



FEDERATION OF MEDICAL WOMEN OF CANADA
Women, Peace and Security Committee

FÉDÉRATION DES FEMMES MÉDECINS DU CANADA
Comité sur les femmes, la paix et la sécurité

FMWC WPS Committee

Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, May 5, 2021

19:00 hours – 20:03 hours

Attendance (by teleconference):

Ms. Celina DeBiasio – Co-chair, Student Member, WPS Committee – chair of this conference call

Dr. Nahid Azad – Co-chair, WPS Committee

Dr. Patricia Warshawski – Member, WPS Committee

Dr. Joelle Thorgrimson – Member, WPS Committee

Dr. Shelley Ross – Member, WPS Committee: Past Secretary-General, MWIA

Ms. Kaylee Jabbour – Student Member, WPS Committee

Dr. Anne Niec – Member, WPS Committee

Regrets:

Dr. Edith Guilbert – Member WPS Committee; SOGC rep

Dr. Karen Breeck - Member WPS Committee

Ms. Brintha Sivajohn – Co-chair, Student Member WPS Committee

1. Introduction and Welcome

The conference started at around 19:05 hours and ended at 20:03 hours. There was trouble logging in initially due to an error in the Zoom link sent out by the national office.

2. Approval of Meeting Minutes

The minutes of the February 11th, 2021 conference call were approved.

3. Updates:

a. Summary of WPS Ambassador O'Neill's webinar on November 24, 2020

i. The summary was reviewed

ii. Dr. Warshawski will follow up with Michael Read in the national office to confirm if this has gone out to all the members

iii. Dr. Niec will await a report from Dr. Azad and Ms. DeBiasio that will be sent to MWIA, and a summary of the webinar can go into this report.



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iv. Dr. Guilbert said in an email that she hoped that further involvement of Canadian women in peace processes around the world would help women's health and security. Too many women and girls suffer in war zones and unsafe refugee camps

b. Rape Kit paper submission to CMAJ

- i. This has been submitted to the national newsletter.
- ii. It is being edited and will be sent to the CMAJ as per their guidelines

c. Updates on Abortion Fact Sheet and Mifegymiso

i. Dr. Guilbert sent a report by email. She and Veronique Pronovost obtained the demands of corrections and Veronique is in the process of correcting the sheets. Once they are corrected, Dr. Guilbert will submit the sheets to her group again for further approval before sending them to Michael Read in the national office.

4. Plan for the next webinar – Dr. Dustin Costescu

i. Dr. Niec reported that funding for Dr. Costescu to give this webinar is already in place so she thought it was better that he speak rather than Dr. Wendy Norman.

ii. Dr. Costescu told Dr. Niec to email him with a time and date and he will do the webinar. It was decided to ask for a Tuesday or Wednesday in June at 7:00 p.m. Eastern time

iii. Accreditation from the College of Physicians and Surgeons and the College of Family Physicians is difficult and expensive to get. If we do want to get accreditation for our webinars it is better to apply for them all at once, not just one lecture at a time. Members can apply for personal learning points to count as continuing medical education.

iv. It was thought that Dr. Costescu should speak on the difficulties of obtaining abortions world-wide rather than how to use Mifegymiso just in Canada.

5. Climate change and it's health effects

i. Dr. Azad said she and Ms. Sivajohn are working on a document about this to make it relevant to the WPS agenda. Climate change is affecting a lot of women. Some need to flee world conflict and become refugees. Some need to migrate to seek better land for farming because their previous area has been destroyed by climate change.

ii. We should endorse the work of The Canadian Association of Physicians for the Environment (C.A.P.E.) and Dr. Azad asked that we all join this group.

iii. Bill C-12 (Canadian Net-Zero Emissions Accountability Act) has low targets. It needs to be looked at every year. We should be advocating more for climate change by signing more petitions, etc. Dr. Niec said that this should be a focus of our group for the next year. What else can we contribute to this at a personal and community level? The Director-General of the WHO said this is a very important issue. It is also very important to the Metis and Indigenous



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people. Dr. Azad will send out a petition for our members to sign. Dr. Ross suggested that the FMWC board send out a petition to all the members for consideration to sign. Ms. DeBiasio suggested that Ambassador Jacqueline O'Neill speak to our group again about this topic.

- iv. Bill C-28 to modernize the Canadian Environmental Protection Act (CEPA)
- v. <https://www.ourcommons.ca/Members/en/search> to find our MPs.

6. MWIA – WPS Special Interest Group: Annual Workplan

- i. This is in progress

7. UN Department of Global Communications

The application document was sent out from the FMWC office May 3 to the UN. The office was told it takes 18 months for approval, but Dr. Ross said that she thought it would be closer to six months. Michael Read wrote an excellent summary for our application.

8. Canadian WPS Network

Dr. Azad attended the April meeting of this organization. It reviews the Canadian National Action Plan (CNAP) every six months and reports to Global Affairs. The group has quarterly meetings with Ambassador O'Neill. Canada is slow in adopting recommendations of this group. It needs a more visible membership and wants to rebrand itself. The organization wants to focus on conflict demilitarization and disarmament. We need a peace organization to prevent and manage conflict. We need to act with a feminized foreign policy. There was a discussion about the need for expensive military procurements and the cost to the environment of these.

The network wants to focus domestically as well. The whole culture of the Canadian military needs changing.

Dr. Thorgrimson suggested that Dr. Breck give her perspective on the role of the military at our next conference call.

Resources:

1. The government of Canada hopes to launch its feminist foreign policy in the first half of 2021. <https://www.amnesty.ca/our-work/issues/womens-human-rights/feminist-foreign-policy>
2. A diverse group of more than 40 feminist representatives from academia and civil society published an [open letter](#) on 29 March calling on the Canadian [Task Force on Women in the Economy](#) to demand the Trudeau government halt its arms exports to Saudi Arabia and increase humanitarian



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assistance to Yemen. <https://reachingcriticalwill.org/news/latest-news/15216-more-than-40-feminists-demand-canadian-government-end-its-arms-exports-to-saudi-arabia>

3. On March 20th 2021, the Medical Women's International Association (MWIA) hosted a virtual parallel event entitled "Women Doctors: Champions of Global Equity" to commemorate the 65th session of the CSW.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yrlxqB1P-Ks>
4. Ban Weaponized drones
http://act.rootsaction.org/p/dia/action/public/?action_KEY=6180