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Chair: Mr. Sven Spengemann



Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development

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• (1110)

[*English*]

The Clerk of the Committee (Ms. Erica Pereira): Welcome, members.

Honourable members of the committee, I see a quorum.

I must inform members that the clerk of the committee may only receive motions for the election of chair. The clerk cannot receive other types of motions and cannot entertain points of order or participate in debate.

[*Translation*]

So we can now proceed to the election of the Chair.

Pursuant to Standing Order 106(2), the Chair must be a member of the government party.

[*English*]

I'm ready to receive motions for the position of chair.

Mr. Randeep Sarai (Surrey Centre, Lib.): I would like to nominate MP Sven Spengemann, please.

The Clerk: Thank you, Mr. Sarai.

It has been moved by MP Sarai that MP Spengemann be elected chair of the committee.

Are there any further motions?

(Motion agreed to)

The Clerk: I invite you to take the chair, Mr. Spengemann.

[*Translation*]

The Chair (Mr. Sven Spengemann (Mississauga—Lakeshore, Lib.)): Thank you very much, my dear colleagues.

First, may I thank you for the confidence you have placed in me. I am very honoured to serve you as Chair.

[*English*]

I would like to move immediately to the next order of business on our agenda, which is to proceed with the election of the vice-chairs.

Go ahead, Mr. Chong.

Hon. Michael Chong (Wellington—Halton Hills, CPC): I would like to nominate Mr. Marty Morantz for the position of vice-chair.

The Chair: There's a nomination on the floor for Mr. Marty Morantz from the Conservative Party to be vice-chair.

Are there any other nominations for vice-chair?

(Motion agreed to)

The Chair: I now invite nominations for the position of second vice-chair.

Go ahead, Madame Bendant.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Rachel Bendant (Outremont, Lib.): Thank you, Mr. Chair. It is a pleasure to see you taking the chair.

I nominate Stéphane Bergeron for the position of second vice-chair of the committee.

The Chair: Ms. Bendant moves that Stéphane Bergeron be elected as the committee's second vice-chair.

[*English*]

Are there any other nominations for the second vice-chair of the committee?

(Motion agreed to)

[*Translation*]

Congratulations, Mr. Bergeron. I am happy to see you elected to the position of second vice-chair of the committee.

[*English*]

Colleagues, now that we have elected our vice-chairs, we are now officially at meeting number one of the House of Commons Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development.

[*Translation*]

Welcome to the committee.

[*English*]

Today's meeting is taking place in a hybrid format pursuant to the House of Commons order of November 25, 2021.

Members are attending in person in the room and remotely using the Zoom application.

Regarding the speaking list, the committee clerk and I will do the best we can to maintain a consolidated order of speaking for all members, whether they are participating virtually or in person.

I would like to take the opportunity to remind all participants to this meeting that taking screenshots or taking photos of your screen is not permitted.

The proceedings will be made available via the House of Commons website.

Given the ongoing pandemic situation and in light of the recommendations from public health authorities, as well as the directive of the Board of Internal Economy of October 19, 2021, to remain healthy and safe, the following procedures are recommended for all those attending the meeting in person.

First, anyone with symptoms of COVID-19 should participate by Zoom and not attend the meeting in person.

Everyone must maintain a two-metre physical distance, whether seated or standing.

Everyone must wear a non-medical mask when circulating in the room.

It is recommended in the strongest possible terms that members wear their masks at all times, including when seated. Non-medical masks, which provide better clarity over cloth masks, are available in the room.

Everyone present must maintain proper hand hygiene by using the hand sanitizer at the room entrance.

Committee rooms are cleaned before and after each meeting. To maintain this, everyone is encouraged to clean surfaces such as the desk, chair and microphone with the provided disinfectant wipes when vacating or taking a seat.

As the chair, I'll be enforcing these measures for the duration of the meeting, and I thank members in advance for their co-operation.

We will now proceed to our items of business. The first of these is the set of routine motions. They've been circulated by the clerk and members should have them available in both languages.

I would like to ask now that Dr. Fry take us through the routine motions as they are in front of you.

Go ahead, Ms. McPherson.

• (1115)

Ms. Heather McPherson (Edmonton Strathcona, NDP): I'm sorry. I have two additional routine motions I'd like to propose, so could you just let me know when that would happen?

The Chair: We will deal with those after we've gone through the customary set of routine motions.

Dr. Fry, I will give you the floor to take us through the first routine motion, which deals with analyst services. After that, I will briefly ask you for the floor back, and then we will continue with the remainder of the routine motions.

Hon. Hedy Fry (Vancouver Centre, Lib.): Thank you very much.

The first motion reads:

That the committee retain, as needed and at the discretion of the Chair, the services of one or more analysts from the Library of Parliament to assist it in its work.

The Chair: Colleagues have the motion in front of them as proposed by Dr. Fry. Is there any discussion on this first routine motion?

(Motion agreed to)

[*Translation*]

I would now like to take the floor briefly to give the members of our House of Commons team the opportunity to introduce themselves, including our clerk and our analysts.

[*English*]

Madam Clerk, the floor is yours.

The Clerk: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

My name is Erica Pereira. I'm the clerk of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development. I believe I have worked with each of you in some capacity before, so it is my great pleasure to be here once again.

Thank you.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear!

[*Translation*]

The Chair: Thank you very much, Madam Clerk.

I now give the floor to Ms. Goody.

[*English*]

Ms. Allison Goody (Committee Researcher): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I'm very pleased to see all of you again and to meet new faces. My name is Allison Goody. I'm going to be one of your analysts from the Library of Parliament. I've worked on the foreign affairs committee for a number of years, and I'm looking forward to it.

Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you so much, Ms. Goody.

Now the floor goes to Mr. Siekierski, please, for opening remarks.

Mr. Billy Joe Siekierski (Committee Researcher): Hi, I'm B.J. Siekierski, and I worked with Allison on this committee in the last Parliament.

[*Translation*]

It is a pleasure to see so many familiar faces again and to be here in person.

[*English*]

I believe most of you are familiar with the work we do, but if you or any of your staff have questions, please don't hesitate to ask.

The Chair: Thank you so much.

I would like to thank, in advance, our House of Commons team for their extraordinary service, as we've experienced over previous legislatures, and their experience and tireless commitment to supporting the work of this committee. Included also are our technical staff, our interpreters and anybody else who's lending service to the work of this committee as it goes forward.

[*Translation*]

Thank you very much.

[*English*]

Dr. Fry, I will give you back the floor to take us through the remainder of the routine motions, please.

Hon. Hedy Fry: Thank you, Chair.

The second motion is:

That the Subcommittee on Agenda and Procedure be established and be composed of five members; the Chair and one member from each recognized party; and that the subcommittee work in a spirit of collaboration.

The Chair: Dr. Fry, thank you very much.

The motion is before the committee. Is there any discussion on routine motion number two?

(Motion agreed to)

The Chair: Dr. Fry, thank you very much. The floor is back to you.

Hon. Hedy Fry: The next motion reads:

That the Chair be authorized to hold meetings to receive evidence and to have that evidence published when a quorum is not present, provided that at least four members are present, including two members of the opposition parties and two members of the government party, but when travelling outside the Parliamentary Precinct, that the meeting begin after 15 minutes, regardless of members present.

The Chair: Dr. Fry, thank you very much.

Routine motion number three is before the committee, on meeting without a quorum. Is there any discussion on that motion?

Go ahead, Monsieur Bergeron.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron (Montarville, BQ): Mr. Chair, I would like to ask a question.

When it says “including two members of the opposition parties”, can that perhaps mean two members of the same opposition party or does it have to be two members from at least two opposition parties?

• (1120)

The Chair: Thank you for the question.

I will ask the clerk to clarify that.

The Clerk: It means two members of any opposition party.

The Chair: So they could be two members from the same party.

[*English*]

With that clarification, is there any further discussion, colleagues?

Go ahead, Ms. McPherson.

Ms. Heather McPherson: I just need a little bit of clarity as well on that one.

The Chair: Sure.

Ms. Heather McPherson: I thought there was an agreement among the parties that members from two different recognized parties would be required. I thought that was the agreement that had been made by the whips previously, and because we are one of the first committees sitting, perhaps we are not seeing the changes that have been proposed and accepted by the House leaders.

The Chair: Thank you, Ms. McPherson.

Go ahead, Mr. Genuis.

Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): I would just say that we're talking about two different things.

I think, Ms. McPherson, you're talking about Standing Order 106(4), which is when you have four members call a meeting. The agreement was that for the use of S. O. 106(4), there would be at least two parties.

This motion is for meetings without quorum. With meetings without quorum, there's not a lot of risk of surprises or magic happening at them because, if I understand this correctly, meetings without quorum would be only to receive evidence. You can't have motions moved. We can't compel someone to testify. It's just for the purpose of being able to have a meeting to receive evidence, so I don't think there's much risk of shenanigans if we just pass it as is. That's my thought.

Ms. Heather McPherson: Thank you. I think you're correct. That was my misunderstanding. I also very much appreciate your describing meetings as “magic”.

The Chair: We'll have plenty of opportunities to create magic.

Thank you, Ms. McPherson, if that clarifies it.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Bergeron, the floor is yours.

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron: I do not want to delay the adoption of this routine motion unduly. I just want to say that, when Mr. Genuis is on a committee, we always have to somewhat expect the unexpected.

However, I was thinking that, in the spirit of collaboration mentioned in the preceding routine motion, we could come to a friendly amendment between ourselves for it to be two members of two recognized opposition parties.

However, if this proposal of mine does not receive equally friendly support from my colleagues, I will not make it into a matter of principle.

The Chair: Thank you very much, Mr. Bergeron.

[*English*]

Mr. Oliphant, on the same point, please go ahead.

Mr. Robert Oliphant (Don Valley West, Lib.): Yes, I thought it was important to get it on the record at the first meeting that I agree with Mr. Genuis. I thought that was quite critical, so I want to make sure that everybody... I think his interpretation is correct, and I think that this routine motion stands as it is. On Standing Order 106(4), we understand that representatives of at least two parties would be appropriate.

I think the motion as it stands is the right one for now, so I would urge that we just pass that one and move through the motions.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Oliphant.

I'll ask a quick question to our clerk with respect to Monsieur Bergeron's point.

Are opposition parties in this set of motions as we have them already defined as recognized opposition parties?

They are. Okay.

[*Translation*]

Is that okay with you, Mr. Bergeron?

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron: As I said before, if proposing this friendly amendment does not receive an equally friendly welcome, I am not going to insist. Seeing that the unfriendly welcome curiously did not come from the ranks of the opposition, but from Mr. Oliphant, I will yield immediately.

The Chair: Thank you very much, Mr. Bergeron.

[*English*]

Is there any other discussion on this motion? I take it we take this motion as adopted as well with the discussion in mind.

(Motion agreed to)

The Chair: Dr. Fry, please go ahead on routine motion number four.

Hon. Hedy Fry: Number four reads:

That witnesses be given 5 minutes or more for their opening statement; that whenever possible, witnesses provide the committee with their opening statement 72 hours in advance; that at the discretion of the Chair, during the questioning of witnesses, there be allocated six minutes for the first questioner of each party, as follows:

For the first round: Conservative Party, Liberal Party, Bloc Québécois, New Democratic Party.

For the second and subsequent rounds, the order and time for questioning be as follows:

Conservative Party, five minutes

Liberal Party, five minutes

Bloc Québécois, two and a half minutes

New Democratic Party, two and a half minutes

Conservative Party, five minutes

Liberal Party, five minutes.

The Chair: Thank you very much, Dr. Fry.

(Motion agreed to)

• (1125)

The Chair: Dr. Fry, we'll go back to you for number five.

Hon. Hedy Fry: The motion reads:

That only the clerk of the committee be authorized to distribute documents to members of the Committee provided the documents are in both official languages, and that the witnesses be advised accordingly.

The Chair: Thank you very much, Dr. Fry.

Is there discussion?

(Motion agreed to)

The Chair: We've adopted routine motion number five.

Back to you, Dr. Fry.

Hon. Hedy Fry: It reads:

That the clerk of the committee, at the discretion of the Chair, be authorized to make the necessary arrangements to provide working meals for the committee and its subcommittees.

The Chair: Thank you very much, Dr. Fry.

There's resounding support for the motion, I believe.

(Motion agreed to)

The Chair: Thank you very much, colleagues. We've adopted the routine motion on working meals.

Dr. Fry, please continue.

Hon. Hedy Fry: The next motion is:

That, if requested, reasonable travel, accommodation and living expenses be reimbursed to witnesses not exceeding two representatives per organization; and that in exceptional circumstances, payment for more representatives be made at the discretion of the Chair.

The Chair: Thank you very much, Dr. Fry.

(Motion agreed to)

The Chair: We've adopted motion number seven.

We'll go back to you, Dr. Fry, for number eight.

Hon. Hedy Fry: It reads:

That, unless otherwise ordered, each committee member be allowed to be accompanied by one staff member at in camera meetings and that one additional person from each House officer's office be allowed to be present.

The Chair: Thank you.

(Motion agreed to)

The Chair: We will go back to you, Dr. Fry, for number nine.

Hon. Hedy Fry: It reads as follows:

That one copy of the transcript of each in camera meeting be kept in the committee clerk's office for consultation by members of the committee or by their staff; and that the analysts assigned to the committee also have access to the in camera transcripts.

The Chair: Thank you very much, Dr. Fry.

(Motion agreed to)

The Chair: Thank you very much, Dr. Fry. We'll go back to you for a slightly longer text. This one is entitled "Notice of Motion".

Hon. Hedy Fry: It reads:

That a 48-hour notice, interpreted as two nights, be required for any substantive motion to be moved in committee, unless the substantive motion relates directly to business then under consideration, provided that: (a) the notice be filed with the clerk of the committee no later than 4:00 p.m. from Monday to Friday; (b) the motion be distributed to Members and the offices of the whips of each recognized party in both official languages by the clerk on the same day the said notice was transmitted if it was received no later than the deadline hour; (c) notices received after the deadline hour or on non-business days be deemed to have been received during the next business day; and that when the committee is holding meetings outside the Parliamentary Precinct, no substantive motion may be moved.

[*Translation*]

The Chair: Thank you very much, Dr. Fry.

Is there any discussion on this motion about notices of motion?

[*English*]

(Motion agreed to)

The Chair: We'll go back to you, Dr. Fry, for the final routine motion. It is on orders of reference.

Hon. Hedy Fry: It reads as follows: “That in relation to orders of reference from the House respecting bills, (a) the clerk of the committee shall, upon the committee receiving such an order of reference, write to each member on the committee to invite those members to file with the clerk of the committee, in both official languages, any amendments to the bill which is the subject of the said order, which they would suggest that the committee consider; (b) suggested amendments filed, pursuant to paragraph (a), at least 48 hours prior to the start of clause-by-clause consideration of the bill to which the amendments relate shall be deemed to be proposed during the said consideration, provided that the committee may, by motion, vary this deadline in respect of a given bill; and (c) during the clause-by-clause consideration of a bill, the chair shall allow a member who filed suggested amendments, pursuant to paragraph (a), an opportunity to make brief representations in support of them.”

• (1130)

The Chair: Thank you very much, Dr. Fry.

Is there any discussion or debate on this final routine motion?

Mr. Garnett Genuis: Chair, just a point of order, I wonder if Ms. Fry can clarify the motion she moved, because I think the word “not” might have been missed in the reading of it. To clarify, the text that I have in (a) says, “The clerk of the committee shall, upon the committee receiving such an order of reference, write to each member who is not a member of a caucus represented” and then continues from there. I'm not sure if that was—

Hon. Hedy Fry: I'm sorry. I thought I read 'not', but that's fine if I didn't.

Mr. Garnett Genuis: It's just so what we're voting on is clear on the record.

The Chair: The word 'not' is in the text of the motion as circulated.

Go ahead, Mr. Bergeron.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron: I have a point of clarification.

Would this routine motion prevent us from introducing amendments during the clause-by-clause consideration of the bill?

The Clerk: Members can always propose amendments during the discussions at a meeting of the committee.

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron: Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Bergeron.

Are there any further questions, requests for clarification or points of discussion?

Thank you very much, my dear colleagues. This routine motion is adopted.

(Motion agreed to [See Minutes of Proceedings])

The Chair:

We have now dealt with all the routine motions.

[*English*]

We will now proceed to other business and discussion.

Hon. Hedy Fry: Excuse me, Mr. Chair; there are two other motions.

The Chair: I'm sorry. I was a little hasty, Dr. Fry.

Yes, there is another page attached. My apologies. There is a motion on technical tests for witnesses. We will go back to you.

Hon. Hedy Fry: I move:

That the clerk inform each witness who is to appear before the committee that the House Administration support team must conduct technical tests to check the connectivity and the equipment used to ensure the best possible sound quality; and that the Chair advises the committee, at the start of each meeting, of any witness who did not perform the required technical tests.

The Chair: Thank you very much, Dr. Fry.

This is an important motion. I'd like to—

Mr. Marty Morantz (Charleswood—St. James—Assiniboia—Headingley, CPC): Mr. Chair, on a point of order, on my list I have several others that come up before the technical test for witnesses: gifts, televising, webcasting, a subcommittee on international human rights, and then technical tests.

The Chair: I don't have that one in front of me. Maybe we're looking at different documents.

Hon. Hedy Fry: We don't have that.

Mr. Garnett Genuis: On a point of order, we can move whatever motions we like, and they are on my list as well.

We could maybe adopt the technical tests motion, and then we can move the other motions and discuss them at that point.

Mr. Marty Morantz: That's fine.

The Chair: Yes, that may be the most expedient way to do it.

In my document I have two additional ones, but I've just been shown a document that has others on gifts, on televising, and on the subcommittee.

If it's okay with members, let's go through the ones that Dr. Fry has in front of her, which include the technical tests and a linguistic review. Then we can pick up the additional ones. Is that acceptable, colleagues?

Hon. Hedy Fry: That's acceptable, Mr. Chair, but I won't be able to read those other ones because I don't have them.

The Chair: We may be able to tap somebody else on the shoulder to read them. If not, I'd be happy to do that. I've just been handed the document that has them included.

On the technical tests, colleagues, this is an important motion because we had some questions and issues in the previous Parliament on exactly that point, and I think this question aims to address them. The question to you is whether it does so sufficiently.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Bergeron, the floor is yours.

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I also find this motion to be very important. However, it is my opinion that the last part of the motion does not ensure that we will avoid the kinds of problems we experienced in the previous Parliament.

I recall a truly memorable occasion when a representative from an agency of the United Nations, the UN, having been asked a question in French, told us that she did not understand the question because she had not heard the interpretation.

If the clerk tells us at the beginning of each meeting which witnesses have not gone through the required technical tests, it will in no way prevent the situations that happened in the previous Parliament. We would simply know about them in advance. In the case I have just mentioned, I would have known in advance that the lady in question possibly might not have access to the interpretation of my remarks. When that situation happened, I found out only once I had asked the question that the lady basically understood nothing of what I asked.

If a similar situation happened again, I would know for sure that the lady would not understand the questions that I was putting to her. However, I'm not sure that we would be any further ahead.

• (1135)

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Bergeron.

We have two challenges: the interpretation and the sound quality.

[*English*]

We need to be mindful of both: access to interpretation, which may be a different technical issue, and also the quality of sound, which precludes interpretation from taking place in the first place if the headset is not—

[*Translation*]

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron: If I may, Mr. Chair, the same question arises.

If the clerk tells us in advance that technical tests were not able to be done with certain witnesses, we will not be any more confident that our interpreters will have an optimal quality of sound.

So apart from being told that nothing will be optimal, we really haven't fixed anything.

The Chair: I understand, Mr. Bergeron.

Would you like to move any amendments on the matter?

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron: I don't know.

Does our clerk have any comments on the issues I am raising?

[*English*]

The Chair: Let's ask first what's possible. The ideal thing would be that we sound-check somebody two days ahead of time, send them the headset and make sure that everything is checked and activated. That may not be realistic in every circumstance.

Madam Clerk, what options do we have to address that issue ahead of the meeting that's scheduled?

The Clerk: Mr. Chair, one of the things that I could do is also check on the kind of equipment they are using. My understanding is that the lack of interpretation had to do more with older equipment that was not able to properly run the Zoom interpretation. Specifically, older iPads had that issue. We're well aware of that issue now, so we can definitely inform witnesses that they would need to use specific equipment to have an optimal experience with the committee.

Then, in terms of informing the committee, it would be up to the committee members to decide what they would like to do at that point. Whether they would like to submit questions in writing or try it anyway and hope for the best would be up to the committee members.

The Chair: Thank you very much, Madam Clerk. That's helpful.

Hon. Hedy Fry: Chair, excuse me.

If I may be permitted, I recall one very embarrassing time in our last Parliament when we did not know that the person who said they were who they were was in fact who they were. You may recall our friend from the Russian radio station. We should be able to make sure that the witnesses are exactly who they say they are.

I don't know how we do that. Maybe the clerk can suggest.

The Chair: It's a very good point, Dr. Fry. Identity verification in addition to interpretation capacity and quality of sound are all fundamental to our being able to examine a witness on a scheduled day. Otherwise, it would be wasteful for us to learn that a person is not the person they say they are or that they are not able to connect with us.

I don't know if all those issues have to be put into a routine motion. We can certainly develop operational understandings among ourselves with the office of the clerk and technical support.

Let's hear from colleagues who have views.

Mr. Oliphant, you have your hand raised.

Mr. Robert Oliphant: I just want to support what Mr. Bergeron said. I don't have a wording in my head and I don't have the technical things we need to do, but we've had officials from government come before us who were not prepared with the correct equipment, and that has caused problems not just with interpretation but generally.

I am wondering whether we could take the routine motion but then ask the clerk to come up with a working principle, as you just suggested, that she could bring to us at a future meeting, just so that we have it as a working principle, because life happens and things get messy. We want to work it out.

I want to support Mr. Bergeron and I want the clerk to listen to this and maybe come back with a reasoned approach to this so that... Every committee is going to have the same problem, so maybe this is another discussion the House needs to have, because we simply can't have meetings where either officials or outside witnesses aren't prepared to deal with it.

I also know that sometimes we're dealing with international witnesses from places that don't have the equipment we have, and we're just going to have to figure this out.

• (1140)

The Chair: Mr. Oliphant, thanks very much. I think that is constructive. I wonder if colleagues would agree that we should adopt the motion on technical tests as it's currently framed but then supplement it with an operational understanding, including perhaps the possibility of getting headsets into the hands of our witnesses ahead of time. It certainly should be possible within the parliamentary precinct. If we have a witness from a different continent who is calling from the field, we may or may not have that opportunity, but let's agree that we develop some sort of operational parameters in very short order with our clerk and technical support staff to address these issues.

Looking at the text of this motion, my sense was that there would be some concerns on the part of those of us who have worked virtually during the last Parliament and have experienced some of the issues.

Does that work? Would colleagues agree to proceed in that fashion—that we adopt a motion as currently framed, but then work on the supplementary understandings?

Go ahead, Mr. Bergeron.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron: Yes, that is fine, Mr. Chair. Mr. Oliphant's compromise proposal is perfectly appropriate. However, right at the very end, I heard him say that we have to understand that, in some areas of the world, they will not necessarily have the equipment needed to ensure a quality transmission.

I agree with him completely, but I just want us to remember that the incident I was alluding to involve the head of a UN agency, one of whose working languages is French. So it was astonishing, to say the least, to find ourselves in that absolutely improbable situation, not once but twice, with a senior official of a United Nations agency.

The Chair: Thank you very much for your comments, Mr. Bergeron.

[*English*]

We will go ahead, then, and adopt this motion as framed and work on the additional parameters that we need to set out with respect to the issues that colleagues have raised.

(Motion agreed to)

The Chair: If that's okay, we'll pass the floor back to Dr. Fry for the final routine motion on her document, and then we'll go to the other ones that were just raised by colleagues.

[*Translation*]

Hon. Hedy Fry: For the linguistic review, I propose:

That all documents submitted for committee business that do not come from a federal department, Member's offices, or that have not been translated by the Translation Bureau be sent for prior linguistic review by the Translation Bureau before being distributed to members.

The Chair: Thank you very much, Dr. Fry.

Is there any debate? Are there any questions or comments?

[*English*]

Okay, seeing none, Dr. Fry, we've adopted that motion as well.

(Motion agreed to)

The Chair: Thank you very much, colleagues.

Before we go to the additional motions that were raised by colleagues, Dr. Fry, if I could take you back to routine motion number two, this is just a clarification with respect to the number of members.

Let me just reread that motion and make sure it corresponds to our collective understanding that we approved the right number. This is on the subcommittee on agenda and procedure.

The motion says, "That the Subcommittee on Agenda and Procedure be established and be composed of"—and then there's a bracket that says the number of members—"the Chair and one member from each recognized party; and that the subcommittee work in a spirit of collaboration."

My understanding, Dr. Fry, is that in your original reading of this motion, you said four members, not five.

Hon. Hedy Fry: I said I thought it was four, but I could be wrong. We just knew that there had to be the chair and a member from each party.

The Chair: Okay, so we are looking at a total number of five—

Hon. Hedy Fry: Yes.

Mr. Marty Morantz: I have a point of order, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: I just wanted to make sure that the wording corresponds with the understanding of colleagues, as we've passed that motion already.

Go ahead, Mr. Morantz.

Mr. Marty Morantz: I was going to say I don't know why we don't all have the same document. Mine doesn't have a bracketed portion without a number in it; mine says "composed of five members".

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Morantz. We are working, with apologies, from two different sets of documents, and thank you for clarifying. I wanted to make sure that every member of the committee has the understanding that it is indeed five members.

• (1145)

Mr. Marty Morantz: It was just to clarify, though.

The Chair: Yes, thank you very much.

Okay. We now have a set of additional motions beyond the ones we have just accepted.

Mr. Morantz or Mr. Genuis, if you'd like, I'll ask one of you to introduce those. I have them in front of me as well. I'm happy to do it, but if you'd like to present them, please go ahead.

Mr. Marty Morantz: The next one is on gifts. It reads, "That the committee be authorized to purchase gifts"—

[*Translation*]

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron: A point of order, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: Did you want to comment, Mr. Bergeron?

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron: Mr. Chair, do we have copies of these additional motions? I don't have them at hand.

The Chair: I have just been advised that the clerk will distribute them again in a moment.

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron: That's great, thank you.

[*English*]

Mr. Marty Morantz: Mr. Chair, should I continue on or wait until—

The Chair: If it's okay with colleagues to listen to them orally with the knowledge that they will be in their inbox momentarily, maybe we can proceed that way.

Mr. Morantz, go ahead, please.

Mr. Marty Morantz: Sure. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

The motion on gifts reads as follows:

That the committee be authorized to purchase gifts to be presented to foreign hosts and visiting delegations.

The Chair: Thank you very much.

Is there any discussion on that motion, or questions?

As a side note, Madam Clerk, the parameters of those gifts would be established by regulation.

Seeing no discussion and no questions, we've adopted that motion.

(Motion agreed to)

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Morantz. We will go back to you.

Mr. Marty Morantz: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

The motion on televising and webcasting reads as follows:

That all meetings other than those deemed in camera be televised or webcast where possible.

(Motion agreed to)

The Chair: We will go back to you.

Mr. Marty Morantz: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

The motion on the subcommittee on international human rights reads as follows:

That, pursuant to Standing Orders 108(1) and 108(2), a Subcommittee on International Human Rights to be chaired by a member elected by the subcommittee, be established to inquire into matters relating to the promotion of respect for international human rights, as may be referred to it by the Committee;

That, the subcommittee be chaired by a member of the government and be composed of eight members or associate members of which four shall be government members, two shall be from the Conservative Party, one from the Bloc Québécois and one from the New Democratic Party, to be named following the usual consultations with the Whips;

That, the Subcommittee on International Human Rights of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development be granted the authority to print from day to day such papers and evidence as may be ordered by them, pursuant to Standing Order 108(1)(a).

That, the subcommittee be empowered to send for persons, papers and records, to receive evidence, to sit during a time when the committee is not sitting in Ottawa, to sit when the committee is sitting outside the Parliamentary Precinct and to sit during periods when the House stands adjourned; and

That, the Chair of the subcommittee meet with the Subcommittee on Agenda and Procedure of the committee at their mutual discretion.

The Chair: Thank you very much, Mr. Morantz.

Again, if colleagues don't already have it, they should have that motion in their inboxes very shortly.

Is there discussion, comments or debate on the subcommittee on international human rights?

Seeing none, we have adopted that motion as well.

(Motion agreed to)

The Chair: That, colleagues, unless there are other hidden motions somewhere, would take us to the end of our routine motions.

Go ahead, Ms. McPherson.

Ms. Heather McPherson: I'm sorry. I did have two routine motions I'd like to propose if I could.

The Chair: Are they not substantive, but routine motions concerning the work of the committee?

Ms. Heather McPherson: Yes.

The Chair: Sure. Go ahead, please.

Ms. Heather McPherson: Thank you.

The first motion that I wanted to propose is that each party represented on the committee be entitled to select one witness per two-hour witness panel.

Obviously this is important so that we make sure there is a diversity of witnesses represented and that all parties have an opportunity to bring forward witnesses. It's important for our committee work, and I think it's an important routine motion to pass.

• (1150)

The Chair: Thank you very much, Ms. McPherson.

Are there any comments, questions or discussions on that motion?

I see Mr. Oliphant, and then we have Mr. Genuis. Mr. Oliphant, go ahead, please.

Mr. Robert Oliphant: Thank you.

I have found there are two ways that committees work on these issues. One is that committee lists are presented, and we do it by the number of seats that Canadians elected to the House of Commons, and we proportion the time exactly. Others are done by consensus through an agenda committee or through working out what is best for the committee to hear.

I have never seen this one before, so I'm just suggesting that I don't believe it's a routine motion. I think it's a different motion, because there are two ways that parliaments have worked on this, and committees have chosen different ways.

I've chaired one committee that always worked on a consensus model and found the best witnesses for the committee. I worked with another committee that always had a percentage, per capita, based on the number of seats elected to the House of Commons. I'm not sure this one is either of those, and so I will need some more information about what that is, because what we've done in the last little while on this committee is basically that the clerk would go through and look at what people have submitted, take out the duplicate witnesses and find a way to balance the parties' submissions.

I have not seen that as a problem. I think it's important for the committee to hear if others have seen it as a problem, but I think we've been fairly successful in working that out. We have a kind of hybrid understanding that we're doing it by the number of seats that have been elected by Canadians and by a consensus to ensure that everyone is finding a way into the committee.

If this is a solution, I guess I need to know what the perceived problem is.

The Chair: Mr. Oliphant, thanks very much.

Mr. Genuis—

Okay, Mr. Genuis is withdrawing. Ms. McPherson wants to come back in. Please go ahead.

Ms. Heather McPherson: Just to respond very quickly to Rob, those of us who are with smaller parties—the New Democrats and the Bloc—of course would like to make sure that our witnesses are brought forward and that we have an opportunity to have those witnesses come.

This particular motion was sponsored by Michelle Rempel Garner in the health committee in the last Parliament, and it worked very well for them. This is one of the rationales for using this as a template for other committees to ensure that we can have that diversity of voices present when we do studies.

The Chair: Thanks very much, Ms. McPherson.

Are there any other comments or questions?

Mr. Marty Morantz: Mr. Chair, I just want to put out there that we do have the subcommittee on agenda and procedure, which is composed of one member from each recognized party, and we just passed a routine motion that the subcommittee would work in the spirit of collaboration. I think that's where the witnesses could be sorted out. That's just a suggestion.

The Chair: Thank you very much, Mr. Morantz.

Go ahead, Monsieur Bergeron.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron: Mr. Chair, I sense the concern that impels our colleague Ms. McPherson to make this proposal. I am inclined to be sympathetic to a motion of this kind.

Perhaps my colleagues are familiar with the saying: “the perfect is the enemy of the good”. In other words, in certain situations, when you want to do better, you end up not helping yourself.

Here is my concern: if, by chance, I managed to convince my colleagues that, in one two-hour block, the three witnesses I proposed were relevant and useful for the committee's work, I would not want to be penalized by this motion stating that the Bloc Québécois is entitled to one witness only.

I understand completely what may be motivating our colleague, but it is my impression that, at the end of the day, this could be more harmful, because it would downplay the importance and relevance of a second or third witness that we might be submitting. They would be automatically rejected because each political party would have the right to one witness only.

Let me misquote Winston Churchill, who said that nothing is perfect in this world of sin and woe, and that democracy is the worst form of government except for all the others. No situation is perfect. In the past, I have expressed some reservations about the way in which we go about choosing witnesses.

Overall, I must acknowledge that everyone's point of view is almost always, let us say always, considered and that the diversity of opinion that our colleague is so passionately advocating has also been considered and honoured.

So it will never be too late for our colleague to bring the proposal back if she feels that the diversity of opinion has not been considered during the negotiations, the discussions, over the choice of witnesses. If that happens, I will be the first to let her know that my remarks today were not at all appropriate and that I would probably do better to revise my position.

However, to this point, we have managed to work collegially to establish lists of witnesses that all members of the committee are satisfied with. Those lists really have provided a diversity of opinion.

I completely understand our colleague's position and, in principle, I am sympathetic to her proposal. Despite that, my inclination is to vote against this proposal at this stage, because I would like us to have the opportunity to work in the same way as we worked in the previous Parliament.

I recognize that that was a different Parliament and the dynamics were different. Perhaps it will be otherwise in this Parliament. In which case, Ms. McPherson will always be welcome to introduce the motion again. At that point, my frame of mind may be such that I may want to support it.

In the current situation and in the light of the experience we had in the previous Parliament, I tend to feel that this proposal is perhaps a little premature. I note that a number of my colleagues sat on this committee in the previous Parliament. I do not believe that diversity of opinion was jeopardized or that any one political party around this table could have felt that none of its witnesses ended up being heard at this committee. That is not what happened.

• (1155)

The Chair: Thank you for your comments, Mr. Bergeron.

[*English*]

Ms. McPherson, this is one option for the committee. We can say we've heard your motion, and it's important as a potential backstop that we may resurrect in week one if we hit the skids, but may not have to.

Is that something that sort of fits with what—?

Ms. Heather McPherson: I appreciate all of the interventions, and I'm very comfortable that I can bring this forward if we do find that the committee does not work appropriately. As Mr. Bergeron has mentioned, democracy is flawed, but it's the best system we have, so that's what we will work with, absolutely.

I do have a second one.

The Chair: You've given the committee an early heads-up, so the committee is now seized with your question if it turns out that we don't have that diversity that you were aspiring to reach through that motion. By all means, you can introduce it in week two if you need to.

Ms. Heather McPherson: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: We'll go back to you for your second motion.

Ms. Heather McPherson: The second motion that I'd like to bring forward is as follows:

That the committee may meet in camera only for the following purposes:

- (a) to consider a draft report;
- (b) to attend briefings concerning national security;
- (c) to consider lists of witnesses;
- (d) for any other reason, with the unanimous consent of the committee;

That all votes taken in camera, with the exception of votes regarding the consideration of draft reports, be recorded in the Minutes of Proceedings, including how each member voted when recorded votes are requested;

That any motion to sit in camera is debatable and amendable.

I know we do have a similar motion that we've already approved. This is just a little more clarity for it.

• (1200)

The Chair: Thank you very much.

Are there any questions or discussion on this motion? Do colleagues have the text of the motion in front of them? Is there any discussion or debate?

Go ahead, Mr. Oliphant.

Mr. Robert Oliphant: There seems to be a certain power in being the only one besides Hedy who is virtual. I don't want to do that, as I'm sure there are people there with their hands up.

My concern on this is that the Standing Orders have been developed over many years and many Parliaments in a way that leaves some flexibility on this. Again, I think the committee.... Obviously we are the masters and mistresses of our own work, but I think that I would prefer not to decide ahead on in camera or not in camera but do it the way we've always done it and find a way to do that as is appropriate when it comes up.

I would not be inclined to support this motion, but I think that the Standing Orders and the routine motions are clear on in camera meetings and give us some flexibility, as opposed to tying us at any one point in time. I'm kind of nervous about this motion.

The Chair: Thank you very much, Mr. Oliphant.

Go ahead, Mr. Genuis.

Mr. Garnett Genuis: Mr. Chair, I would just say respectfully in response to Mr. Oliphant's comments that the committee retains the ability to meet in camera under item (d), but it is a good way of providing some clarity and direction for our staff, in terms of planning meetings, to say that these are the parameters we have in mind for what is and isn't in camera. On that basis, I think it's reasonable to provide that clarity and that direction in a space where, in my experience in the past on committee, there's been a level of ambiguity.

I appreciate this being brought forward.

The Chair: Mr. Genuis, thanks very much.

Go ahead, Monsieur Bergeron.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron: Correct me if I am mistaken, Mr. Chair, but I do not believe that it is in the interest of anyone at this table to try to impose in camera work by a majority vote. I'm inclined to feel that our colleague's proposal is a little excessive, to the extent that she seems to be proposing that in camera meetings must be decided on in that way. However, I acknowledge that there is always a possibility that we could, by common accord, agree to meet in camera. I do not see why we would be opposed to meeting in camera with unanimous consent, rather than by a majority vote of the committee.

Therefore, although I am of the opinion that the proposal is a little redundant, in that I see it as how the committee already works, I see nothing wrong with confirming it all in writing. So I am inclined to be in favour of our colleague's proposal.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Bergeron.

Mr. Morantz, the floor is yours.

[*English*]

Mr. Marty Morantz: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I have a couple of concerns with this motion.

One is I think that if the entire committee wants to go in camera, one member shouldn't be able to prevent that, and we need to be able to make those decisions on a case-by-case basis. The other concern I have is the issue of our votes being made public, which I think is what this motion is saying. The reason for going in camera is often that there's very sensitive information that we're dealing with, so it's not so simple to make a vote public. The substance of that vote would likely come into question as well, and it could open the door to important discussions that need to take place in camera being made public.

I'm all for transparency, but I think that the wisdom of having in camera meetings is also important, and we need to protect the integrity of it as well.

The Chair: Mr. Morantz, thank you very much.

I'll give the floor to Ms. McPherson, and then I think our clerk may have a comment on the very last line of that motion, "that any motion to sit in camera is debatable and amendable", in terms of historical precedent.

Ms. McPherson, go ahead first, please.

• (1205)

Ms. Heather McPherson: Thank you.

I want to let my colleagues know that as much as I anticipate that this committee will work extremely well together, that has not always been the case in committees that I have sat on, and this motion just gives us a little more clarity, a little bit more in terms of the ability to control when, for example, the government may try to move in camera to avoid difficult conversations, as we have seen in the past. That has happened in the past. This, for me, gives us a little bit more information, a little bit more ability to be a very, very responsive, transparent committee. While I expect that it won't be necessary, I think it doesn't hurt to have it in place to protect us in the event that it does become necessary.

The Chair: Ms. McPherson, thank you very much.

Madam Clerk, do you want to clarify a bit for the committee on the final portion of that motion?

The Clerk: Certainly. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

One of the issues is that the last line of this motion states "that any motion to sit in camera is debatable and amendable". Specifically, you'll note that Standing Order 67(2) states that these are dilatory motions. They're not debatable motions. It's outlined in chapter 20, on page 1089, where it says, "Any member may move a motion to go from sitting in public to sitting in camera (and vice versa). The motion is decided immediately without debate or amendment."

I do know that some committees have adopted this motion in a previous Parliament. I believe that they used it more as a guide rather than a strict contradiction of the Standing Orders in that way. We did discuss it at the beginning of 43-2 for foreign affairs. One of the issues that comes up as well with Mr. Morantz's concern about making the decisions public is that there could be some diplomatic concerns with doing that. For example, if the committee is deciding to conduct a study about a certain country, for example, and members vote against it, it is then captured in the minutes that members have voted against hearing about this specific issue; however, it's an in camera meeting, so you cannot defend your position publicly.

Those kinds of issues could potentially come up with specific regard to foreign affairs.

The Chair: That's very helpful, Madam Clerk. Thank you very much.

Go ahead, Monsieur Bergeron.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron: I know that each committee is, in a way, free to operate as it sees fit, but we must not forget the law. I have just been informed that the clerk of the Standing Committee on Access to Information, Privacy and Ethics has declared a similar, not to say identical, motion out of order. I do not know the basis on which that motion was deemed out of order, but that is what I have just been told.

The Chair: Thank you very much, Mr. Bergeron.

[English]

We've had a full discussion on this. There are other considerations that we may potentially raise. One of them, Ms. McPherson, might be that part (b) of the motion talks about "to attend briefings concerning national security". One might also consider whether the position of a witness who is precariously positioned because of political or other sensitivities should be protected through an in camera option and if, in that case, it would have to be unanimous, or whether members should be able to vote in those cases by majority to protect the name of that witness, the identity, the geospatial location and the substance of what that witness will tell us. That might be equally important for the committee to consider.

This may also be a motion that we might want to incubate a bit more, especially in light of what Monsieur Bergeron just told us, and see if there's a modulation of the motion that you may wish to reintroduce, or we can see how our practice establishes itself. At a minimum, I would think, it's a backstop to potentially regulate our decision-making with respect to in camera work if members don't feel that it's going in the right direction or that it could be fine-tuned through that motion.

I don't know how colleagues feel. Are there any other points in terms of what we should do with this motion today? Would colleagues wish to vote on it today, or should we have some sideline conversations in terms of the substance and revisit it?

Mr. Chong, go ahead, please.

Hon. Michael Chong: Are we finished with the routine motions?

The Chair: Yes. This is a procedural motion, not necessarily routine, that Ms. McPherson has introduced. It's about governing the work of the committee. We need to find a way to dispose of it today or in the future.

• (1210)

Ms. Heather McPherson: Mr. Chair, I'm happy to withdraw it and bring it forward at another time if that is deemed necessary.

The Chair: Okay, sure. We can do that if it solves the situation.

Mr. Chong, did you want to come in on that motion?

No? Okay, perfect.

Colleagues, I think that has taken us to the end of not only routine motions but also procedural ideas with respect to how to structure our work.

Colleagues have put forward a number of notices of motions with respect to substance going forward. We have a good amount of time left if colleagues wish to speak to any of those motions that they would want to bring forward with respect to substantive work in the 44th Parliament. I think there's an opportunity to do that now. I invite colleagues to raise their hands and signal for attention so we can get into that discussion.

Mr. Chong, go ahead, please.

Hon. Michael Chong: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Congratulations on your acclamation as chair.

Before I move the motion I have in front of me, I would like to give it to you to distribute to members of the committee. The motion is in both official languages.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Chong.

It's being circulated as we speak. If you wish, you can start.

Hon. Michael Chong: Would you like me to read it into the record, or is the paper copy sufficient, Mr. Chair?

The Chair: I understand that it's rather lengthy. If you wish to start speaking to it, you can certainly do that.

Hon. Michael Chong: I won't read it into the record since members have a paper copy of it. I will speak to it briefly.

The motion calls for the government to deposit with the Law Clerk and Parliamentary Counsel, in both official languages and within one week of the adoption of this motion, the documents concerning the breaches at the government's Winnipeg lab.

We have put in place measures in this motion to ensure the safeguarding of national security. The motion calls for the law clerk to transmit the documents in redacted form to the clerk of this committee, who would then, in turn, distribute the documents in redacted form to the members of this committee.

Then we would meet with the law clerk, who would tell us whether or not he is satisfied with the redactions proposed by the Government of Canada. If the clerk is not satisfied, a report indicating such would be tabled in the House by yourself, Mr. Chair.

This motion takes into account concerns about national security. It allows the government to propose redactions while at the same time respecting the right of Parliament to get information from the government.

I will finish there. I hope members of the committee will support the motion. Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you very much, Mr. Chong.

Is there any discussion?

Go ahead, Monsieur Bergeron.

[Translation]

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron: I have had the opportunity to express to our colleague the discomfort that introducing such a motion causes me. I emphasize the word discomfort, not necessarily disagreement.

Let me also share my discomfort with you. Some chose not to reconvene the Special Committee on Canada-China Relations. That choice was theirs to make. Personally, I have very many reservations about that choice because I believe that, with the major obstacle removed, meaning the illegal detention of the two Michaels and the extradition request for Meng Wanzhou, we are at a kind of crossroads in our relations with the People's Republic of China. Consequently, I believe that the committee is perhaps more important than it was before. But others chose differently.

I was concerned by the fact that, although the choice was made not to reconvene the Special Committee on Canada-China Relations, there was perhaps the wish for the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development to do part of the work left unfinished by the Special Committee on Canada-China relations. That is a source of concern for me.

The other source of concern, and I will come back to it in a few moments, is this. If that committee had been reconvened, it was my intention to bring to the attention of the members of the committee one of the most significant challenges that the West may well have to confront in a few months. This is the possible invasion of Taiwan by the People's Republic of China. If that were the case, we would face a dilemma worthy of Corneille. We would have to decide whether to put the lives of our sons and daughters at risk in a conflict that we would very likely lose in order to defend our values or whether we would abandon our allies in Taiwan to a sad fate.

My view is that the subject deserves our attention in order to avoid any situation that anyone might want to use subsequently in a political way. I do not want people to think that I am alluding to the situation in Afghanistan. But it is a situation that most definitely deserves our consideration in advance. In that way, we will not be taken by surprise if it were to happen. So, in a few moments, I will have a motion along those lines, Mr. Chair.

However, I am also of the opinion that one situation we saw in the previous Parliament is still unresolved. This is about the mysterious events that took place at the National Microbiology Laboratory in Winnipeg. Someone, somewhere in this Parliament really has to want to get to the bottom of things.

Although I am uneasy about this motion, as I have told my colleague, I would be inclined to support it, if only to prevent this becoming one of the countless mysteries of history that remain unresolved. I feel that we have the tools to let us get to the bottom of things while still accommodating the government's legitimate concerns for national security, for personal privacy, and for potential criminal investigations.

• (1215)

The Chair: Thank you very much, Mr. Bergeron.

Mr. Oliphant, the floor is yours.

[*English*]

Mr. Robert Oliphant: To follow up on Mr. Bergeron, it was news to me that there's not going to be a Canada-China special committee. Maybe I'm outside those discussions, and that may be a negotiation happening among parties to which I'm not party, so I don't know. I'm not even sure...If it hasn't happened, I'm not sure how we know something hasn't happened, because it just hasn't been brought up yet, but maybe I'm outside the loop on that one, which is fine.

I'm not opposed to our doing work on the Canada-China relationship in this committee. It was my argument in the last Parliament, when that special committee was set up, that we are the foreign affairs committee, and it is a good place to discuss all our relationships. My concern is that we find a procedure to address all the possible work in a way that looks at the world, because right now we have a critical issue in Ukraine and we have issues going on in

Ethiopia. We have a number of issues that are really quite timely that I think Canadians want us to discuss.

It would be very appropriate to find a way to have input from all the parties—from the Bloc, the NDP, the Liberals and the Conservatives—and get those motions into the subcommittee on agenda. We can then have the subcommittee on agenda present a proposal for this committee to deal with as a whole with respect to what we do, and when and how we do it. It's not to preclude that we wouldn't do China right away if there is no special committee, but it also doesn't tie us if there is a special committee on China.

I know that on the government side there are four or five motions that have not yet been submitted as notices of motion. We can obviously put in motions today when we're in a business meeting, but to be thoughtful and fair, and to look at our work in an orderly way, I would like us to consider that we set a date by which all notices of motion should be in. I'm not precluding that there are ways to always.... We pass routine motions about those motions, but we could set up a kind of first tranche of topics, have the agenda committee meet on them, set some priorities based on input from all the parties, and then come back to a meeting of this committee to make a decision on whether or not to accept the report of the subcommittee.

I may need some help from the clerk on what an appropriate timeline would be to make sure we get a good set of motions, because the motions from previous Parliaments are no longer available. They're gone. We would want to make sure that every member has a chance to put in some motions so that we don't jump over the goodwill of any member of the committee because we decide to study something right away today.

I'm prepared to make a motion on that if that's deemed in order, but we have a motion on the floor from Mr. Chong. I'm not quite sure how we would do that, because I don't want to defeat that motion. We may want to support it, but to be fair to the committee, we should be looking at everything, or at least five or six things, to decide what we'd want to do first, second, third and fourth.

We need a little bit of help from the clerk on two things: how we can we dispose of that motion in a way that is within the Standing Orders and how can we keep it available for discussion at the subcommittee along with other issues; and what an appropriate timeline would be for us to work with to make sure every member of the committee, regardless of how big their party is, is heard on this issue.

• (1220)

The Chair: Mr. Oliphant, thanks very much.

I have Mr. Chong, Ms. McPherson, and then Madame Bendayan on the list, but why don't we go to our clerk, before I pass the floor to Mr. Chong, to give us a few thoughts on timing and the way to deal with the motions, including the one that's currently in front of us?

The Clerk: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

It would really be up to the committee to decide what its timeline would be. Looking at the House of Commons sitting calendar, having new motions in for consideration this week seems unlikely, which means our first meeting when the House comes back would be January 31. Having all motions in and circulated sometime in mid-January would definitely be suitable for me, but it would be up to the committee members to decide.

The other issue was how to dispose of this motion before us but not defeat it. You could certainly refer it to the subcommittee on agenda and procedure, or with unanimous consent, it could be withdrawn to be moved at a further time.

The Chair: Thank you very much, Madam Clerk.

Next up are Mr. Chong, Ms. McPherson and then Madam Bendantayan.

Mr. Chong, please go ahead.

Hon. Michael Chong: It sounds like there's no opposition to the motion on the floor, so perhaps we could move to a vote on the motion if there's no further debate, and then move on to other business.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Chong.

I think Ms. McPherson had her hand raised, and Madam Bendantayan as well.

Go ahead, Ms. McPherson.

Hon. Michael Chong: There are further interventions.

The Chair: There seem to be additional speakers, yes.

Hon. Michael Chong: Okay. Well, briefly then, there are a lot of provisions in the motion on the floor to protect national security. We're asking the government to come forward with proposed redactions to the documents, which the law clerk would review. The committee would receive the redacted versions through you, Mr. Chair, and the clerk, of the documents. The law clerk would then sit down with us at an in camera meeting to discuss those redacted documents and whether or not, in his view, those redacted documents are consistent with the terms of the motion.

I have complete faith in the Parliament of Canada's security measures that are in place. In fact, I've more faith in Parliament's security measures, in some ways, than in the Government of Canada's. I noted over the weekend an email that we all received about security breaches in information technology systems that took place in the Government of Canada's systems but not in the Parliament of Canada's systems, which I think speaks to the quality of the professionals we have working here on Parliament Hill. I think the provisions we've put in place in the motion are very responsible and I think they will ensure the protection of national security in any ongoing criminal investigation.

I hope that we're able to dispose of this motion at this committee meeting. For matters that we're not able to deal with in the next 35 minutes, perhaps we could take those up at the steering committee between now and the end of January.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

• (1225)

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Chong.

Ms. McPherson is next.

Ms. Heather McPherson: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I want to thank everyone for their interventions. This is very interesting.

I'm very interested in this motion. I see a lot in this motion that is useful. However, I understand the concerns that Monsieur Bergeron has raised. Some of my concerns also stem from hearing the clerk talk about the fact that we are not going to be sitting again until February. Knowing that this committee has not sat since June and will not sit again until February is quite worrying for me.

Of course, there are things happening in this world that need our attention urgently. Some of those have been outlined. Some other ones that I would like to move motions on today are things around vaccine equity, the importance of dealing with how Canada has responded to COVAX and how we are working with countries around the world to ensure vaccine equity is happening. As well, what is happening in Ukraine is deeply troubling and I think requires parliamentary study.

I would like to suggest that if we want to have more time to examine this, perhaps this committee could agree to have a meeting next week. I know it is not a traditional sitting week, but we have the ability to sit next week to develop a plan, to develop what our strategies are, so that the clerk and the team supporting us can use the month of January to line up our work and we can hit the ground running.

As disappointed as I am that we are going from June until February without the foreign affairs committee of the Parliament of Canada sitting, I think this would be a compromise. We would have some time. We would be able to pass some of the motions before us and we would be able to have a work plan in place for February, or January 31, I suppose, when we reconvene.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: Thank you very much, Madam McPherson.

Madam Bendantayan, I think you had your hand up.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Rachel Bendantayan: Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

I would like to come back to Mr. Bergeron's very interesting comments. I would like to know if he has any additional information, somewhat along the lines of what my colleague Mr. Oliphant raised. We do not know if there will be a Special Committee on Canada-China Relations, and I would like to know if this has already been discussed among the opposition parties.

Personally, I would very much like to continue to look at the China issue in the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development. I agree with Mr. Bergeron that there are some really critical issues that we should be discussing, and they are not limited to what is in this motion, whether it is Xinjiang, Tibet, Hong Kong or Taiwan. I think we have many possible topics for discussion.

In my view, the motion before us is somewhat narrow. However, since we just formed a subcommittee this very morning, I agree that the subcommittee could look at this in the next few days and report back to the committee. I know we have a number of options for motions and studies to consider.

• (1230)

The Chair: Thank you very much, Ms. Bendayan.

[*English*]

Dr. Fry, you have the floor.

Hon. Hedy Fry: Thank you, Chair.

Look, I understand the substance of Mr. Chong's motion. I think it's an important one. However, we just passed our routine motions, which state that a 48-hour notice, interpreted as two nights, is required for any substantive motion to be moved in committee. I did not receive this, in both languages, with 48 hours' notice. I also think that as Mr. Oliphant pointed out, there are many of us who have motions. I think that to vote on this current motion right now presumes that this motion must automatically take precedence over everybody else's.

We have a subcommittee that we set up that's going to look at all of this. I think we should follow procedure, follow the process, and get that committee to look at motions that have given the 48 hours' notice, given the timelines we heard from the clerk. I think it's fair.

It's only fair and reasonable for us to do that, so I move that we do not vote on this motion, actually. I would not like us to vote on it right now.

The Chair: Dr. Fry, thanks very much.

I see Mr. Ehsassi and then Mr. Chong.

Hon. Michael Chong: No, on a point of order, Mr. Chair, I believe my motion is in order. Perhaps you could rule as to whether or not it is in order. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: It was received in committee business, so from that perspective, yes, it's in order.

Hon. Michael Chong: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: We have Mr. Ehsassi and then Mr. Bergeron.

Mr. Ali Ehsassi (Willowdale, Lib.): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

First off, allow me to congratulate you as well on being selected as the chair of this committee. Let me say that I am new to this committee, unlike many of you, and that I very much look forward to working with each and every single one of you.

With respect to some of the issues that have been raised, the first issue I'd like to touch on is that this committee will not be meeting until February. This is something that Ms. McPherson brought up.

Yes, I share her frustration. I think all of us would like to roll up our sleeves and get to work, but I think it's important to highlight that this is not specific to the foreign affairs committee. It is actually something that all of our committees are working through.

The second issue I wanted to comment on is that I'm somewhat surprised by the motion that has been brought in. I had a motion myself. I'm sure other colleagues here did as well.

On that particular point, allow me to say this. As an observer to this foreign affairs committee in the past, I think it is important that members act in a collegial manner. That is what Canadians expect of us: that on issues as significant and as important as foreign affairs, international development and national security, they see each and every single one of us working together.

In my opinion, just all of a sudden coming up with this motion is not necessarily in that spirit, in the sense that each of us has a number of different priorities that we would like to focus on, and there should be a better process to make sure that the agenda of this committee reflects the issues that are of concern to most of us.

I would be very much in favour of the process or modality that has been identified by Mr. Oliphant, which is that we should take all of the motions, including the one that has been tabled by Mr. Chong, and refer them to the subcommittee so that we can make sure all of us continue to work together and continue to focus on those issues that matter.

Let me also say this. I agree that the China-Canada relationship is an important one. It's one that Canadians from coast to coast care about. It's not about substance that I have any misgivings here; it is just about working out a routine that works for all of us.

Finally, if I could also comment on an issue raised by Mr. Bergeron, he did say that we have to plumb the depths of this mystery, which is part of the substance of what Mr. Chong has tabled here. Let me say that yes, Canadians want to know all these issues and they want to understand them, but they're not willing to do it at the expense of actually not doing it in a professional manner and not making sure that our national security interests are upheld.

On that point, I think it's important to also highlight the important work that the national security committee is doing. There are issues that they are fully apprised of, and it is a committee that consists of members from various parties, so it's not a partisan one. At times like this and on issues that implicate—possibly implicate, I should say—our national security, there are mechanisms. I don't necessarily think that dealing with “redacted” materials on issues that pertain to national security is necessarily the best process to adopt.

This is all to say that I very much look forward to working with all the members here, and I'm very much in favour of the process that has been outlined to make sure the various motions that we all have drafted are considered and we all can work together, hopefully, to set up the agenda for this committee.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

• (1235)

The Chair: Thank you very much, Mr. Ehsassi.

I have Dr. Fry.

Hon. Hedy Fry: Mr. Chair, I would like to clarify something once again with regard to procedure.

As I said, I don't have a problem with the substance of the motion, but I do want to repeat that it is business under consideration. If you're going to take a substantive motion, it could be brought in without the 48-hour notice if it's under business under consideration. We're not considering China in this meeting. This is a motion that was filed, and it was supposed to be sent to be distributed to the offices of the whips of each recognized party in both official languages by the clerk on the same day that the said notice was transmitted. I am sorry, but as a member I did not receive it.

I've chaired committees in the past, and I would like to ask the clerk if the meaning of the words "business under consideration" is not as I've understood it to be. As Ms. McPherson was saying, let's say we were discussing vaccines, and then somebody gave notice and moved a motion about vaccines while we were discussing vaccines. That's what I thought "business under consideration" was meant to be. It's not that we were in a business meeting.

Could the clerk clarify this for me, please?

The Chair: Dr. Fry, thanks very much.

I think we have a couple of colleagues here who are waiting for clarification on that front as well. It was the committee business portion of the meeting, and the motion was presented in both official languages.

Madam Clerk, the implication of—

Hon. Hedy Fry: It's the business the committee is dealing with.

The Clerk: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Right now the rubric for the committee is committee business, which means that anything that the committee decides to consider at this time is admissible. If you were considering vaccine equity, a motion not related to vaccine equity would not be in order at that time and you would need the notice. Because we are in committee business, any motion that any member chooses to bring forward at this time would be admissible.

On a point of clarification, I have sent the motion to your email account.

The Chair: Thank you very much, Madam Clerk.

It is my understanding that a number of other colleagues also have motions to bring forward and discuss to see how we get ourselves into the starting blocks for the 44th Parliament and what the priorities are.

The Standing Committee on Agenda and Procedure was referred to as an option for members to consider to see in what sequence and with what priority the committee should consider this. I would encourage colleagues to follow that thought to see who else has things that they wish to bring forward today.

On the motion of Mr. Chong and how the committee wishes to dispense with it this afternoon, are there further comments and discussion?

Mr. Bergeron and then Mr. Sarai.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I'd like to raise two points.

First, to address Mr. Oliphant and Ms. Bendayan's legitimate concerns, as far as I know, there are no negotiations or anything else between the opposition parties on the issue of the Special Committee on Canada-China Relations. I simply drew a conclusion—some might say a hasty one—from the fact that our Conservative friends, following the 2019 election, had put forward a motion in the House at the very first opportunity given to them on an opposition day to pass the motion creating the Special Committee on Canada-China Relations.

Based on informal discussions I had had with some of my colleagues, I thought they were going to do exactly the same this time. Instead, to my surprise, without having discussed it with anyone beforehand as far as I know, they came to us with a motion calling for a committee on what happened in Afghanistan. I had the opportunity to speak on this issue in the House and to say that it seems the Conservatives lost interest in the Special Committee on Canada-China Relations; perhaps because they felt that there were no more partisan gains to be made from it and that they had found a new and more politically and partisan plaything, which was a committee that would look at what happened in Afghanistan.

At that time, Mr. Chair, you will recall that in the House we said that we would not support the motion of our Conservative friends as proposed if there were no amendments. We wanted amendments that would allow us not only to examine what happened this summer, but also, and more importantly, to see what would happen to the Canadian nationals who are still trapped in Afghanistan, to the Afghan allies who are risking death every day, and to the Afghans themselves, of course, who are reduced to starvation, and to the girls and women of Afghanistan, who are once again in the grip of an Islamist government.

That said, I understand there is less appetite from our Conservative friends to recreate the Special Committee on Canada-China Relations. I simply concluded that this committee would not be revived unless our Liberal friends tell us that they intend to do so. That's all I meant. Now, if there is anyone at this table who knows anything or intends to re-form the Special Committee on Canada-China Relations, please tell us, so that we can stop wondering.

In the absence of any expressed intent on anyone's part, I simply assume that this committee will not be restructed. I think the motion before us from Mr. Chong this morning illustrates precisely the fact that the Conservatives have no intention of reconstituting the Special Committee on Canada-China Relations, since they want to have the work done by the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development. So I have no hope on that front. If our Liberal friends intend to do it, let them tell us. Otherwise, I see no indication that this committee will be recreated. So let our Liberal friends stop suggesting that there might be one in order to avoid dealing with this motion, which was submitted by Mr. Chong this morning.

Now, on the motion itself, frankly, I see great merit in the fact that all motions from all political parties can be referred to and discussed in the Subcommittee on Agenda and Procedure, as is the usual practice. However, the fact is that there is a motion on the table which you have ruled to be in order, and I do not sense any intention on Mr. Chong's part to let this vote go. I am sorry about that, because I would prefer, quite frankly, that we go to the Subcommittee on Agenda and Procedure with all our motions to see if it is possible, as we did on the issue of vulnerabilities exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, to amalgamate, if I can put it that way, the concerns of the different political parties.

• (1240)

I expressed my concern about Taiwan to Mr. Chong, and he was receptive. Of course, if we only vote on this one motion today, mine will take a back seat. So you will understand that I am not particularly enthusiastic about this idea.

However, may I repeat that you have just ruled on the admissibility of Mr. Chong's motion. As I do not sense any intention on his part to let the motion be set aside, I do not see how we can avoid voting on this motion today.

• (1245)

The Chair: Thank you very much, Mr. Bergeron.

The next speakers will be Mr. Sarai, Mr. Oliphant, Ms. McPherson and Dr. Fry.

Mr. Sarai, you have the floor.

[*English*]

Mr. Randeep Sarai: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I think we've spoken about the length. I think the gist of it is that if we can refer it to the subcommittee and if we can have a subcommittee meeting perhaps in January, then this motion could be discussed there. January 7 might be a good day if somebody wants to work that out.

My motion will be to refer this to the subcommittee, and in the interim I move that the debate be now adjourned.

The Chair: Thank you very much, Mr. Sarai. I don't think that motion is in order. There's still debate on Mr. Chong's motion that needs to continue. I will confer with the clerk.

My apologies, Mr. Sarai; the motion is in order. It's dilatory, and the committee will proceed to a vote on adjourning the debate.

Madam Clerk, would you take us through the vote?

The Clerk: The motion adopted on November 25 in the House specifies that any votes in committee must be by recorded division, unless they're unanimous or on division.

May I proceed, Mr. Chair?

The Chair: Yes, please.

The Clerk: The motion is that the debate be now adjourned.

(Motion negatived: nays 6; yeas 5 [*See Minutes of Proceedings*])

The Chair: The motion is defeated.

Thank you, Mr. Sarai.

We will go back to the speakers list that we had in place. We have Mr. Oliphant.

Mr. Robert Oliphant: As I said earlier, I would like to put into a motion what my proposal was. To be fair to the work of all the committee members, I would move that we refer this motion to the subcommittee on agenda and...whatever it's called. What's it called? I used to call it the steering committee.

The Chair: It's the subcommittee on agenda and procedure.

Mr. Robert Oliphant: Yes, I move that we refer this motion to the subcommittee on agenda and procedure, and further request that that committee meet in the month of January at the call of its chair and that it consider all motions that have been received by the clerk prior to that, but I suggest that a date of, say, January 7 would be helpful.

I further move that the subcommittee be prepared to report with a proposed work plan to the committee at its first meeting, which is also at either the call of the chair or... There's no reason our committee can't meet before the House comes back. It can meet at the call of the chair at any time, or under section 106(4) we have the ability of any two parties with four members total to call the committee back. However, I would hope that it can meet prior to our losing too much more time.

That's my motion. I'm sorry it's not written out, but in essence it's a motion that we refer this motion to the subcommittee on agenda and procedure, that we ask the subcommittee on agenda and procedure to review it with all other motions that have been received for consideration in the month of January, with a suggested date of January 7, and to report at the first meeting of this committee, which is at the call of the chair or under section 106(4) at the request of any four members, and not necessarily only when the House resumes.

• (1250)

The Chair: Mr. Oliphant, thank you very much.

I see some hands going up.

To make sure that this motion can be put forward procedurally, would you then implicitly frame it as an amendment to Mr. Chong's motion? I mean, it would have to take that shape for us to consider it, because Mr. Chong's motion is still formally on the floor.

Are you amending it, Mr. Oliphant, to then change it to be received by the subcommittee as—

Mr. Robert Oliphant: On a point of order, Mr. Chair, just for the information of the interpreters, I am receiving a French translation while I have the English button tab pushed on. I would have understood the French, but I couldn't understand the French and English at the same time.

The Chair: Let's give that a second to see if we can fix the interpretation. It's a technical question.

Is it working now as it should? It is. Okay.

Mr. Oliphant, let me just repeat this. In terms of what you just said with respect to the motion brought forward by Mr. Chong, I'm suggesting that it may be framed as an amendment to then supersede Mr. Chong's motion, which is still on the floor. I read it as a parallel motion, but technically it would have to be an amendment to Mr. Chong's.

Mr. Robert Oliphant: I think there are two different ways to do it. Your proposal is one way. I am happy to make that amendment to Mr. Chong's motion to refer it to the subcommittee. It's quite lengthy, because the goal of it is to put it into the context of a body of work that should be considered fairly.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Oliphant.

Hon. Michael Chong: On a point of order, Mr. Chair, can we have a ruling on whether or not the amendment is in order? It seems categorically different from the motion on the floor in front of us.

The Chair: Well, I think it preserves the substance of your motion. It just says that instead of the committee considering it now, he would propose to give it to the subcommittee on agenda and procedure. It would still be an amendment to your motion.

Hon. Michael Chong: Yes, but if the amendment is adopted, then we have a motion that's been amended....

The Chair: Then we vote on the motion as amended.

Hon. Michael Chong: Yes, but they seem incongruous to me.

An hon. member: I have a point of order.

Hon. Michael Chong: The motion would seem incongruous to me if it were to be amended by the amendment proposed by Mr. Oliphant.

The Chair: On this same point, we'll hear from Ms. McPherson.

Ms. Heather McPherson: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I would like to propose a subamendment to Mr. Oliphant's amendment, which I'm not sure I can do, considering the point of order that's been brought forward by Mr. Chong.

I would propose that the subcommittee does have to deal with this issue before December 17—sorry; before the December 23 break. I would like to see this happen next week. That would be my recommendation. Because of the urgency of the matter and because

it has been so long since we have sat as a committee, pushing it back is inappropriate at this time.

The Chair: Thank you, Ms. McPherson.

Mr. Chong, let me ask you this, then, just informally. Would you be supportive of the thrust of Mr. Oliphant's quote-unquote amendment in addition to what Ms. McPherson just said?

Hon. Michael Chong: Mr. Chair, may I suggest that we proceed in the following fashion? If there's unanimous consent, I'm happy to have my motion set aside for the consideration of the subcommittee on agenda and procedure next week, as well as for the subcommittee on agenda and procedure to also consider other proposals for studies from other members of the committee, as outlined by Mr. Bergeron and Madam McPherson. I'd be willing to proceed on that basis.

If there's unanimous consent that the subcommittee meet next week to deal with this motion that I've moved in front of the committee right now, as well as the proposals from Madam McPherson, Monsieur Bergeron and any other member of the committee, I would be willing to proceed in that fashion.

• (1255)

The Chair: Thank you very much, Mr. Chong.

Before making some procedural points that I was just given by the clerk, let me just canvass the committee generally to see if there would be unanimous consent.

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Chair: I don't see any objections.

Now, procedurally I'm advised that the proper way to do this is to do two things: First, Mr. Chong's motion would be referred to the subcommittee without any conditions attached, and second, a second motion would be moved for the subcommittee to meet next week.

If that's amenable to the committee, then for the record, Mr. Chong, I will give you the floor to make those two motions.

Hon. Michael Chong: I so move, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: Is there any discussion or any disagreement?

(Motions agreed to)

The Chair: Colleagues, I think we have landed it, in the sense that we are now moving Mr. Chong's motions to the subcommittee along with other motions from members of the committee that will be brought forward. We supported a motion that the subcommittee meet next week with guidance from the clerk in terms of the best timing to make that happen.

Go ahead, Monsieur Bergeron.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Just like Mr. Chong, I will invite our clerk to distribute the text of the three motions I would like to submit to the members of the committee.

The first motion is for a study that I would like us to undertake, which would require a minimum of three meetings, on the existing situation between the People's Republic of China and Taiwan.

The second motion concerns the situation in Haiti, which, as we know, is extremely serious. Developments in recent days suggest that the assassination of President Jovenel Moïse may have been ordered by groups wanting to prevent the president from releasing the names of people who may have been involved in illegal manoeuvres.

The third motion is about the current situation in Ethiopia, particularly in the Tigray region, where we may be witnessing one of the worst humanitarian crises to have emerged in recent years.

The Chair: Thank you very much, Mr. Bergeron.

Ms. McPherson, you have the floor.

[*English*]

Ms. Heather McPherson: If this is the opportunity to do that, I also had two motions that I think have been distributed.

Is that correct, Clerk?

They will be distributed very quickly. I believe they have been provided to the clerk in both official languages.

The first motion is that the committee undertake a study on global vaccine access at the earliest possible opportunity and that the study focus on Canada's contribution to COVAX as well as the impacts of intellectual property rights on global access to COVID-19 vaccines, and that the findings be collected and reported to the House, and that pursuant to Standing Order 109, the committee request the government to provide a comprehensive response to the report.

Also, I would like to ask the committee to hold at least two meetings on the situation unfolding in Ukraine and that witnesses include officials from Global Affairs Canada and the Ukrainian Canadian Congress.

The Chair: Thank you very much, Ms. McPherson.

Do any other colleagues wish to bring forward references to motions that they will be presenting?

As colleagues are contemplating, could we maybe ask, Madam Clerk, if we're going to meet next week, what a good date would be by which to receive those notices of motions?

We will advise on the dates.

Dr. Fry, go ahead.

Hon. Hedy Fry: I was going to speak to a motion that I propose, but if we're going to send them all to the clerk to be sent on to the subcommittee—the old steering committee is what I usually call it—then I will send that motion off.

One of them is about an issue that is of great concern to me, not only here in Canada but globally, and that is the violence that has increased 38% in the last year against women journalists and women politicians, including in British Columbia, where a woman politician was beaten and assaulted on the streets. It's something very important and very close to home.

Thank you.

The Chair: Dr. Fry, thank you very much.

As the clock winds down, Mr. Oliphant, please go ahead.

Mr. Robert Oliphant: I was going to clarify to make sure I understand that we can all put in motions in the next couple of days and that one is not taking precedence over the other, isn't being weighted. It will be weighted at the subcommittee on agenda and procedure, and then a report will be brought forward to the committee at the appropriate time. I'm just making sure.

I have motions here, but I'm not going to rush to get them in. I want to make sure that I have good wording that will be acceptable to other parties. I would even like to negotiate the motions a little bit with my colleagues so we could have winnable motions. I just don't want to rush.

As long as that's clear, then we will get motions in to the clerk.

• (1300)

The Chair: Mr. Oliphant, thank you.

Yes, that matches the expectations of colleagues here; I see heads nodding. If that's agreeable to everybody else, then we will stand by for the timing of the subcommittee meeting next week.

This committee then stands adjourned until our next session at the end of January.

[*Translation*]

Thank you very much, colleagues.

The meeting is adjourned.

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