:

## PROPOSAL 2

That salary increases apply to everyone on the same date.

### PREMIUMS

Historically, premiums were always negotiated at the central bargaining table. However, during the last round of bargaining, they were discussed at the sector-based tables. This situation gave rise to improvements to certain premiums and even the creation of new premiums, but in a very unequal fashion between different job sectors. In the spirit of transparency, equity and coherence, we are hoping that all questions related to premiums will be negotiated at the central bargaining table.

Several new demands pertaining to premiums can be justified and we understand that after informing our Common Front partners, there could remain, in exceptional circumstances, certain special premiums, that do not have a major impact upon total remuneration, that could be negotiated at the sector-based level. But given the common goal of emphasizing salary improvements across the board for everyone, we believe that the sole demand pertaining to premiums should involve enshrining into the collective agreement the gains that were made within the framework of the parity committees in the health and social services system that dealt with problems that were previously identified during the last round of bargaining.

## PROPOSAL 3

**3.1** That the salary parameters apply to premiums as a fixed amount.

**3.2** That the amounts paid to employees be enshrined in the collective agreements, the whole in accordance with the spirit of the letters of agreement agreed to in the health and social services system regarding severe behavioural disorders (SBD), the attraction and retention mechanisms pertaining to the Far North region and for employees working with CHSLD residents.

### PENSION PLAN

Since July 1, 1982, the RREGOP has been a shared cost (50/50) plan between participants and the employer. The participants' contributions are paid into a dedicated RREGOP fund (the employee fund) and the benefits, in terms of the portion that concerns the participants, are paid out by this fund.

During the last round of bargaining, we undertook a major modification to certain pension plan provisions with regard to the funding formula in order to ensure its longevity and survival, to offer better guarantees with regard to benefits and to stabilize as much as possible the contribution rate. We also secured a modification to the contribution formula in order to make it more equitable, and this, while preserving the vested rights of the lowest-paid employees. Finally, we removed the ceiling on the number of years of service for determining one's pension benefit: an employee can now contribute for up to 38 years and thus receive a pension benefit corresponding to 76% of the average salary of his or her five best years.

We believe that these changes are still too recent to be able to gauge their full impact. In addition, the results of the

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last actuarial valuation, that gave rise to an increase in the contribution rate, don't lead us to believe that we could improve the plan, in the medium term, without producing additional increases to the contributions that would have to be paid by the participants.

### PARENTAL RIGHTS

The question of parental rights certainly constitutes one of the very nice victories won by public sector workers; a victory that culminated in the National Assembly adopting the Parental Insurance Act, which today benefits all Quebeckers.

In the 2005 decree, parental rights were modified unilaterally to take into account the new provisions of this Act. In 2010, several modifications were made to our agreements: we won an indemnity for paternity leave and a modification of the benefits granted for adoption leaves in order to make these articles non-discriminatory. In addition, the last round enables us to add several new provisions regarding family responsibilities. We do not believe that it is appropriate, during the upcoming round, to make additional demands in this area.

### BALANCING FAMILY-WORK-EDUCATION

In light of the extensive work force renewal challenges that awaits us, the question of balancing family-work-education is more than relevant. More and more of our members have to juggle responsibilities related to their children, ageing parents, their studies, or the additional training needed to perform their jobs. In order to attract and retain personnel, the public sector must offer employees meaningful and practical measures to reconcile these needs. We want a firm commitment from the State on this matter.

We want the parties to agree at the central bargaining table to send a clear signal to the sector-based tables that they can implement practical solutions to facilitate balancing family-work-education responsibilities.

## PROPOSAL 4

**That the Common Front seek a firm commitment from the Treasury Board that practical solutions are put forward regarding balancing family-work-education responsibilities.**

### SUBCONTRACTING AND PRIVATIZATION OF SERVICES

Recourse to subcontracting and privatization in public and parapublic sector establishments has been rampant over the past few years. In addition to the harmful consequences they produce upon employees (job losses, modification of working conditions), subcontracting and privatization contribute to as loss of expertise and the deterioration of public services.

Indeed, the more the spectre of private enterprise permeates into our systems, the more public sector employees are able to observe on the front lines the myriad forms of waste of public funds that the former causes. In most cases, recourse to the private sector and subcontracting costs the State more money, without any corresponding gains in efficiency, nor any improvements in the quality of services provided. To this increase in costs, one must inevitably add the loss of expertise in our ranks, which further cultivates the public sector's dependency upon the private sector. Finally, privatization and subcontracting pose serious problems in terms of transparency with regard to access to information – which is anything but reassuring in a context of allegations of corruption and collusion that have been making headlines for several years now.

Once again, we want the parties to agree at the central bargaining table to send a clear signal to the sector-based tables that they identify practical solutions to subcontracting and the privatization of services.

# PROPOSAL 5

**5.1 That the Common Front seek a firm commitment from the Treasury Board to implement solutions to subcontracting and the privatization of services.**

## PROFESSIONAL AUTONOMY

Over the past few years, we have observed two phenomena in our systems that jeopardize the professional autonomy of the members we represent: a more rapid increase in the number of administrators than the number of employees and the introduction of management approaches straight from the private sector. Confronted with an increase in the administrative controls exercised by their superiors, numerous employees have no choice but to reduce the amount of time they spend devoted to providing direct services to users and thus spend far more time devoted to administrative tasks. In the education system, the introduction of quality assurance could have a major impact upon teacher autonomy, as it imposes various standardization requirements that threaten the richness and diversity of many pedagogical approaches.

**5.2 That the Common Front seek a firm commitment from the Treasury Board to set up protective mechanisms against the erosion of our professional autonomy.**

## REGIONAL DISPARITIES

The question of regional disparities is a complex one and involves numerous dimensions: difficulties of attraction and retention, rights to outings, the question of dependants, training in remote areas, the sectors, the availability of housing, etc.

This dossier is of great concern in the education, health and social services systems, and likewise in the Public

Service. The interests are numerous, and over the years, certain challenges and issues have become a priority for several organizations.

### A. Isolation and remoteness premium

Ever since it was first negotiated, at the end of the 1970s, the isolation and remoteness premium has only seldom been the subject of discussions with regard to its quantum and the applicable criteria, which had initially been agreed upon. We can't help but observe that the current amount of the premium is no longer sufficient in terms of compensating for the cost of living that is clearly much higher in these remote areas, than everywhere else across the Province of Quebec.

In practical terms, this means that an appropriate increase to the isolation and remoteness premium should be part of our demands.

### B. Compensation for fiscal burdens

The reimbursement of certain disbursements regarding outings out of these remote regions granted to employees are considered as taxable income. For some of our members, the cost of these outings are so high that they have no choice but to forsake this benefit, in view of the fiscal burden that is imposed upon them.

In practical terms, this means that compensation equal to the income tax that these employees are required to pay when shouldering this fiscal burden when they take outings out of these remote regions should likewise be part of our demands.

### C. Iniquities pertaining to certain localities

Some localities on the outskirts of sector IV have to deal with identical problematic situations to those localities located within this sector. This is notably the case for Kuujjuarapik, Whapmagoostui and Kuujjuaq. These three localities should be included in sector IV.

#### **D. Definition of a dependant child**

For residents in sectors III, IV and V, the definition of a dependant child also includes children who are enrolled full-time in a postsecondary institution located in another locality than that of their place of residence. The payment of the isolation and remoteness premium is maintained and the child conserves their rights regarding outings.

However, the city of Fermont located at the extreme Northwest boundary of sector II, very close to sector III, does not benefit from this provision. We therefore believe that this definition of a dependant child should also apply to the locality of Fermont.

### **PROPOSAL 6**

That the Common Front ask for improvements in the area of regional disparities with regard to the following benefits:

**6.1** Ask that the isolation and remoteness premium be revised upwards.

**6.2** In the case of employees who shoulder a fiscal burden when receiving a payment or reimbursement for the outing expenses that they incur, ask to review the fact that the benefits related to working in remote areas are taxed, by notably including a compensation that is equal to the income tax that has to be paid.

**6.3** Ask that the localities of Kuujuaq, Kuujuarapik and Whapmagoostui be integrated into sector IV.

**6.4** Ask that the city of Fermont be included in the localities entitled to benefit from the dependant child article with regard to post-secondary education.

#### **HARMONIZATION MANDATE**

The central bargaining table demands are recommended by the Common Front member union organizations. Various phases of the consultation process must however be completed before we can proceed with tabling our bargaining proposals to the employer.

We hope that the next round of bargaining will be conducted within the widest possible alliance of other union organizations. We believe that in the current economic, political and social situation the quest for such unity is more than ever imperative.

### **PROPOSAL 7**

That each organization be mandated to work at harmonizing the central bargaining table bargaining proposals with the other Common Front member organizations.

#### **WORK UNDER WAY**

Finally, it should be noted that during the 2010 negotiations, we signed several letters of agreement, letters of intention or other such documents in order to continue working throughout the life of the collective agreements. Whether it be regarding the question of skilled workers or salary relativity, the work is still continuing and we still hope to identify and find solutions before the expiry of the current collective agreement. Likewise, the union organizations made commitments regarding certain problems in certain letters of agreement. We have every intention of respecting those commitments.









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