

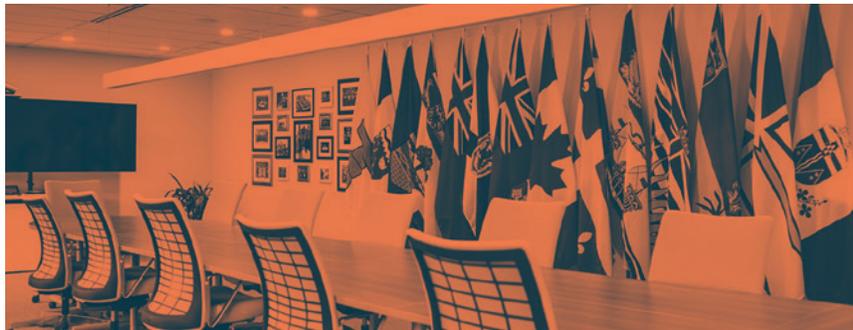


Canadian  
Intergovernmental  
Conference  
Secretariat

Secrétariat  
des conférences  
intergouvernementales  
canadiennes

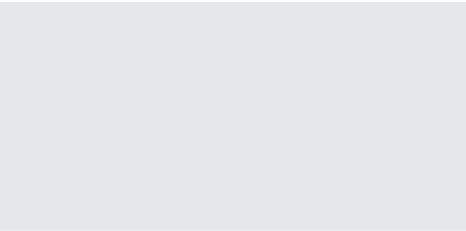
# PROTOCOL GUIDE

For Intergovernmental Meetings  
of Ministers and Deputy Ministers



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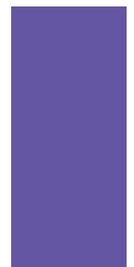
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# Seating Plan

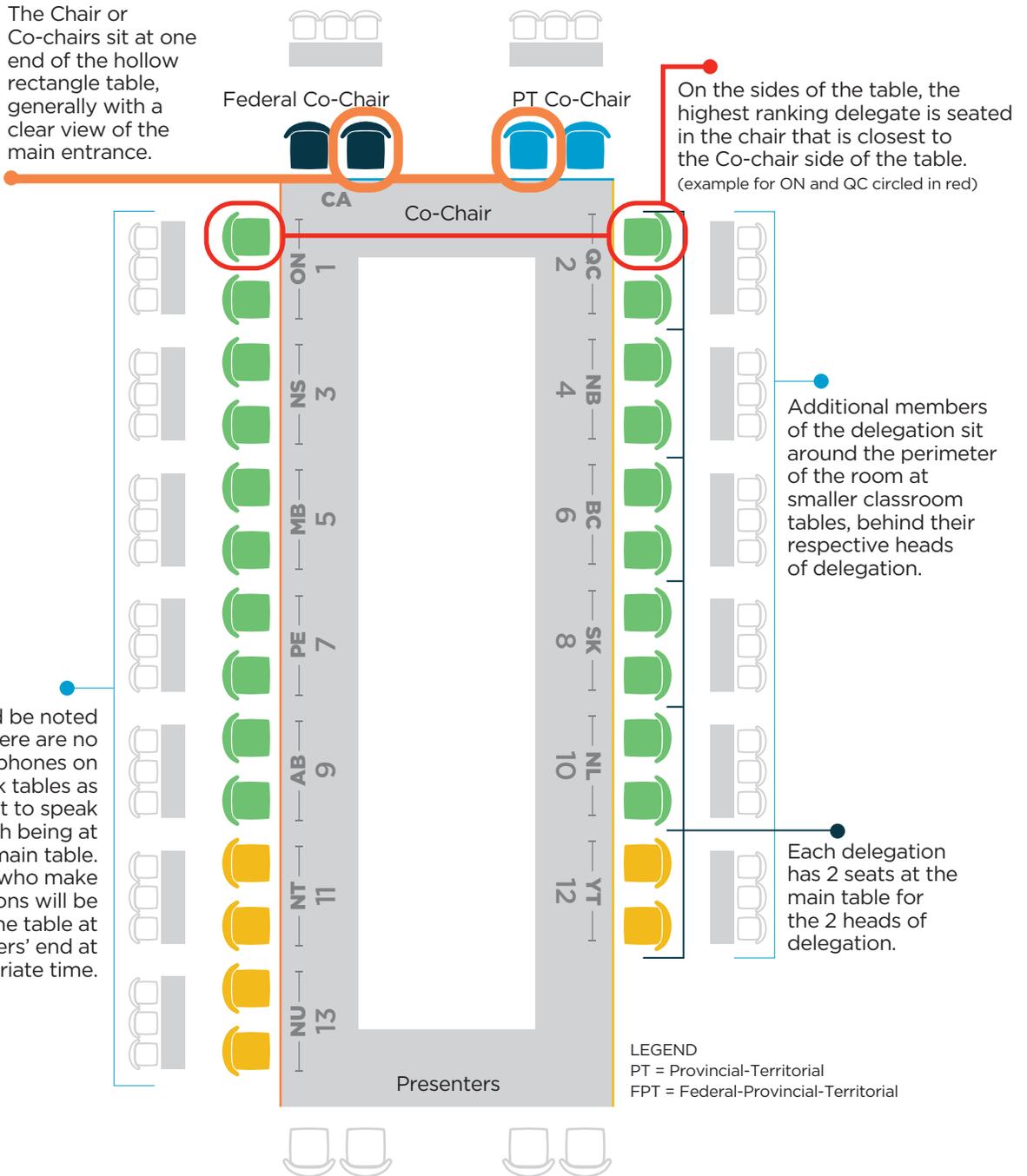
This set-up represents a long tradition in intergovernmental conferences. It is recognized as a formal setting and is the most widely used set-up for intergovernmental conferences.

**Order:**

Date of entry into confederation of the provinces (■), followed by the territories (■).

1. ON (1867)
2. QC (1867)
3. NS (1867)
4. NB (1867)
5. MB (1870)
6. BC (1871)
7. PEI (1873)
8. SK (1905)
9. AB (1905)
10. NL (1949)
11. NT (1870)
12. YT (1898)
13. NU (1999)

The Chair or Co-chairs sit at one end of the hollow rectangle table, generally with a clear view of the main entrance.



It should be noted that there are no microphones on these back tables as the right to speak comes with being at the main table. Officials who make presentations will be invited to the table at the presenters' end at the appropriate time.

LEGEND  
 PT = Provincial-Territorial  
 FPT = Federal-Provincial-Territorial

# Flags

The National Flag of Canada and the flags of the provinces, and territories are symbols of honour and pride for all Canadians and should be treated with the utmost respect.

While the manner in which flags are displayed in Canada is not governed by any legislation, due consideration should always be given to flag etiquette and precedence whenever the flags are displayed.

## WHEN ARE THE FLAGS USED?

FPT flags are used at ministerial conferences, due to the formality and the potential presence of media at the event. The flags are generally displayed in the main conference room (where a photo op could occur), at press conferences and at media scrums.

The flags are often used as a backdrop for an official group photo and may be displayed at other official events such as a signing ceremony or a banquet.

If a DMs meeting precedes a Ministerial meeting in the same exact location on consecutive days, the flags are displayed during the DM meeting as well.

The Chair or Co-chairs can request to display the flags at meetings of other levels if the media is in attendance or if the degree of formality warrants it.

## PROTOCOL FOR THE FLAGS ON DISPLAY

The flags to be displayed at intergovernmental meetings are those which represent the provinces and territories invited to the meeting.

Examples:

- At a meeting of **Western Premiers**, the flags of the **eastern and central provinces would not be displayed**.
- At a meeting of **Northern Development Ministers**, **only the 11 jurisdictions involved** would have their flags displayed.

Exception:

- At PT meetings, the Canadian flag should always be displayed as it is the symbol of our country and not of the federal government per se.



## POSITIONING

In the main meeting room, whenever possible, the flags are lined up against the wall (or close to the wall) behind the Chair or Co-chairs. The order of the flags is highly significant. The Canadian flag is in the middle, flanked by Ontario's and Quebec's on each side and followed by the flags of the provinces in the order in which they entered Confederation, then by the ones of the territories.

### ORDER OF FEDERAL, PROVINCIAL, TERRITORIAL FLAGS



# Interpretation

Provided in Canada's two official languages, English and French, in the main meeting room and at formal press conferences.

Interpretation may be requested by individuals at other events such as in-camera meetings, private lunches as well as at banquets which have guest speakers. Often in these situations,

one-on-one interpretation such as whispering (also called elbow interpretation) or consecutive interpretation (paraphrasing for a small group what the person has said in another language) are better options. Often, the type of interpretation offered in these situations is negotiated well in advance of the meeting by the Chair or Co-Chairs with the individual(s) based on the specific needs.

**whispering**  
one-on-one interpretation

**consecutive interpretation**  
paraphrasing for a small group what the person has said in another language

# Conference Documents and Presentations

Official conference documents are expected to be made available to participants in both English and French. They are forwarded to conference participants in advance of the meeting, usually in one of the following ways:

In the main meeting room, there are 2 large display screens: one English and one French. Presentations should be projected in both official languages. Please allow sufficient time for translation in advance of the meeting.

- e-mail**  
Distribution from the Chair or Co-Chairs
- secure website**  
Placed on a secure website created by the Chair or Co-Chair
- CICS secure website**  
Placed on the CICS secure document website

**Note: Inform presenters that PowerPoint presentations should be in 16:9 format in order to optimize the image.**

**YES** 16:9

**NO** 4:3

## Meetings in Quebec

When a conference is held in the province of Quebec, all signs and bilingual documentation associated with the conference follow one basic rule: the French language comes first giving it precedence over English.



**one basic rule:** the French language comes first giving it precedence over English.

## Distributions on Site

New documents are sometimes tabled at the conference itself. While any jurisdiction has the prerogative to table a document in the meeting room, it is common practice to inform the Chair or Co-Chairs prior to the distribution. In addition, CICS must obtain a signature from the person who wishes to distribute the document which becomes the official authorization for that distribution. It is this person who ultimately decides when the document should be distributed and to whom.

Distributions on site should be done during breaks to avoid disruption during the meeting.

When circumstances warrant a table drop during the proceedings, CICS personnel are usually responsible since a protocol exists for document distribution. The most efficient manner is for two people to do the distribution. Interpreters must receive the document first, then the Chair or Co-Chairs, followed by the two sides of the table simultaneously. Once the main table has been fully served, delegates seated at the classroom tables around the perimeter of the room would receive a copy of the document, beginning with the Chair or Co-Chair delegations followed by both sides of the room simultaneously from front to back.



- 1<sup>st</sup> Interpreter
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Chair and Co-Chairs
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Two sides of the table simultaneously



**Then**  
delegates seated at the classroom tables around the perimeter of the room

- 1<sup>st</sup> Chair and Co-chair
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Both sides of room at the same time, front to back

## Archives

Following the conference, all official conference documents are stored in the CICS intergovernmental document archive. CICS is the custodian of the material only. The documents remain the legal property of the originating government or governments.

Participants who attended the meeting have the right to request and receive the official conference documents related to

that conference. Other requests for documents that are not in the public domain are referred back to the originating jurisdiction.

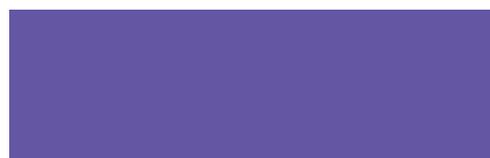
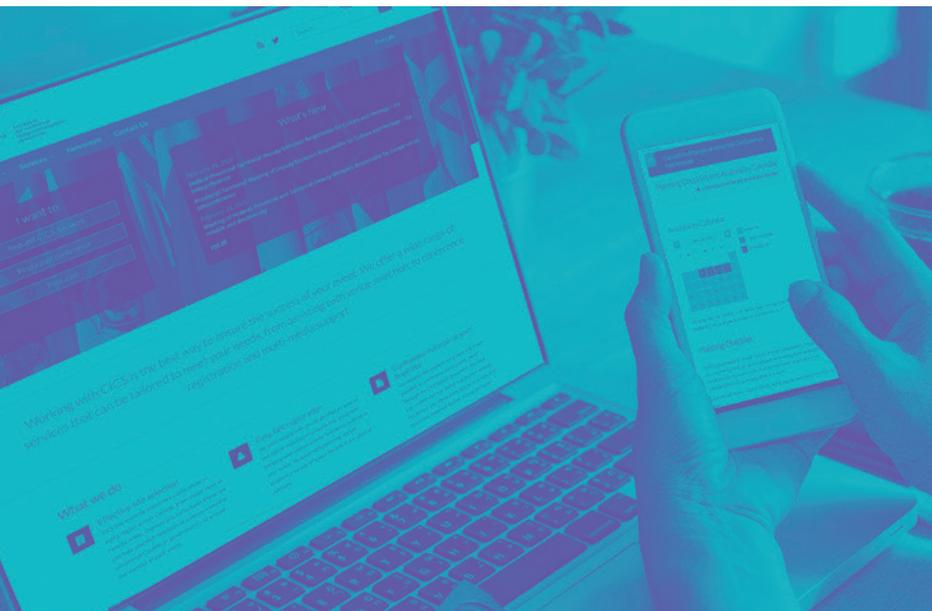


**Note:** CICS is exempt from requests under the Access to Information legislation with respect to these conference documents

## Audio Recordings

All intergovernmental meetings are recorded unless instructed otherwise by the Chair or Co Chairs. The press conference is also usually recorded. The digital recordings are kept in the CICS archives for a period of three years. The Chair or

Co-Chairs always receive a copy of the recording. Jurisdictions or individuals present at the meeting who wish to have copies of the recordings of the meetings must receive authorization from the Chair or Co-Chairs.



# News Releases

The departments chairing or co-chairing the meeting are responsible for preparing the news release that will be distributed to the media following the meeting.

## Process best practices:



### Drafting committee

It is strongly recommended to form a communiqué drafting committee tasked with drafting the news release and obtaining approvals. Regional representation and the presence of the official languages need to be considered when the committee is created.

Circulating a draft of the news release before the meeting to all the provinces and territories and the federal government is an effective way to obtain comments, forge a consensus and reduce the time needed to obtain final approval at the end of the meeting.

### Communique room on site

The Chair or Co-Chairs can also ensure that the drafting committee has access to a designated location during the meeting to effectively fulfil its mandate.

### Updates and version control

It is recommended for the drafting committee to designate one representative to be the sole person authorized to make changes to the news release. When a new version is ready, this representative should liaise directly with CICS in order to have the translation updated.

### Final approval and release

The federal department and all provinces and territories should approve the English and French versions of the final news release.



Once the English and French versions are approved, the Chair or Co-Chairs (or their representatives) need to sign off to authorize the release and distribution of the news release. Upon receipt of this signature, CICS will post the news release to its website.



# Media Involvement

Many different terms are used such as Press Conference, Scrum, Photo Op or Media Availability and the format also widely varies from one sector to another, depending on the level of desired formality and the issues at hand. The Communications people from the Chair or Co-Chairs offices take the lead on this aspect of the conference. They are responsible for issuing the media advisory, answering media inquiries and providing direction to the event.

At all conferences where media are invited to attend through a media advisory, media registration should be carried out on-site by the host government to ensure security. CICS will assist with this by providing badges and media kits.

## PHOTO OP

Usually at the start of larger meetings, this is an arranged opportunity for media to take photos or video in the main meeting room.

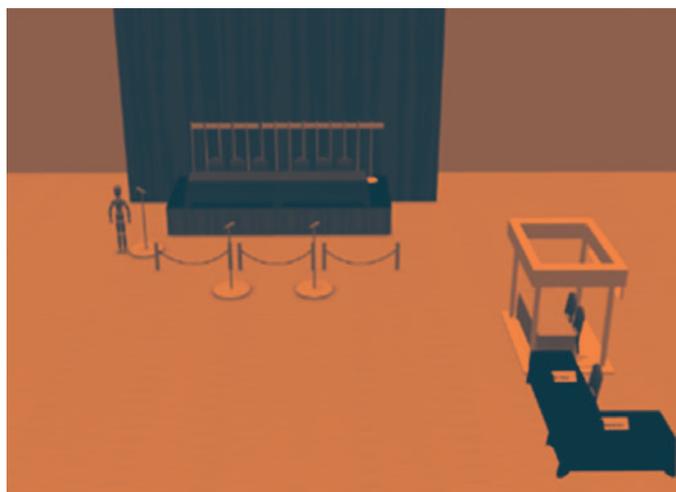
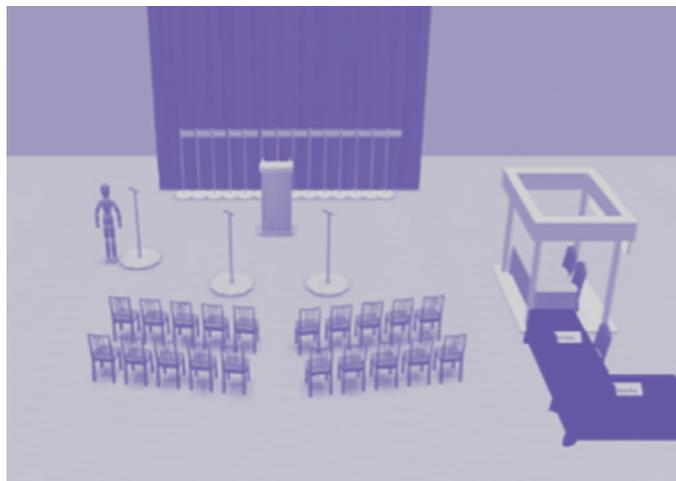
## PRESS CONFERENCE

Backdrop: FPT Flags. The host Minister usually provides opening comments and then invites their federal counterpart to say a few words. An invitation is often extended to other Ministers to speak as well.

A Q&A period then follows and questions can be addressed to any of the Ministers present. Microphones are used by the journalists so that both questions and answers can be recorded. Media often have the option of participating by teleconference as well. Ideally, the communique is distributed just prior to the press conference so that journalists can prepare their questions.

## SCRUM

A much less formal way to meet with the media. This event is usually done in an open area such as a hotel lobby or meeting room foyer. The background is still the flags. Generally, only the host Minister or the 2 Co-Chairs meet with the media and it is usually informal with stand-up mics and no moderator. This type of media availability may happen on several occasions if the conference is held over a 2 or 3 day period. It can best be characterized as an exchange of information or a Q&A period. Scrums are usually recorded and participation by teleconference may be allowed.

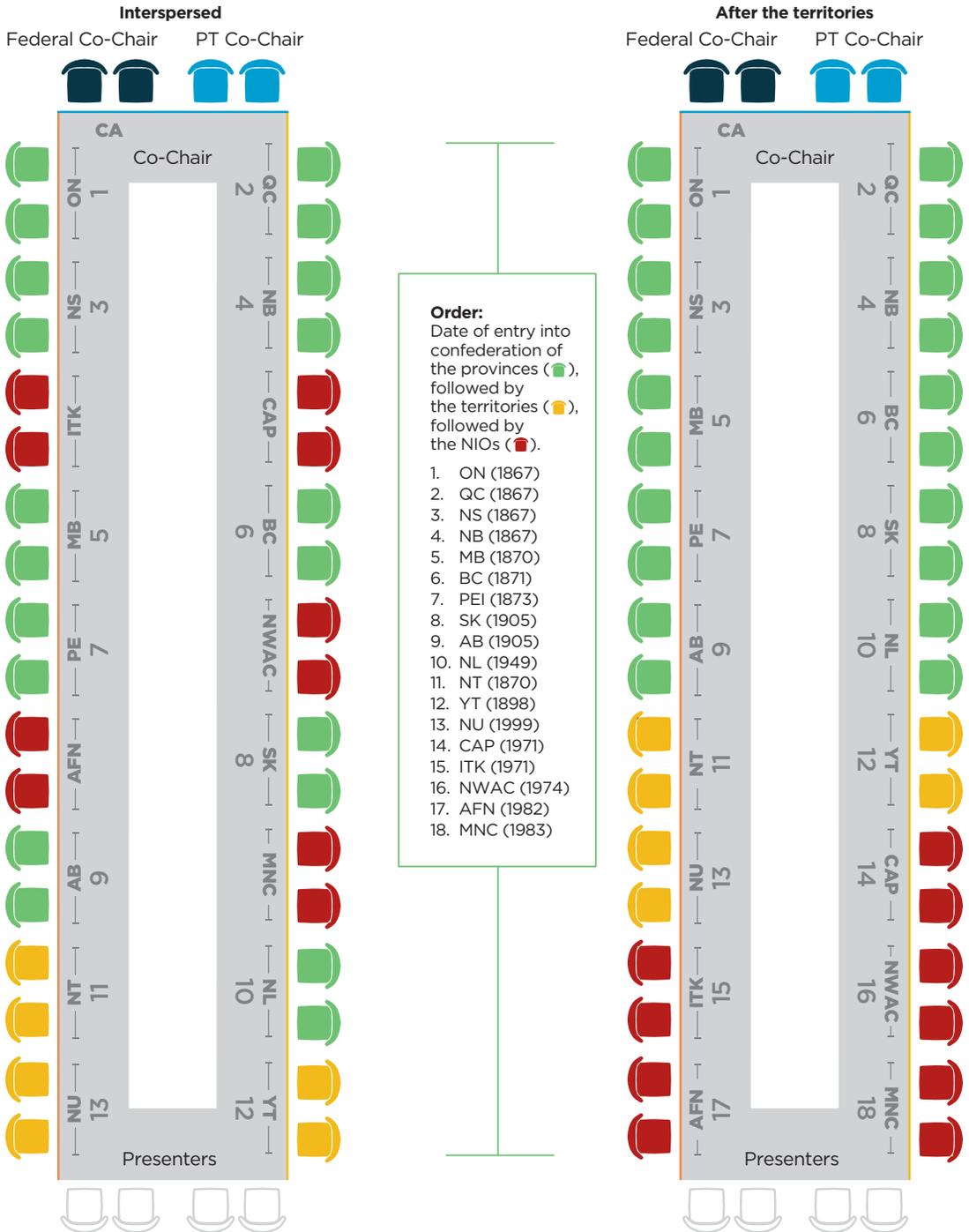


Common Press Conference Set-Ups

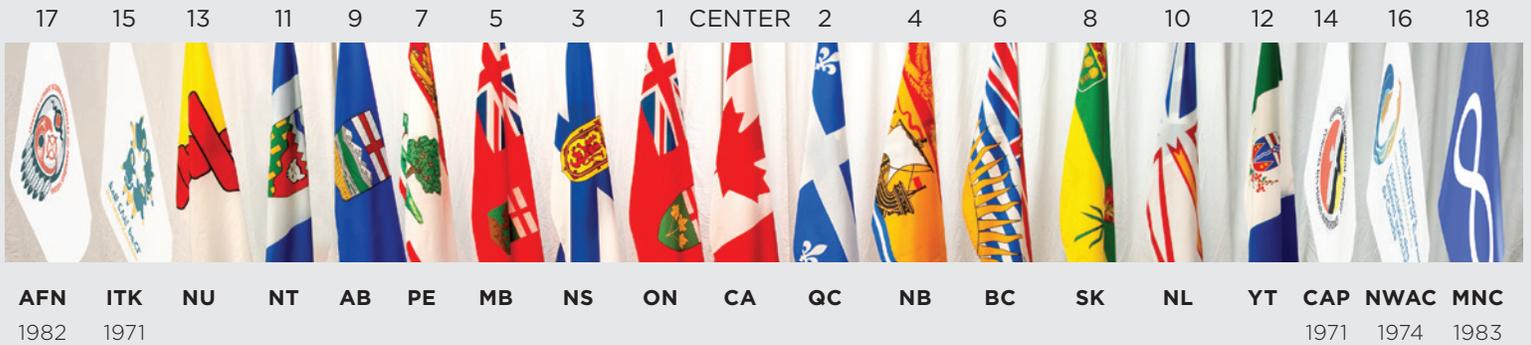
# Meetings with NIOS

There is no specific protocol for the placement of National Indigenous Organizations (NIO) at the conference table, however, the two approaches most commonly used are:

- Interspersed between the provinces and territories, in the order in which they were created;
- After the territories, in the order in which they were created



**THE NIO FLAGS, WOULD BE ADDED TO THE FPT FLAG DISPLAY AS FOLLOWS:  
ORDER OF FLAGS OF THE PROVINCES AND TERRITORIES OF CANADA**



# Working together to make it happen.

If you have questions or are interested in learning more about the protocol surrounding the inclusion of indigenous organizations in intergovernmental conferences, please contact:

**the Conference Manager  
assigned to your event**



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Intergovernmental  
Conference  
Secretariat

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des conférences  
intergouvernementales  
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