



Coordinating Committee: Terms of Reference

Approved by the Coordinating Committee – September 2008

Role

The Coordinating Committee is responsible for the overall coordination of the coalition. Halifax Initiative Coalition staff are accountable to the Coordinating Committee.

Members of the Committee:

- represent their organizations in Halifax Initiative decision-making processes;
- participate, as needed, in meetings, events and on coalition sub-committees;
- are listed as Coordinating Committee members on coalition communication materials.

Membership

The membership of the Coordinating Committee is representative of the non-governmental organizations that comprise the coalition and includes a balance between the environmental, development, faith-based, human rights and labour sectors.

Membership review

Coordinating Committee membership is reviewed annually to ensure fair and appropriate representation and participation. The Coordinating Committee holds the right to review membership status in order to:

- evaluate an individual's eligibility in the event that he or she has not met the membership requirement;
- invite new members to participate in the event of a vacancy or as needs are identified;
- ensure the effective participation of members at all times.

Responsibilities

Coordinating Committee members are responsible for coalition decisions and are actively involved in coalition decision-making processes. Members agree to contribute to a number of coalition tasks including, but not limited to:

- the development of position statements, work plans, budget and campaign strategies;
- the development of materials (e.g. letters, policy papers, media communications and educational materials);
- securing the endorsement of their respective organizations for materials and statements;
- attending meetings organized by the Halifax Initiative including, but not limited to,

parliamentary and government briefings, press conferences and media briefings, and public events;

- representing the Halifax Initiative at meetings, conferences and public policy forums;
- sharing information with other members and staff;
- promoting the work of the coalition through document distribution, event promotion, etc.;
- overseeing budget administration, funding submissions and financial reporting;
- overseeing all personnel matters including, but not limited to, staff hiring, evaluation and supervision.

Decision-making

The Coordinating Committee is the decision-making body of the Halifax Initiative. All decisions are taken by consensus. When consensus is not immediately reached, the Coordinator shall provide the Coordinating Committee with additional information and options, as necessary, and shall propose, in consultation with the Coordinating Committee Chair, a process to achieve consensus.

The Coordinating Committee will consult with coalition members regarding new coalition issue-based policies and position (not administrative policies). Member input shall be sought and shall be incorporated to the greatest extent possible.

The Coordinating Committee shall approve all expenses valued at more than \$1000. The Coordinator has discretion to incur expenses valued at less than \$1000.

Meetings

Coordinating Committee meetings take place no less than three times a year. With rare exception, the meetings take place in Ottawa. A majority of Coordinating Committee members constitutes quorum.

Meeting agendas are developed by staff in consultation with the Chair of the Coordinating Committee and are circulated usually one week in advance of the meeting.

Coordinating Committee members are responsible for reading any background materials circulated in advance of the meeting by staff.

Meetings are facilitated by the Chair of the Coordinating Committee. Staff is responsible for taking minutes. Minutes shall clearly communicate any decisions made by the Coordinating Committee and any instructions that are given to staff. Draft minutes are circulated to the Coordinating Committee for approval within one week following the meeting. The minutes will be taken to be approved by the Coordinating Committee if members do not provide comment one week after they have been circulated.

Members are responsible for travel and other costs incurred in order to participate in Coordinating Committee meetings.

Sub-Committees and Working Groups

The Coordinating Committee may establish sub-committees, as needed. The membership of

these sub-committees need not be limited to Coordinating Committee members.

Document Approval

1. Public documents – letters and short educational materials

The Coordinating Committee reviews all draft public documentation that is produced by the coalition. Public documentation includes: media releases (but not advisories), official correspondence (but not letters concerning basic administrative matters), reports and public education materials.

Generally, document approval works on a non-objection basis. In other words, if no objection is noted by a member of the Coordinating Committee within the time frame allotted for approval, a document is assumed to have been approved and can be released. However, If the document sets out a coalition position that is new or more nuanced than previous positions, the Coordinator should secure the explicit approval of at least the Committee Chair.

2. Public documents – reports and longer educational materials

For reports and longer pieces of public education material, the Coordinating Committee, at the request of the Coordinator, shall appoint two readers to comment on and approve the document. Readers can be selected from the broad membership, and should be chosen based on their expertise and availability.

3. Signature

Generally, the Coordinator signs coalition correspondence. The Coordinator shall endeavour to secure the signature of a member of the Coordinating Committee for letters to high-ranking government officials, such as ministers.

The Coordinator may sign an international sign-on letter without Coordinating Committee approval if (a) the timeline is too short for circulation and feedback and (b) if the letter states a position that has already been agreed to by the coalition.

4. Listing of Members

Unless a member expresses an objection, all members are listed on correspondence and in reports.



Coordinating Committee Chair: Terms of Reference

Approved by the Coordinating Committee – September 2008

Role and Responsibilities

The Chair of the Halifax Initiative Coordinating Committee presides over the Committee and is responsible for the general coordination of the coalition's work, in collaboration with other Coordinating Committee members and staff.

The Chair is responsible for the following tasks:

Coordinating Committee Meetings

- Review agenda before it is circulated to other members.
- Chair meetings and conference calls.

Coalition Representation

- When possible, represent the coalition in meetings with government officials.
- Sign correspondence with member organizations, and where deemed appropriate or strategic, letters sent to Ministers, government officials and institutional representatives.

Decision-making

- Provide guidance to staff regarding: 1) minor process or program issues that are of a time-sensitive nature; 2) expenditures that have a value between \$500 and \$1000; 3) process options to foster consensus among Coordinating Committee members; and 4) approval of time-sensitive communications in situations where Coordinating Committee members have not responded to staff queries.
- Provide guidance to staff regarding the release of public documents that present new or more nuanced coalition positions.

Term and Selection

- The position of Chair shall rotate among the members of the Coordinating Committee.
- Selection of the Chair is by consensus
- The duration of the Chair term shall not exceed two years.
- During the first month of this two year period, the out-going Chair shall make her / himself available as a reference for the new Chair, to allow for the transition of responsibility.
- A new Chair shall be selected at the first Coordinating Committee meeting that is scheduled at the end of the two year period.