



## PUBLIC SECTOR'S NEGOTIATIONS A MONOLOGUE BY THE GOVERNMENT

**Given the questionable move of the Treasury Board president, Christian Dubé, to bring the negotiation into public discourse by broadcasting a copy and paste of its government's April 27, 2020 offer - which is, a few details aside, a copy and paste of the December 12 offer - the Centrale des syndicats du Québec (CSQ) notes that the negotiations are beginning to look like a monologue by the government.**

"Instead of sitting down to listen to the solutions suggested by the unions representing the workers, the government insists on imposing its vision of work organization, denounces CSQ president Sonia Ethier. It's more urgent than ever for the government to listen to the solutions we offer to improve working conditions of the education, higher education and health and social services personnel."

Faced with this situation, CSQ members took advantage of their May 27 General Negotiation Council (CGN) to adopt a resolution publicly condemning the government's proposal. The members also reaffirmed the importance to quickly invest in the school and college networks as well as in health and social services.

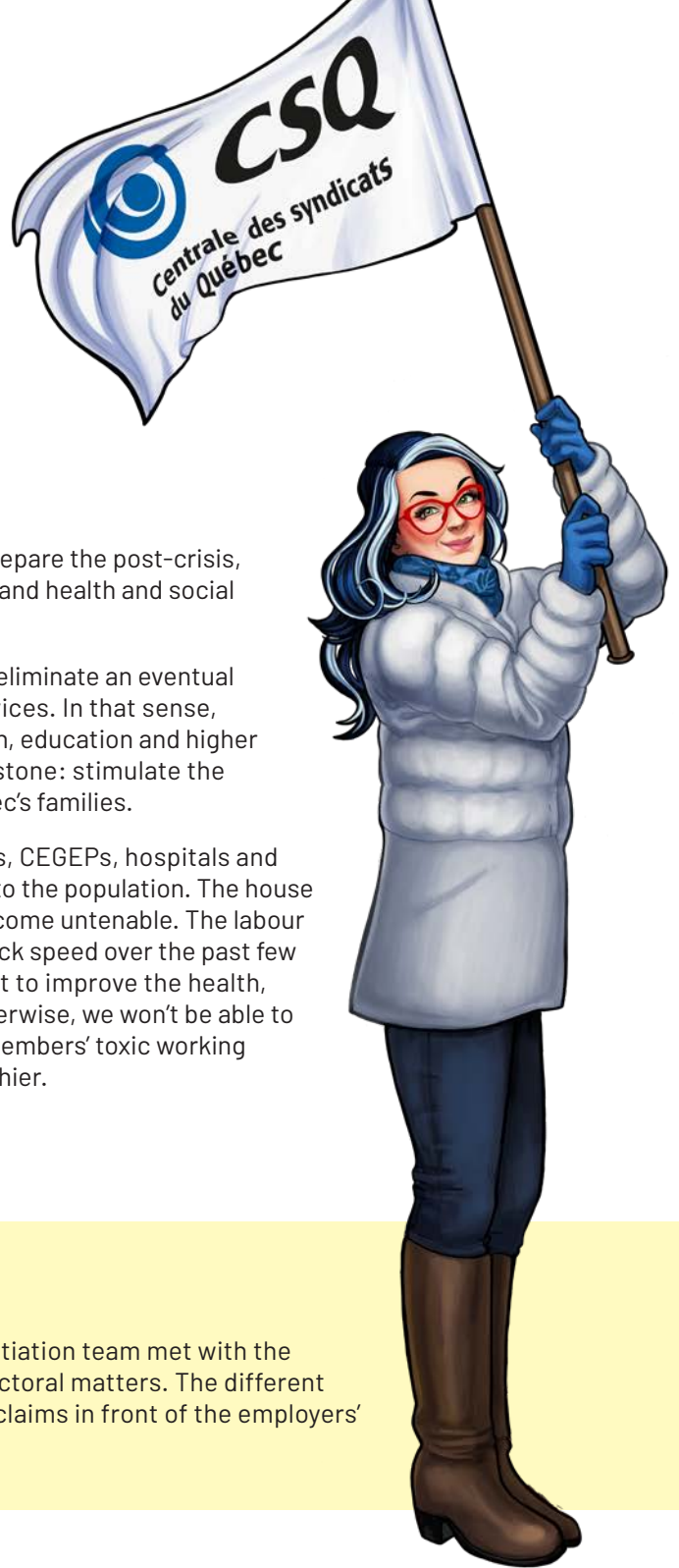
### A counter-offer left unanswered

On May 6, in response to the disappointing Treasury Board offer, we submitted a counter-offer that met the negotiation framework required by the government: three-year agreement, acknowledgement of the new crisis context and necessity to address the urgency of health and education jobs promotion. (Consult the details of the counter-offer in the [May 8, 2020, Info-Nego.](#))

"Three weeks later, the government still hasn't reacted to this counter-offer. It's unworthy of a government that claims to want to negotiate seriously. It is clear that the realm or unicorns painted by the Treasury Board president and what happens at the negotiation tables are a world apart," comments Sonia Ethier.

The CSQ president adds that the government's repeating its unacceptable offer three times in a row will not make the offer better. "For a government that wished a 'rapid and sustained' negotiation rate, it's paradoxical. Our counter-offer is still on the table, and we are in solution mode... in front of a wall! Yet again, this government is disconnected from the reality in the field," says Sonia Ethier. She indicates that, even though only a few tenths of percentage points separate the Treasury Board offer from the global salary demands of the Centrale, it's the generalized absence of investments in the improvements of working conditions that show how the government is totally disconnected from the problems existing in the field way before the crisis and still today.





"After years of cuts, the CAQ government is facing a dilemma: replay the overused austerity movie and make the labour shortage in the networks worse, or invest in the working conditions to value its employees and improve services to the population. It's now or never!" says Sonia Ethier.

## Prepare the post-crisis now

The pandemic shows the critical importance of public services. To prepare the post-crisis, we reiterate that massive investments in early childhood, education, and health and social services must be at the heart of an economic and social recovery.

The stabilization reserve of over 12 billion dollars, which will serve to eliminate an eventual deficit, was reached at the cost of sacrifices imposed in public services. In that sense, meeting the needs of its employees by massively reinvesting in health, education and higher education could enable the government to kill three birds with one stone: stimulate the economy, promote mainly female jobs and improve services to Québec's families.

"The cuts, the negligence and the lack of investments in the schools, CEGEPs, hospitals and CHSLDs' personnel over many years have wreaked havoc in services to the population. The house is on fire. If the situation was difficult before the crisis, it has now become untenable. The labour shortage and attraction problems have even accentuated at breakneck speed over the past few weeks. We invite the government to send a clear signal: does it want to improve the health, education and higher education personnel's working conditions? Otherwise, we won't be able to be a part of a sellout agreement and thus endorse the fact that our members' toxic working conditions will continue for the next three years," concludes Sonia Ethier.

## THE NEGOTIATIONS CONTINUE

Armed with its mandate, reaffirmed by the CGN, the Centrale's negotiation team met with the Treasury Board on May 27 and continued the discussions on intersectoral matters. The different sectoral negotiations teams are also working to defend the union's claims in front of the employers' committees. Now, let the negotiations proceed!

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