

**THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF THE FIRST
SESSION OF THE ELEVENTH PARLIAMENT OF
GUYANA**

(2015-2018)

NINTH REPORT

OF THE

COMMITTEE ON APPOINTMENTS

**IN RELATION TO THE APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS OF THE
RIGHTS OF THE CHILD COMMISSION**

**COMMITTEES DIVISION
PARLIAMENT OFFICE
PUBLIC BUILDINGS
BRICKDAM
GEORGETOWN**

March 28, 2018

NINTH REPORT

1. Introduction

1.1 The Standing Committee established under the Constitution to address matters relating to the appointment of members of Commissions, pursuant to article 119C of the Constitution and under the provisions of Standing Order No. 84, has agreed to the following as its Ninth Report.

2. Members of the Committee

2.1 At a meeting of the Committee of Selection held on September 4, 2015, the following Members were nominated to the Committee on Appointments to address matters relating to the appointment of Members of Commissions:

Members from the A Partnership for National Unity/Alliance for Change (APNU/AFC) (5):

- (i) Hon. Dr. George A. Norton, M.P.
- (ii) Hon. Amna Ally, M.P.
- (iii) Hon. David A. Patterson, M.P.
- (iv) Hon. Catherine A. Hughes, M.P.
- (v) Hon. Annette N. Ferguson, M.P.

Members from the People's Progressive Party (PPP) (4):

- (i) Ms. Gail Teixeira, M.P., Opposition Chief Whip
- (ii) Bishop Juan A. Edghill, M.S., J.P., M.P.
- (iii) Mr. Ganga Persaud, M.P.
- (iv) Dr. Clive R. Jagan, M.P.

3. Change of Membership on the Committee

3.1 Dr. Clive R. Jagan resigned as a Member of the National Assembly with effect from February 10, 2016. Subsequently the Committee of Selection met on March 4, 2016 and nominated Ms. Bhagmattie Veerasammy, M.P., as the newly appointed Member to replace Dr. Jagan on the Committee.

4. Election of Chairperson

4.1 The Committee at its first meeting held on September 9, 2015 elected, Hon. Dr. George Norton, M.P., as its Chairperson.

5. Terms of Reference

5.1 The Committee by Resolution No. 17 passed on May 8, 2003, by the National Assembly was entrusted to discharge the following functions in relation to the appointment of Members of the Commission established under the Constitution-

- “(a) identifies appropriate bodies for consultation in the appointment of the relevant members of the Commission, conduct the necessary consultations and, where necessary, receive nominations from appropriate bodies;
- (b) make recommendations to the National Assembly:
 - (i) for a consensual mechanism for the Ethnic Relations Commission, the Women and Gender Equality Commission, the Indigenous Peoples’ Commission and the Commission on the Rights of the Child;
 - (ii) for the appointment of members of the Commissions with the exception of the Public Procurement Commission;
 - (iii) in connection with any other matter referred to it by the National Assembly from time to time.
- (c) report to the National Assembly in relation to each Commission as soon as possible upon the discharge of its function in relation thereto”.

6. Mandate

6.1 The Committee was mandated by article 212U (2) (a) of the Constitution in relation to the Rights of the Child Commission, to nominate for appointment by the President:

- (a) *“not less than five nor more than fifteen members, with expertise in issues affecting children, nominated by entities, by a consensual mechanism determined by the National Assembly, after the entities which shall include the Ministry with responsibility for children’s affairs, the Ministry of Education, and organisations representing the interest of youth,, are determined by the votes not less than two-thirds of all elected members of the National Assembly.”*

7 Meetings of the Committee

7.1 The Committee held a total of thirty (30) meetings and two (2) special meetings.

8. Rights of the Child Commission – nomination process

8.1 At the 2nd meeting held on Wednesday, December 23, 2015, the Committee commenced discussion on the way forward with respect to the Rights of the Child Commission. It was noted that during the 10th Parliament the Report on the Rights of the Child Commission was submitted to the National Assembly. Therefore, the Committee was to determine the way forward.

8.2 The Committee recognised that the list of entities was approved by the previous Committee; where a majority of the Members of the Committee were present at the Meeting. However, the following information was submitted to the new Members for the purpose of providing guidance on the way forward:

- The Consensual Mechanism on the consultation of entities;
- Motion with the list of entities; and
- Resolution with list of names consulted.

8.3 At the 23rd meeting held on Wednesday, June 7, 2017, the Committee agreed to accept the list of entities approved by the National Assembly during the 10th Parliament and to consult with the entities, to ascertain whether they were functioning. They were requested to provide their *bona fides*. The entities were given a deadline of July 12, 2017.

8.4 At the 24th meeting held on Wednesday, June 21, 2017, the Committee noted that correspondence was dispatched to the list of entities for the Rights of the Child Commission.

8.5 At the 26th meeting held on Wednesday, November 15, 2017, the Committee recognised that few responses were received from the entities consulted to submit nominees for the Rights of the Child Commission. Although follow up was made via telephone calls, a significant number of responses were still outstanding.

8.6 The Chairperson suggested and Members agreed that the Hon. Ferguson contact the Christian entities with outstanding responses for the Rights of the Child Commission. Members were requested to peruse the list of entities and assist in following up with those entities that they were familiar with.

8.7 Thereafter, the Committee agreed that at the next meeting, from the responses received, it would then finalise the list of entities to be consulted.

8.8 At the 27th Meeting held on Wednesday, January 31, 2018, the Committee discussed the way forward regarding the non-responsiveness of some entities listed to be consulted for the Rights of the Child Commission.

8.9 It was agreed that an advertisement would be placed in the print media to target the non-responsive entities. The dates of publication were 4th, 7th and 11th of February 2018, giving a deadline of February 13, 2018.

8.10 Further, it was decided that if an entity did not respond to the advertisement, it would be considered a disclaimer to the nomination process. The Hon. Hughes volunteered and the Committee agreed that the Hon. Member should coordinate with the Clerk of the Committee to peruse the advertisement to ensure it captured the intended objectives.

8.11 At the 28th meeting held on Wednesday, February 14, 2018, the Chairperson informed the Committee that following the advertisement in the print media, to target the non-responsive entities listed to be consulted for the Rights of the Child Commission, a number of responses were received. However, correspondence was also received from the following entities seeking to be included on the list of entities:

- African Cultural Development Association;
- Guyana Chest Society;
- National Coordinating Coalition;
- Guyana Guidance Counselling & Mediation Services;
- Achievers Youth Development Association;
- Blossom Incorporated; and
- Women's Refuge Emergency Shelter Programme.

8.12 Following a lengthy discussion, Members agreed that those entities should fulfill the eligibility criteria specified for acceptance to the list of entities to be consulted for nominations. The Committee did not wish to delay its work, in awaiting the information. It was then agreed that those entities would not be included.

8.13 Subsequently, the Clerk of the Committee was instructed to write those entities that were seeking acceptance, acknowledging receipt of their correspondence and informing them of the Committee's decision not to consider the inclusion of their entity. It would also be explained that the Committee intended not to delay its work but consideration would be given during the process of the re-establishment of the Commissions. A copy of the eligibility criteria would be attached for guidance when seeking acceptance to the list of entities. It was also agreed that an updated list of entities to be consulted to submit nominees to be appointed to the Rights of the Child Commission, should be prepared to reflect only the agencies which were functioning.

8.14 At the 29th meeting held on March 7, 2018, the Chairperson referred to the revised list of entities to be consulted for appointment to the Rights of the Child Commission. The revised list was prepared, reflecting only the entities that were functioning.

8.15 The Committee also agreed to amend the revised list of entities to include the following entities:

- Youth for Change - (AFC) Youth Arm; and
- Guyana Youth Student Movement (GYSM).

8.16 The Committee further agreed that the list of entities should reflect accurately, the names of the entities to be consulted hence, the change in names of the following entities:

- AFC Women's for Change to Women's for Change- AFC;
- Conference Women's Missionary to AME Zion Church Women;
- Roman Catholic Youth Office to Diocese of Georgetown;
- Youth Ministries Department of the Assembly of God to Assemblies of God Youth Ministries;
- Youth Ministries Department of the Guyana Conference of Seventh-day-Adventists to Guyana Conference of Seventh-day-Adventists Church Youth Ministries; and
- Rastafarian Council to Guyana Rastafarian Council.

8.17 At the 30th meeting of the Committee held on Wednesday, March 28, 2018, the Committee on Appointments examined and unanimously adopted its Ninth Report and the Motion, together with the First and Second Schedules, on the identification of entities to be consulted for submission of nominees to be appointed by the President to the Rights of the Child Commission. The Committee further agreed that the Ninth Report, the Motion with the First and Second Schedules should be presented to the Clerk of the National Assembly for transmission to the National Assembly.

8.18 The Report and Motion are accordingly submitted.



***Dr. George Norton, M.P.,
Chairperson,
Committee on Appointments
March 28, 2018***

