



215 Spadina Avenue, Suite 122, Toronto, Ontario M5T 2C7
Tel: (416) 979-3909, Fax: (416) 946-1983
website: www.narcc.ca

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The Toronto Star
One Yonge Street
Toronto, Ontario
M5E 1E6

**Re: Letter to the Editor
Human rights body needs fixing, not dismantling - March 13, 2006, Toronto Star**

The National Anti-Racism Council of Canada (NARCC) is an organization that represents racialized group members from across Canada. The majority of racialized group members have made Ontario their home.

NARCC welcomes amendments to the Ontario Human Rights Commission, (Commission). However, it is of great concern that the Attorney General plans to eliminate the Commission's ability to help individuals with "the investigation and prosecution of their complaints".

NARCC welcomes changes to the Ontario Human Rights Commission, (Commission) – However, those changes should improve access to the system and not adversely affect those without the resources to hire lawyers to prepare their cases.

It is therefore a great concern that the Attorney General plans to eliminate the Commission's ability to help individuals with "the investigation and prosecution of their complaints".

The Commission is a forum that has been accessible to racialized communities when an act of discrimination occurs, particularly, when they experience racial discrimination or where race intersects with other grounds of discrimination.

It has been the experience of racialized group members that the investigation process is one that has enabled the Commission to flesh out the complexities that an individual faces when required to demonstrate that there has been a racial discrimination.

Statistics have shown that a good number of racialized group members live in poverty. Without the investigation and prosecutorial assistance by the Commission individuals would not afford the cost of representation in oftentimes protracted cases. NARCC is of the view that when considering to revamp the Ontario Human Rights Commission, the Attorney General failed to consider the social economic status of the people who use the system. Also, the Attorney general failed to relate the language barriers which are overcome through the investigative and prosecution process carried out by the Commission.

NARCC is concerned at the decision to eliminate the investigative and prosecution process, for this means that racialized group members who experience racial discrimination will be denied access to justice.

NARCC commends the Attorney General for initiating changes to the Commission, however, meaningful reform to the Commission need to involve the consultation of stakeholders and the analysis of any amendments through a racialized lens.

Sincerely,

[Estella Muyinda](#)

Estella Muyinda
Executive Director
estellamuyinda@narcc.ca
416-979-3909 ext 2