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• (1125)

[*English*]

The Chair (Mr. Sven Spengemann (Mississauga—Lakeshore, Lib.)): Welcome, colleagues.

We are meeting to discuss the first report of the Subcommittee on Agenda and Procedure, which was distributed to you on December 23, 2021. We will go right into the discussion.

I understand from the clerk and her colleague that Madame Bendayan would like to have the floor.

Please, go ahead.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Rachel Bendayan (Outremont, Lib.): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Dear colleagues, I wish you a happy new year.

I think that it is very important for us to have this meeting today as the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development. We are at a turning point, a crucial moment for rules-based world order. Quite frankly, it is possible that we are on the eve of a new invasion of Ukraine by Russia, a military confrontation that could have vast and devastating consequences not only for Ukraine, but also for Europe and NATO, including Canada. I think that it is important for this committee to study the issue and make it a priority.

[*English*]

I would propose to colleagues, even though I understand there are a number of issues to be debated—all of them important and pressing no doubt, particularly a study around vaccine equity around the world—that the devastating consequences of the escalation of tensions at the Ukrainian-Russian border is of paramount importance.

We are the committee tasked with studying foreign affairs on behalf of Parliament. I do also want to point out that we could potentially study more than one thing at any given time. This may be helpful in terms of ensuring we constantly have a roster of business that keeps us busy with the important items that need to be studied.

I would like to immediately move, pursuant to Standing Order 108(2), that the foreign affairs and international development committee undertake a study on the situation at the Russia-Ukraine border. It is one which, as I said earlier in French, risks the peace and security in the region, and also, frankly, in the entire world.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs, Minister Joly, was recently in Ukraine. She also had in-person meetings with many of her European counterparts. I think all members of this committee and all Canadians should hear the tenor of those meetings.

I would also note that the Minister of Defence is currently on the ground in Ukraine.

I did submit a motion to this effect, which all colleagues would have received back in December. Since then, things have only escalated further.

I would like to read the motion into the record. I will do so now, colleagues, even though you have it.

Hon. Michael Chong (Wellington—Halton Hills, CPC): I have a point of order, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: Madame Bendayan, can I interrupt you for one second?

Mr. Chong raised a point of order. We will go to that briefly and then continue.

Hon. Michael Chong: I believe the motion in front of us right now is the adoption of the first report from the subcommittee, so I think that should be disposed of before other motions are moved.

• (1130)

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Chong.

The subcommittee report is before the committee. I will confirm with the clerk to see if this was actually put into the form of a motion. If not, then Madame Bendayan's—

Hon. Michael Chong: I assumed it was implied that had happened.

The Chair: Let's be explicit. In the current phase of the committee's lifespan, it might be helpful to be as explicit as we can just to make sure everybody is on the same page.

Madam Clerk, is the report that was sent to members on December 23 deemed to be in the form of a motion or would a motion first have to be put to the committee to adopt or even discuss this report?

The Clerk of the Committee (Ms. Erica Pereira): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

As it was presented to the committee, then it would be properly before the committee.

The Chair: Is it in the form of a motion implicitly, as Mr. Chong is saying?

The Clerk: That's correct, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: That being said, Madame Bendant, the way to tackle your motion is to ask whether you are effectively amending the subcommittee report or bringing a new motion.

I will return the floor briefly to you for a response on that to address Mr. Chong's point of order. If it's essentially an amendment to the motion to adopt the subcommittee report, then it will be procedurally clear. Otherwise, we will confer with the clerk to see what we would do with that parallel motion.

Ms. Rachel Bendant: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

It was not my impression that the subcommittee report was in the form of a motion. I thank the clerk for clarifying.

In light of that, yes, I am amending the subcommittee motion before the committee with what I have just put into the record.

The Chair: Please continue, Ms. Bendant.

Ms. Rachel Bendant: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

[Translation]

For transcription, I would like to read the motion that proposed this study, after which we can proceed with the vote:

That, pursuant to Standing Order 108(2), the Foreign Affairs and International Development Committee undertake a study on the escalating situation at the Russia-Ukraine border that risks peace and security in the region, the Government of Canada's support for our allies in Ukraine and the path to Ukraine's accession to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) as reaffirmed at the 2021 NATO Brussels Summit; that the committee hold a minimum of four (4) meetings on this study, including two (2) meetings to hear from witnesses and two (2) meetings to receive briefings from officials concerning the situation and recognizing the sensitivity of matters of national security, that one of the latter briefing meetings be held in camera and the other in public.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

[English]

The Chair: Thank you very much.

[Translation]

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron (Montarville, BQ): Point of order, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: Yes, one moment.

[English]

To make sure, Ms. Bendant, that members understand correctly the amendment, are you effectively replacing the entire language of the subcommittee report with the motion you have proposed, or are you contemplating or proposing that both be carried forward in parallel?

Ms. Rachel Bendant: Yes, I propose that, given the urgency of the situation at the Ukrainian-Russian border, my amendment put forward this study first, and we can move to the studies discussed by the subcommittee and proposed in its motion at a later date.

The Chair: Okay.

[Translation]

Mr. Bergeron wishes to raise a point of order, but first, I would like you to make some clarifications, Madam Clerk.

[English]

If Ms. Bendant proceeds, is that effectively extinguishing the committee's option, assuming this motion goes forward? It may be carried or defeated, but does that extinguish the option from discussing the subcommittee report as originally drafted?

The Clerk: According to my understanding, Ms. Bendant has moved an amendment to the subcommittee report. That amendment would replace what is currently there with the motion that she just read into the record.

The Chair: Assuming it passes, right?

The Clerk: Correct.

The next course of action would be to debate and vote on this amendment. If people vote in favour, then yes, it would have the action of replacing that one item. If people vote against, then that one item would be restored.

[Translation]

The Chair: Okay, thank you very much.

[English]

That's very helpful.

[Translation]

Mr. Bergeron, you wanted to raise a point of order.

[English]

Mr. Marty Morantz (Charleswood—St. James—Assiniboia—Headingley, CPC): I have a point of order, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: Apologies, there were multiple points of order. I think Monsieur Bergeron, if I understand correctly, had his hand up first. We will go to him, and then to you, Mr. Morantz.

Monsieur Bergeron, please go ahead.

• (1135)

[Translation]

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron: First of all, Mr. Chair, unless I am mistaken, I thought I understood that Ms. Bendant's amendment was intended not to replace what had been adopted by the subcommittee, but to add to it. I need confirmation that this is indeed Ms. Bendant's intention, otherwise I will be forced to vote against it, when I am rather in favour of this one.

Secondly, I admit that I am acutely uncomfortable discussing this motion while completely disregarding discussions held before December 23. It must be said that this subject was part of a certain number of subjects. If my memory serves, there were six that we had focused on, but for various reasons from one of the subcommittee members, they could not be adopted. Members of the subcommittee had agreed on a single point. Actually, there was another one, but it wasn't officially worded. On one hand, it was to invite the ambassador of Canada to the UN to appear before the Committee, and on the other hand, to invite both ministers for their letters—

The Chair: Mr. Bergeron, excuse me for—

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron: If you will allow me, Mr. Chair, I will just finish—

The Chair: Mr. Bergeron, I must briefly interrupt you.

That discussion was held in camera. There are details that must not be discussed during a public meeting.

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron: I understand, Mr. Chair. I was very careful not to say anything that would put anyone in an awkward situation.

I simply want to say that we cannot simply ignore decisions that were made. Indeed, I draw to your attention that there was a consensus for the ambassador and both ministers to be called to appear before today's meeting. For a long list of entirely justifiable and understandable reasons, that did not happen. I simply wanted to communicate the unease I feel about the fact that we are discussing this while disregarding everything that was discussed on December 22.

Thank you.

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

[English]

These are not really points of order. They are more points of debate. On Madame Bendayan's point, she was very clear that her amendment would extinguish the option of bringing Ambassador Rae and would not add to it.

[Translation]

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron: Ah, okay, that was not what I had understood.

The Chair: On the second point you raised, Mr. Bergeron, the committee has the option of resuming discussion of all the challenges that were discussed in camera on December 22.

[English]

The committee has not abandoned anything. It can completely take up its discussions and move them forward as it sees fit, so procedurally everything is still on the table.

There was another point of order.

Please go ahead, Mr. Morantz.

Mr. Marty Morantz: I just want to clarify with the clerk, because there was a vote taken at the subcommittee to invite a specific individual. That was the only item that survived as part of the subcommittee's report to this committee.

If Ms. Bendayan is proposing an amendment, does that not simply amend the subcommittee report to include her motion in addition to the vote that was taken to call the specific individual? I did not hear her say—and I see her nodding to me in the room. She did not specifically say that she wanted to exclude the decision of the subcommittee with respect to the calling of the individual we are discussing.

I'd like the clerk to clarify that, please.

The Chair: Mr. Morantz, I believe I did circle back to Madame Bendayan and I believe she did clarify that is indeed her intention. We can do it a second time just for the sake of clarity among members.

Madame Bendayan, could you once again, please, just clarify the effect of your amendment as you have put it forward?

[Translation]

Ms. Rachel Bendayan: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I did indeed propose that we delay the study approved by the subcommittee, in order to urgently address the issue of Ukraine. As far as I understand, Mr. Bergeron and my colleague Mr. Morantz are emphasizing that there may be a possible consensus on the matter. I would like to arrive at a consensus that will allow us to make studying this issue a priority. We can review the calendar for availabilities as they pertain to the other study proposed by the subcommittee.

I would also like to hear the clerk on this issue. I believe that she is the one who corrected me by saying that it was not possible and that one study had to be replaced altogether by the other. We could invite the clerk to clarify it, under the circumstances.

● (1140)

The Chair: Yes.

That you very much, Ms. Bendayan.

[English]

Madam Clerk, again, the amendment currently before us is an amendment to the original implicit motion, which puts the subcommittee report before the committee. If it passes, it would go forward as the new text of the subcommittee report motion and would thereby extinguish the original content of the subcommittee report.

To what extent is it then open to the committee to revisit, as Madame Bendayan is suggesting, the original content in the form of a future motion?

The Clerk: Perhaps I could rewind just a little bit. There are two ways to amend the subcommittee report. One is by adding to it, and one is by deleting what's there and replacing it.

My understanding from the way Madame Bendayan was talking was that she would like to replace what was there. However, if the intention is not to replace what is there but simply to add to it, then that's completely acceptable as well.

The Chair: Just to follow up briefly, if she does replace it, to what extent is the committee then precluded from again discussing the original content of the subcommittee report with respect to the appearance of Ambassador Rae in the future?

The Clerk: The main committee can certainly discuss that again at any time. However, if the intention, as I said, is just to add, then that wouldn't be necessary. They could do both things on the subcommittee report.

The Chair: This is helpful, Madam Clerk, in the sense that it really meets Madame Bendayan's objective, which is to say Ukraine first; we can go back to the motion and the discussion around the appearance of the ambassador at a future time; and it's open to the committee to move that at a future time.

Is there an additional point of order, on the sequence of points of order we just had, to clarify where we are with respect to the discussion of this amendment? Okay.

I have an original speakers list of Madame McPherson, I believe, and Mr. Sairi. They had wanted to speak before Madame Bendayan took the floor.

We are now discussing the amendment—

Hon. Robert Oliphant (Don Valley West, Lib.): I have a point of order.

The Chair: Yes, Mr. Oliphant.

Hon. Robert Oliphant: I think the speaker who still has the floor is Ms. Bendayan. I am not sure she stopped her remarks. I think you asked her to clarify whether or not she would be agreeable to this addition to the subcommittee report.

I think she still has the floor before...unless it's a point of order.

The Chair: That's fine. I just wanted to outline for the committee the list of names I have following Madame Bendayan. If she has additional points, she is absolutely welcome to make them. Then I have Madame McPherson and Mr. Sarai on the amendment, if they choose.

If your interventions were for other motions, then please just remove yourselves from the list for the moment. I have your names noted down, and you can come back in following discussion of this amendment.

I then have Dr. Fry, Mr. Oliphant, Mr. Aboultaif and Mr. Chong. This is to make sure that we have clarity in terms of the sequence of speakers, given that we're in a hybrid format.

Madame Bendayan, do you have any remaining thoughts on your amendment as you proposed it?

Ms. Rachel Bendayan: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I guess I would just end by clarifying, with the greatest respect for the subcommittee's work and all of its members, that the situation has evolved since the subcommittee met. The matter of Ukraine is a matter of urgency. I propose that we study this first and that we revisit the work requested by the subcommittee in order to do those studies at a subsequent time.

[*Translation*]

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

[*English*]

I will ask Madame McPherson and Mr. Sarai if they want to come in on the discussion on the amendment.

Ms. McPherson, I see that you're nodding. Please go ahead. You have the floor.

Ms. Heather McPherson (Edmonton Strathcona, NDP): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

It's nice to see everybody virtually—or in person, I guess, for those who are in the room.

First of all, I want to get a little bit of clarity from you. My understanding is that all of the things that were discussed prior to when the subcommittee met—the things we tabled in the first meeting of the foreign affairs committee—are still on the table. They're all up for debate as we look at our schedule going forward.

Right now, because Ms. Bendayan has brought forward this particular one, it is superseding all other things that the subcommittee has done. I just want to be very clear on that.

• (1145)

The Chair: We will continue to seek clarity as we need to. It's complex. We have a lot of members, a lot of competing points of view potentially, and also complex subjects.

This is now an amendment that was brought to the subcommittee report that was sent to you on December 23. It's a motion on Ukraine. If the committee chooses to accept that amendment, it will become the order of business that the committee chooses to engage in. Presumably, with agreement to that amendment, the committee would want to move forward fairly quickly. Everything else that was discussed or submitted in the form of motions, or discussed verbally, can then be moved as additional items for discussion. Part—

Ms. Heather McPherson: I'm sorry to interrupt, Mr. Chair. If we did vote against this particular amendment, the decision of the chair to move forward on, for example, having Ambassador Rae join us would still be something we would be looking at, but also, in addition to that, we would be able to bring forward the opportunity to look at Ukraine in the future.

The Chair: That's correct, but first of all, the chair did not make any decisions in terms of what we discussed. The chair with the clerk had forwarded a subcommittee report that embodies what the subcommittee discussed on the 23rd, which is the appearance of Ambassador Rae.

Ms. Heather McPherson: Sorry.

The Chair: If Madame Bendayan's amendment passes—that's if the committee is interested—that would have to be re-moved at some future time, but all other items, once we're through the amendment of Madame Bendayan, would then also be up for discussion as the committee chooses to prioritize and to introduce.

Really, the discussion point at the moment is the amendment that was put forward by Madame Bendayan.

Ms. Heather McPherson: I have a comment on that, if that's all right.

The Chair: Please go ahead, Ms. McPherson.

Ms. Heather McPherson: I'm sorry to continuously interrupt you. Apparently, I'm very excited about this today.

There's one thing that I wanted to flag with regard to Ukraine. Of course, it is the most pressing issue that we are facing, or one of the most pressing issues that we are facing. It's very important. It is why, in the very first meeting on December 13, I also brought forward a motion. I want to make sure that we have the opportunity to read it into the record. It reads:

That, pursuant to Standing Order 108(2), the Committee hold at least two meetings on the situation in Ukraine and invite witnesses, including officials from Global Affairs Canada and the Ukrainian Canadian Congress.

The reason I wanted to read that in—my thinking is with regard to what is happening in Ukraine and the aggression we are seeing from Russia—is that it is an extremely fluid situation. It is changing extremely rapidly. My worry is that if we undertake a one-time study right now, at the beginning of our sitting days within this committee, we will not have the opportunity to be continually updated on this important issue.

We know there will be a take-note debate in the House of Commons today, so there will be an opportunity for all parliamentarians to debate this. We know that right now the defence committee is looking at this issue, and that's very important. I would say that many committees within our parliamentary structure have an obligation to look at what is happening in Ukraine with the aggression from Russia. This is an extremely important issue for many reasons.

What I would rather see this committee do is have updates from officials and people who can give us more information as the issues evolve. I'd like to propose—I don't know if this needs to be a new amendment to the amendment to the subcommittee report—that we, even as early as Wednesday, bring in officials from Global Affairs Canada. We could conceivably bring in people from the Ukrainian Canadian Congress to give us a briefing of where we are right now. We could then plan to have follow-up meetings as we go forward. We would be able to do other studies in between those.

We have an awful lot of work to do. Vaccine equity is one that I'm pushing very hard for. This is something that affects people in every country in the world and it is urgent, but we also have what's happening in Taiwan, which I think is very closely related to what we're seeing in Ukraine. There are a lot of other pieces of work that need to happen in this committee.

Perhaps a solution to that would be to make sure that we, as the foreign affairs committee, are looking at the situation in Ukraine, but, realizing that because it is so fluid and evolving so quickly, we need to be a little more flexible on how we undertake that study.

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

Before going into the procedure of what you're suggesting and then going through the rest of the speakers list, the committee in the last Parliament and prior to that always took the view that it was doing multiple things. Some things evolve quickly and the requests for ministerial or departmental briefings are certainly at the committee's disposal to either add to its current or future work plan, or to incorporate them into motions, as you're suggesting.

If you have some language that you want to propose that complements Madame Bendayan's original motion and achieves what you're trying to do, and you'll draw the [*Technical difficulty—Editor*] amendment, I invite you to do that, because that seems to be where you're going with it.

• (1150)

Ms. Heather McPherson: Do we have the text from the amendment that has been brought forward?

The Chair: I believe the text of Madame Bendayan's motion has been distributed or is going to be imminently distributed. I am just checking with the clerk to make sure that members have that in front of them in both official languages.

The Clerk: I did just send an email around, but for members' reference, it's in the list of motions that we have on notice. It's number 10.

The Chair: Ms. McPherson, I will offer you the opportunity to introduce a subamendment to achieve—

Ms. Heather McPherson: I don't have the wording ready for me, but I could try to bring something forward if that's helpful.

The Chair: Sure. The gist of it seemed to be that the committee should be open to receiving—

Hon. Michael Chong: Mr. Chair, I have a point of order just to help everybody here. The clerk has just sent everyone an email containing two PDF documents. Ms. Bendayan's amendment is number 10 in those attached PDFs.

Thank you.

The Chair: Thanks, Mr. Chong, for clarifying. I think that was communicated in writing as well.

Ms. McPherson, if you'd like to take a look and introduce a subamendment if you think that's going to take us where you'd like to go, please do so.

Ms. Heather McPherson: I would ask that the analysts who are so much stronger at being able to frame this to say something like, instead of, that the committee hold a minimum of four meetings on this study, including two meetings to hear from witnesses and two meetings to hear from officials, acknowledging the fluid nature of this particular conflict or this escalation, that the committee meet on the next available time to get a briefing from Global Affairs Canada.

I named the UCC and that would my preference, but I would be open to an amendment on that. We could include, at the earliest possible time, a briefing on the situation in Russia and on Ukraine and the ability to reconvene the study or to ask for further briefings as the situation develops.

The Chair: Thank you very much, Madame McPherson.

Ms. Heather McPherson: That was as clunky as could be. I apologize.

The Chair: It's giving us some direction.

I'm going to turn briefly to the analysts or clerk to see if they can quickly tweak that to match where committees in the past have gone with respect to briefings being incorporated into main motions, but then maybe also offer members the opportunity to discuss that subamendment and see if there's a consensus emerging around that.

Madam Clerk or either of the analysts, I think we're getting somewhere in terms of the direction that's proposed by Ms. McPherson. From your perspective in terms of organizing those kinds of meetings and one of them, as Ms. McPherson said, should be done in the shortest possible order, is there anything we should add to that language?

The Clerk: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'll take a first stab at it and then I might turn it over to Allison or BJ afterwards.

What I would suggest is that in the amendment it has “including two meetings to hear from witnesses”. There, I would put a comma and say, “including the Ukrainian Canadian Congress”, and at the end of the motion, that one of the latter briefing meetings be held in camera and the other in public, and that the first of these briefings take place on Thursday, February 3, 2022, which is the next meeting.

The Chair: That has significant direction in it and detail.

Ms. McPherson, did you want to add anything to that? Are you okay with what has been proposed? If so, then we would invite debate on your subamendment.

• (1155)

Ms. Heather McPherson: The only thing I would suggest is that perhaps we do not need to have the in camera. I would remove the in camera in my subamendment. I don't think there would be a possibility that we would need that to be the case for this.

The Chair: Okay. Thank you very much.

The subamendment is now on the floor, with guidance given by the clerk as well and the analysts. I invite debate on the subamendment.

I have a speakers list from the previous round. Is anybody on that speakers list—

Hon. Michael Chong: Mr. Chair, I have a point of order again. I'm sorry to keep interrupting, but I want to make sure that everybody is on the same page.

As I understand it, Ms. McPherson's subamendment is also amending the amendment in a way that would add Ukraine to the appearance of Ambassador Rae, to the report, rather than replace Ambassador Rae with the hearings on Ukraine.

Am I correct?

The Chair: In my understanding, we are now in a discussion that has taken us completely past. If the subamendment passes and Madame Bendayan's amendment passes, we would no longer be in a discussion about the appearance of Ambassador Rae. That would have to be reintroduced in the form of a new motion.

Hon. Michael Chong: My understanding is that's not the case. That's why I'm raising this point of order.

My understanding is that Ms. McPherson is proposing in her subamendment three things: a) the wording that the clerk has outlined; b) to get rid of in camera; and c) that we add the Ukraine hearings to Ambassador Rae's appearance rather than replace Ambassador Rae with the hearings.

That's my understanding of what Ms. McPherson has just introduced as a subamendment. Perhaps she could clarify it.

The Chair: Ms. McPherson, did you want to clarify?

Ms. Heather McPherson: Yes, that was my intention. Thank you for being much more articulate than I am this morning, Mr. Chong.

The Chair: Madam Clerk, that's certainly in order in terms of procedure and substance. [*Technical difficulty—Editor*] the Bob Rae motion through a subamendment.

The Clerk: Mr. Chair, if she would like to change the nature of the amendment from “replacing” to “adding”, then that would be fine.

The Chair: I think we are all on the same page.

Is everybody clear what the subamendment now entails?

Ms. Rachel Bendayan: Mr. Chair, that is certainly not the way I had understood Ms. McPherson's subamendment, when she was literally reading it out loud. I had understood something quite different. In particular, she was removing the in camera meeting and was adding the Ukrainian Canadian Congress as a witness.

There was no mention of—

Ms. Heather McPherson: Bob Rae, no.

Ms. Rachel Bendayan: —Ambassador Rae, so I would seek clarification directly from the member who moved the subamendment.

The Chair: Thank you, Ms. Bendayan.

She has clarified that she is reintroducing the appearance of Bob Rae into the subamendment. Procedurally, that is in order.

Ms. Rachel Bendayan: I would like to hear her on how that operates. In effect, she's requesting a delay of the Ukrainian study?

The Chair: In terms of the timing of this, let's ask her to clarify, because that does matter. One of the points she had made was that the briefing, at least, should be in the shortest possible order, as early as next week.

Mr. Ziad Aboultaif (Edmonton Manning, CPC): I have a point of order, Mr. Chair.

I would like to call the vote on Ms. McPherson's motion.

The Chair: That's not a point of order, Mr. Aboultaif. There's still debate. You cannot call a vote. There's still discussion that needs to go on first before people are ready to vote on it.

Ms. McPherson, in terms of, and this is important, the timing, your subamendment would launch us into the Ukraine study imminently, and would then bring in, with the understanding that you've clarified, the appearance of Bob Rae.

What chronology do you have in mind, or do you leave that to the analysts or the clerk to figure out, or is there additional guidance that you would put in?

Ms. Heather McPherson: The only thing I would add, Mr. Chair, is that we recognize that the ambassador has a schedule that we would be working with. His availability would also be part of that conversation.

My expectation is that we could very quickly turn around a briefing with experts from Global Affairs. I assume we could even get some potential witnesses from the Ukrainian Canadian Congress. Those things could happen very quickly. I would like to see that happen at our next meeting this week, to have that meeting as fast as possible and get that briefing. I think that's very doable and seems very reasonable.

Ambassador Rae would then come when he can, and as quickly as he can, but we would have already had the briefing this week. Potentially, I would be envisioning that Ambassador Rae would come next week.

• (1200)

The Chair: We may need some additional clarification in the text of the amendment, because the clerk and analysts would have to ensure that this is workable in terms of timing.

Do you want to reread, for the sake of clarity, the three elements that you and Mr. Chong talked about?

Ms. Heather McPherson: Mr. Chair, we often say that we'll invite the ministers and the ambassadors, and they come based on the schedules that we can arrange with them. We rarely say that the ambassador comes on February 5. We say that the ambassador will be invited to testify at committee.

What I'm bringing forward is that we would like to add to the work. The subcommittee did an awful lot of work to bring forward a number of things. We weren't able to land on anything but the fact that we wanted to bring Mr. Rae, so I certainly don't want to lose that. I want that to be the very least we can do to achieve that piece of the work we did in the subcommittee.

I would suggest that we don't have to clarify timing. We can make sure that the Ukrainian study is started, that we have that first meeting as soon as possible, this week. I can't see any reason why it can't be. We could then bring Ambassador Rae in when it's possible. I'm sure the clerk and you, Mr. Chair, can work on finding a schedule that will work for that to happen.

The Chair: Let's perhaps hear the subamendment in its entirety again, Ms. McPherson, if you could do that.

Ms. Heather McPherson: Certainly, and again, I haven't worked on the wording. This is always something I lean so much on our very skilled support team for. We would be looking to ensure that we could have a Ukraine study; that the study would start as soon as possible, with representatives from the government and representatives from UCC; that that would happen in addition to bringing in Mr. Rae to our committee, or inviting him to come testify before our committee; that there would be no need for in camera; and that we would have subsequent meetings as needed as the situation in Ukraine evolves because of the fluidity and because of how fast it's changing.

Outside of the motion, to clarify, realistically we could do three full days of study on Ukraine, and it could all change the next day. That's just the reality of the situation we're dealing with.

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

I think it's now time for members to have an opportunity to debate the subamendment. I have a list. I think some of this is still from the original list for debate on the amendment that Ms. Bendayan had proposed. I have Mr. Sarai, Dr. Fry, Mr. Oliphant, Mr. Aboultaif, Madame Bendayan and Monsieur Bergeron.

I had Mr. Chong on the list at one point.

Mr. Chong, are you still on the list, or have you withdraw your name for the moment?

Hon. Michael Chong: I've taken my hand down because I want to get on with things. We have not sat as a committee since last June. Parliament has sat for four weeks, and we seem to be dragging here on getting an agenda set for this committee. I hope we can expeditiously deal with this subamendment and expeditiously deal with the amendment and then get to what other committee business we want to in the upcoming weeks.

Thank you, Mr. Chair. That's why I've taken my hand down.

The Chair: Thank you.

I had invited Mr. Chong to respond to the fact that his hand was no longer up.

There's a point of order.

Ms. Rachel Bendayan: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

It was to say that the member did not have the floor, but I understand.

The Chair: I had given him the floor, because I wanted him to clarify that he was no longer on the list. It was my prerogative to invite him to speak.

Was it on anything else, or just his intervention?

Ms. Rachel Bendayan: It was on that piece.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: Thank you, Madame Bendayan.

Mr. Sarai, you have the floor on discussion of the subamendment as presented by Ms. McPherson.

Mr. Randeep Sarai (Surrey Centre, Lib.): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I want to thank Ms. Bendayan and Ms. McPherson for raising this issue. I think the most pressing issue internationally for foreign affairs is the situation in Ukraine, and I think we must treat it as being of paramount importance and deal with it as quickly and as efficiently as possible. I'm not saying it trumps any other crisis in the world, but currently it is probably the biggest existential crisis in a military sense or a foreign affairs sense, and I think this committee should study it and we should hear from our experts. Hearing from the Ukrainian Canadian Congress as well is important, as Ms. McPherson has also stated, but also, perhaps we should listen to our experts, our departmental officials, and then try to get Ambassador Rae in as well. Perhaps after listening to them, we can get a better understanding of the situation and be better able to ask questions to Ambassador Rae.

It seems that I'm in agreement with Ms. Bendayan's and Ms. McPherson's amendments, which are to include his appearance, as well as to add some more witnesses into this. I think a study that is at least four meetings long would suffice, and if we need more, perhaps we can add a meeting. I think this should be the first study that this committee deals with in this Parliament.

Thank you.

• (1205)

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

Dr. Fry.

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

Before I speak, I want to clarify something. If we add Ambassador Rae to the subamendment to Ms. Bendayan's amendment, would we not be changing the intent of Ms. Bendayan's amendment? It is my understanding that if that piece about Mr. Rae changes the intent, it should not be allowed as a subamendment unless we are asking Mr. Rae to come speak on Ukraine. If he's doing that, then fair enough, but I think if he's not doing that, it changes the intent of Ms. Bendayan's motion entirely. I don't know, and I would listen to what the clerk has to say about that, but I would think that we cannot allow the Mr. Rae piece to stick into the subamendment.

I want to clarify that before I speak.

The Chair: I had attempted to address that same point also in seeking clarification on whether the subamendment to reintroduce the original content of the report was in order, and it seems to have been confirmed to be in order, but perhaps in the interest of clarity we will ask one more time.

Hon. Hedy Fry: I'm not speaking about the subamendment, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: No. That's understood.

Hon. Hedy Fry: I'm speaking about the piece that adds Mr. Rae, just that line. That's all.

The Chair: That's exactly the line that I also asked about, but for the sake of clarity, let's ask it again.

Hon. Hedy Fry: Let's hear from the clerk, please.

The Chair: Madam Clerk, on the subamendment as presented, is it in order in terms of the relationship it has to the original motion?

The Clerk: In this particular case, Ms. McPherson indicated that her subamendment would no longer replace the first part, but rather add to it. What might be helpful if there is some confusion on the part of the committee is to deal with this one item of Russia-Ukraine and the subamendment that it contains within that motion, and then go back to inviting Ambassador Rae. That will have to be amended anyway, because the date on it is not correct.

If that is the will of the committee members, perhaps they could deal with those two issues separately instead of in one subamendment, but I will leave it in your hands, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: Okay. Thank you, Madam Clerk.

Ms. McPherson has chosen not to do that. She has chosen to introduce Bob Rae in the text of her subamendment.

The question now is this: Is that subamendment procedurally in order because it adds to the.... Does the subamendment have to stay within the confines of the original amendment or can it bring in additional substance? If it's the latter, then I would imagine it's in order. If not, perhaps it wasn't in order and we need to backpedal.

The Clerk: Mr. Chair, I would suggest that the subamendment should amend the amendment, so in this case, it makes the most procedural sense to stick with the Russia-Ukraine situation and then move back to the Ambassador Rae point.

• (1210)

The Chair: In terms of tactics, though, the committee may not want to go back there, and Ms. McPherson has introduced it. What I need to have some clarity on is whether we can go ahead and vote on Ms. McPherson's amendment because it's actually in order or, if it's not in order, to bring us back to the confines of the amendment—

Hon. Hedy Fry: I don't think it's in order.

The Chair: —that was brought by Madame Bendayan.

The Clerk: Mr. Chair, I would suggest that the proper course of action would be to deal with the subamendment that strictly amends what is before the committee at this time, which is the amendment of Ms. Bendayan.

The Chair: Ms. McPherson, do you have views on this to align your idea with the views of the clerk?

Ms. Heather McPherson: I don't know if the clerk could be more clear. I'm just wondering, is this votable? If we can vote on this, I would rather that we vote on it the way it is.

Hon. Michael Chong: On a point of order, Mr. Chair, perhaps I could be of help here.

I think there's some confusion here. As I understand it, Ms. Bendayan moved the following amendment to the report: That the words of the report beginning with paragraph one be replaced with the following, which is what is contained in motion number 10 in the PDF that was distributed about 20 minutes ago. That's what I understand to be the amendment that was moved at the beginning of this committee meeting.

I think what Ms. McPherson has moved as a subamendment is that the word “replace” be replaced with the word “added” and also the addition of the words concerning the appearance of the Ukrainian Canadian Congress and the replacement of or the striking of the words “in camera”. That's what I understand to be the case. The problem here is that we don't have a written copy in front of us of Ms. Bendayan's actual amendment to the report, an amendment to the main motion, which is the adoption of the report.

Mr. Chair, we need to clarify what's actually on the floor in terms of the amendment, and that will allow us then to figure out what's on the floor in terms of the subamendment.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Chong.

Going back to the conversation with Ms. Bendayan, she had decided that she would bring forward her motion, which members have, as an amendment to the original motion, implicitly before the committee, through the distribution of the subcommittee report, doing exactly what you suggested, Mr. Chong.

Ms. McPherson then came in and said, “Okay, we want you to do a couple of things. We want to make sure that this goes to the front of the line, that we have the flexibility to add emergency meetings, that we remove the in camera portion, and then to say, yes, we also want Ambassador Rae,” thereby reintroducing that element of the original motion before the committee.

The question now is whether that amendment is in order. I had received news—

Hon. Hedy Fry: It is not.

• (1215)

The Chair: —partway through the discussion that it was. There's now a question around that.

In the interest of expediency, I'm prepared to rule that it isn't and stand to be challenged on that, if that's helpful to the committee. I just wanted to make sure that we're on the right page, or at least the same page, with respect to getting something done today and giving the clerk and analysts some guidance in terms of the first study, which seems to be in the minds, as far as I can ascertain, of the majority of members at least, if not all of them, the expeditious discussion of the file on Canada-Ukraine-Russia.

Dr. Fry, you had made your intervention, and you do not feel that it's in order. I'm really trying to move things forward so it comes to a landing.

Hon. Hedy Fry: Chair, I had said when I was speaking that I'm prefacing my remarks by asking a point of clarification.

I haven't even made my remarks with regard to the amendment yet.

The Chair: Why don't we invite you to make those remarks with a bracket around your request for clarification, and we'll see if we can arrive there, and your substantive remarks may take us forward.

Hon. Hedy Fry: With the exception of the piece about Mr. Rae, I think that Ms. McPherson's subamendment is fine. I accept that it is fine, but I do not agree. I will say that in all of my knowledge of the rules of committees, if a subamendment or an amendment substantially changes the intent of the motion, and unless Ms. McPherson is suggesting that Mr. Rae speak to the issue of Ukraine, I don't think it's—

Mr. Marty Morantz: Point of order, Mr. Chair.

Hon. Hedy Fry: Now I want to continue with my—

The Chair: One second, Dr. Fry. We have a point of order.

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

My understanding is that you've now ruled that the motion is in order, so—

The Chair: No, I have not. I have suggested that as a discussion point to the committee if it's helpful. I have not ruled. I'd like to hear views—

Mr. Marty Morantz: So I heard—

The Chair: Excuse me for one second. I just want to convey my thoughts.

I'd like to hear from the members who are on the speakers list on the subamendment, because they may have additional views and comments that may be helpful to resolving this in the most constructive way. Until they've spoken, I will certainly not entertain making any rulings.

Mr. Marty Morantz: Just to clarify though, Mr. Chair, when you said "I'm prepared to rule; this is an order and I'd be open to a chair challenge", were you not ruling that it was in order?

The Chair: Mr. Morantz, there's no challenge at the moment to be made because I suggested that if it's helpful to the committee I'd make a ruling that could then stand to be challenged. I have not made that ruling, because I haven't heard from the remainder of our colleagues.

Hon. Hedy Fry: May I continue, Mr. Chair?

The Chair: Yes, Dr. Fry, go ahead.

Hon. Hedy Fry: I am supporting Ms. McPherson's subamendment, with the exception of the Mr. Rae piece. I also feel that there should be one meeting in camera, because the nature of Ukraine, Russia, the nature of what is going on in that region may require that we hear from some of the people who are briefing us and there may be some things that are sensitive and that are probably within security guidelines. I just think that by leaving at least one meeting in camera, or half of a meeting in camera, we would be able to discuss very sensitive security issues during that period of time.

That's my position on the subamendment. Thank you.

The Chair: Thanks very much, Dr. Fry.

Mr. Oliphant.

Hon. Robert Oliphant: Thank you.

I'll just set where I think we are and where I think I am. I would agree to accepting the subcommittee report with respect to Mr. Rae coming to committee and adding to that a first study on Ukraine, which would be briefings first and then studies. I am fine with the way it's coming down.

I would agree with Dr. Fry that having one part of one meeting in camera may be a good option for the committee to get some information that we think could be more valuable. I'll be very clear that I don't necessarily need that. I'm the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, so I am briefed regularly in confidence. I'm not able to share certain things outside of that, but members of this committee don't have all of that capacity.

I think you may want a meeting—or part of a meeting—in camera or leave that option open. I think it would be smart to have that ability.

I am fine with us beginning this week. Having been a chair of a committee, I would say that sometimes we have plans to have an immediate briefing. Today is Monday and we have an unfortunate combination of events going on in Ottawa with many public servants not able to get to their jobs. We're asking them to come and brief us on Thursday. That should be fine, but I have requested briefings from officials at other times where it's been delayed because they're human beings who have to get that work done and need to prepare us.

I think it's fine, but we have to remember that while we can request a briefing, we don't demand the timing of it. I would like an early set of briefings and meetings on Ukraine. I don't want to shortchange our technical capacity to get good information and get experts who are from the diaspora who have an emotional connection to this, and experts who are not government and not from the diaspora who may have some intelligence for us. Those may be some academics who are studying it. I'm reading articles every day and I think the committee could gain some insight into why the world is in this position at this time. I don't want to shortchange the issue of Ukraine and Russia.

I would say, however, that given the chance, we would then take a third option as well. I think a committee should have an ability to be doing a second or a third thing at the same time as Ukraine. Sometimes there may be some delay in getting those things and, as Ms. McPherson says, things will change. We may want an ongoing set of situation updates from our officials on Ukraine and that's where I am very open to looking at vaccine access around the world. I think we should look at that. We do less international development at this committee than we do foreign affairs and we are both, so I would say that this would be an ongoing study. The chair, the clerk and the analyst could blend those three things together and keep us quite busy for the next month.

We can look at that list of 16 motions that are already presented to us. That would get rid of three of them, which are Mr. Rae and Ukraine. It gives us a little time to set the agenda after that.

I think Ms. McPherson's amendment does this. I don't think I can do sub-subamendment, so we're already at the motion there. I can't take out the part about having no meetings in camera. I would just advise the committee that I think it would be smarter if we had at least that capacity.

I am nervous about us defeating the amendment from Ms. Bendayan. I would caution the committee that once we decide not to do something—there's a motion on the floor that has been passed to not do something—revisiting it is a different thing than to just say that we're delaying it until later.

• (1220)

We have to be careful about our rules around revisiting work that was clearly defeated. I would say I'd be in favour of the subamendment, in favour of the amendment and in favour of the report as amended in the subamendment and amendment, and the actual report of the committee.

I feel Mr. Chong's stress about our getting to work, but this is the way we're getting it done. I would like to get those three things done. I haven't made an amendment because I can't further amend the subcommittee report to add in vaccine equity at this stage. We already have Ms. McPherson's subamendment, but once this is done—if I get the floor back—I will try to bring that back to get us doing those two things: one urgent, which is Ukraine-Russia, and one extremely important, which is the vaccine issue that could be our contribution to the COVID-19 pandemic we are in.

Was I clear?

Hon. Hedy Fry: Yes.

The Chair: Mr. Oliphant, thank you very much. If I had to summarize that briefly before going to the next speaker who would like to intervene, you've given supports for the subamendment as framed by Ms. McPherson, and you've given a suggestion that we retain the flexibility to go in camera during that study as needed. That will be helpful to Ms. McPherson, I believe, as she contemplates perhaps even making a change or tweaking the amendment to draw the consensus of the committee.

I now have on my list Mr. Aboultaif—

Ms. Heather McPherson: Mr. Chair, could I interrupt really quickly? I'm sorry to do this, but I just have some clarity for you. If we remove the “in camera”, it doesn't mean that we can't have an in camera meeting. It won't explicitly say there can be no in camera. It's just that we have removed the piece that says there has to be an in camera. That could be visited—

The Chair: Right. The committee can always go in camera or out of camera at its choosing. It's just if you want to invite witnesses to come in camera because they are discussing sensitive issues.... I think Mr. Oliphant is suggesting that this be part of the framework of the motion just to make sure there is clarity about our wanting to have those briefings that otherwise, in public, would not get us the content we would want to receive.

I had Mr. Aboultaif. Are you still on the list or have you taken down your hand for the moment?

• (1225)

Mr. Ziad Aboultaif: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes, I lowered my hand, but I just want to emphasize it is important to study Ukraine. It will be an ongoing issue. We don't know how long it is going to be, and I hope to see a vote coming so we can just move on.

Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you.

[*Translation*]

The next people who wanted to speak are Ms. Bendayan, Mr. Bergeron and Mr. Ehsassi.

[*English*]

Madame Bendayan, the floor is yours.

[*Translation*]

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

Things have since been clarified, so I will give the floor to Mr. Bergeron, who has not yet spoken on the matter.

The Chair: That's nice. Thank you very much, Ms. Bendayan.

Mr. Bergeron, you have the floor.

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron: Mr. Chair, based on my understanding, there was a consensus to adopt Ms. McPherson's sub-amendment, which focuses on three things: maintaining the idea of summoning Mr. Rae, even if that happens a little later, given the circumstances; include the Ukrainian Canadian Congress, obviously; and not to decide right away that the meetings will be in camera.

If that is the case, I am in favour, it goes without saying.

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

[English]

Ms. McPherson, you are receiving additional support for your subamendment.

I will now give the floor to Monsieur Ehsassi.

Please go ahead.

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

It has been a great honour to be on this committee. This is my first introduction to the foreign affairs committee, and I must say it has been a topsy-turvy procedural process, given everyone's interest in making sure we can move forward.

In the interest of addressing everyone's concerns, perhaps we could square some of the differences that have arisen.

Firstly, allow me to thank Ms. Bendayan for rightly highlighting how urgent the issue of Ukraine is. I also want to thank Ms. McPherson for appreciating that and wanting to see us move forward.

However, at this particular juncture we're stuck at a sequencing issue, because as Mr. Chong rightly pointed out, it's about whether we go with the term "replace" or "add". This is the thing that is getting in the way of this committee coming together, being focused on issues that are of concern to Canadians and moving forward.

It would seem to me that the better approach would be to have those briefings to hear what our government is doing with respect to Ukraine right now, because what Canadians want to see is concrete action.

At this current juncture, the world is concerned about deterring the possibility of an invasion happening. That's why our Minister of Foreign Affairs has been in Ukraine. Our Minister of National Defence will be heading there shortly.

If we focus on these briefings and what the Canadian government has done or should be doing in short order, and then subsequently hear from Ambassador Rae, that would make more sense. You will recall that Ms. McPherson was talking about how this is an evolving situation. What that suggests is that at this point, both intellectually and insofar as Canadians are concerned, we want to see what's being done, what more needs to be done, and then subsequently—God forbid, if things do not go as intended—it gets into the diplomatic arena, because it's a threat to international peace and

security. It would make more sense to hear from Ambassador Rae at that particular point.

All that would be required to make sure that everyone is happy—first of all Ms. Bendayan, then Ms. McPherson and Mr. Chong—is to inquire whether Ms. McPherson would agree to hear from Mr. Rae at the end of the process, rather than somewhere in between.

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

In the last four, five or six interventions, we have made progress. We're getting close to—I don't want to call it an agreement—the direction supporting Ms. McPherson's motion.

Are there additional points waiting to be brought forward? I'm optimistically going to think we can bring this to a vote before we finish, and potentially even talk about some other things.

Mr. Oliphant, you have your hand up. If anybody on the floor wishes to come in, please let the clerk's colleagues know so I have that information as well.

Mr. Oliphant, the floor is yours.

• (1230)

Hon. Robert Oliphant: I think we're there. I think we have reached a good point.

What I wanted to clarify is that we would vote on the subamendment, then we would vote on the amendment, and then we would come to the full report. I have one comment I would like to make on the original subcommittee report, but because we got into an amendment and then a subamendment, I haven't yet had a chance to do that.

Sometimes we go quickly, and we wouldn't get back to that very basic point. I'm not against the report from the subcommittee, but I want to get some clarification on what that was about. I want to make sure we're all on the same page.

The Chair: I'm going to ask again if there are any additional interventions on the subamendment on the floor that has been brought forward by Ms. McPherson and discussed by members, with the support of the clerk and analysts.

Is there any opposition to the subamendment as currently framed by Ms. McPherson? I want to see if we can do this quickly by consensus. If there is, then we can go to a vote.

(Subamendment agreed to [See Minutes of Proceedings])

The Chair: Mr. Chong, you have your hand raised. Go ahead, please.

Hon. Michael Chong: Mr. Chair, I'd like to move the following subamendment: That, pursuant to Standing Order 108(2) the foreign affairs and international development committee undertake a study on the escalating situation in the Taiwan Strait that risks peace and security in the region; and that the committee hold a minimum of four—

Hon. Robert Oliphant: I have a point of order, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: Just wait one second, Mr. Chong. We'll go right back to you. I have a point of order.

Mr. Oliphant.

Hon. Robert Oliphant: I don't think I will be against this, but just in terms of order, it would seem to me that it is an amendment to the subcommittee report as opposed to an amendment to Ms. Bendayan's amendment. It just seems to me it would be better form if we got through that one and then added yet another piece to the subcommittee report, in terms of agenda. It would seem to me we're now mixing Taiwan with Ukraine. It seems to me that's going to get confusing, because it is a subamendment to the amendment on Ukraine. I would ask if the chair would consider moving to the amendment and then entertaining Mr. Chong's further amendment to the subcommittee report.

The Chair: I'm getting a quick thumbs-up from Mr. Chong.

That was a helpful intervention, Mr. Oliphant.

Is that okay with you, Mr. Chong? Okay. That's perfect.

Colleagues, we've passed the subamendment. That takes us back to Madame Bendayan's amendment as amended, which we will now bring to a vote unless there are additional views.

Are there any additional views on Madame Bendayan's amendment as amended? I see none.

(Amendment as amended agreed to [*See Minutes of Proceedings*])

The Chair: That means we have passed Madame Bendayan's amendment unanimously. Congratulations, Madame Bendayan.

That now takes us back to the original motion.

Mr. Chong, I will give you the floor.

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

I move the following amendment to the motion, that the following be added to the report:

That, pursuant to Standing Order 108(2), the foreign affairs and international development committee undertake a study of the escalating situation in the Taiwan Strait that risks peace and security in the region; and that the committee hold a minimum of four meetings on this study, including three meetings to hear from witnesses and one meeting to receive briefings from government officials concerning the situation.

Mr. Chair, I move this amendment to the report because I believe it's complementary to the study on Ukraine. We have a situation in which two authoritarian governments, two authoritarian states, are threatening peaceful democratic neighbours in the region. I think both situations have been unfolding now for some time. I think that doing the study of both Ukraine and Taiwan for the next several weeks would be of utility to the committee, to Canadians, and to understanding what is going on in the world. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

• (1235)

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

There is an amendment on the floor that colleagues have heard. It's been read out in full.

I have an intervention from Ms. McPherson, who had her hand raised, and from Madame Bendayan.

Ms. Heather McPherson: No, I've withdrawn my hand. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

[*Translation*]

The Chair: All right.

Ms. Bendayan, you have the floor.

Ms. Rachel Bendayan: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

[*English*]

Allow me to thank Mr. Chong for bringing this forward and for his leadership on this issue for some time now.

I also would like to refer to my own motion, which suggested a study on Taiwan, Hong Kong, and the very troubling situation of the Uighur people. I also would like, simply, to raise for the consideration of this committee a number of other issues.

[*Translation*]

I'm thinking in particular of our friends in Haiti. Many Quebec men and women are concerned about the situation. I therefore also propose that the committee take on the responsibility of studying the situation in Haiti.

[*English*]

I would also like to raise Ethiopia; I believe that a number of people, including Mr. Oliphant and Ms. McPherson, at various times over the course of the last meeting and this one, have raised the importance of vaccine equity.

I do support the motion put forward by Mr. Chong. I do wish very much to study Taiwan. I would just suggest that perhaps we can include one or more other aspects into this study, perhaps simultaneously, as this committee appears to be open to doing for other issues, including the one that was just discussed.

Thank you very much once again, Mr. Chair.

[*Translation*]

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

[*English*]

Are you then amending Mr. Chong's amendment, which would take us back to a subamendment by adding...? Or is this simply a thought for the committee for further discussion in the future on Haiti, Ethiopia and the cases that you raise?

Ms. Rachel Bendayan: Given the importance of this particular issue, I'm not proposing an immediate amendment. What I am proposing is that we perhaps have an open discussion as a committee on what study we may wish to do simultaneously with this study that Mr. Chong has put forward. It seems that the committee is open to doing that in other situations. We may wish, possibly, to study other issues at the same time as the one put forward by Mr. Chong, but I would like to express my unequivocal support.

The Chair: Thank you very much, Madame Bendayan.

Time permitting, before we close today, maybe we can circle briefly to the analysts and the clerk just to give us a bit of an overview in terms of capacity in the very short term and the intermediate term for additional studies as we contemplate them.

[*Translation*]

I now yield the floor to Mr. Bergeron.

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron: Mr. Chair, I would like to echo what Ms. Bendayan just said.

I fully agree with the proposal put forward by Mr. Chong. However, I believe that there are also other situations that are extremely concerning. I am thinking in particular of Haiti and Ethiopia. It will be up to us to decide whether we want a briefing on these other situations of concern from the Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development. This is a formula that we have used in the past. After that, we can decide to go further, if necessary. I think it is important to schedule at least one briefing on the situation in Haiti and Ethiopia, if only to fill in the gaps that may exist here and there in the organization of other work. Of course, we keep open the possibility of going further, if necessary.

I would also like to come back to the consensus we reached in the subcommittee on December 22, that it might be appropriate to schedule two meetings to hear from each of our two ministers in relation to their mandate letters. This would allow us to discuss the priorities that the Prime Minister has set for them and to see how we can support them in fulfilling the mandates given to them by the Prime Minister.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

• (1240)

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

[*English*]

Before I go to Dr. Fry and Ms. McPherson, maybe I can ask for some thought to be given to the number of meetings that we would have to receive briefings in light of the work that the committee is currently contemplating.

If the clerk and analysts can give us some quick thoughts on that and maybe let us know by the end of the session, with just a thumbnail sketch, for between now and the time Parliament will rise, let's say, on how many briefing sessions we would be able to put in, in addition to the work that's already been put forward, I think there is always that flexibility. It's always good practice for this committee to stay informed about the most current events. It should be doable to add briefings for Haiti, Ethiopia and other files as the committee sees fit. Hopefully, we'll circle back on that discussion briefly before closing.

I now give the floor to Dr. Fry and then to Ms. McPherson.

Hon. Hedy Fry: Mr. Chair, I want to clarify again.

Are we still discussing Mr. Chong's amendment that's on the floor?

The Chair: That is correct.

Hon. Hedy Fry: Then I would like to speak to Mr. Chong's amendment.

I think I can support it fully, because I do believe there are very great similarities. If Russia should succeed in moving its 100,000 troops on the border of Ukraine into Ukraine, then that says to China that they can do whatever they want to do with Taiwan, because

the rest of the world does not have any power or any teeth to do anything about that kind of aggressive behaviour. I am very much in support of that. I think it's an urgent piece to look at. I don't think we should delay too long in looking at that. The two are in some ways linked from a political point of view for either China or Russia, so I want to support it. I want to support that it be urgent, but not precluding or not being more urgent than Ukraine, which I think is actually in a state of what I would consider to be the closest we've been to a world war since World War II. Europe is very concerned about all of this.

I think it's really important we do Ukraine first, that it's urgent, that we deal with it, and that we also then look at Mr. Chong's amendment as being extremely urgent from also that kind of perspective.

Thank you.

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

Ms. McPherson.

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

First of all, I want to say I'm very supportive of the study on Taiwan and echo what my colleagues have said on how important it is we look at this and how it is tied with what is happening in Ukraine, but I did just want a little bit of clarity.

I know that we have introduced now a number of different topics in terms of other things we could study. We have looked at vaccine equity, at Ethiopia and Haiti, and of course bringing the ministers in.

Could you tell me how you plan on moving us forward on that? Are we going to be voting on Mr. Chong's amendment, and then we can bring in other amendments or should we subamend Mr. Chong's amendment so that we actually get there? I'm really interested in us getting there and determining how we can do that.

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

In terms of expediency, of course it's in the hands of the committee. One path of action would certainly be that there seems to be, so far, no opposition to what Mr. Chong has put forward. If that holds, then we should be able to agree on this quickly. Members could then feel free—and we have about 15 minutes of regular time remaining—to introduce one or more additional amendments to the main motion, which is the subcommittee report, or to arrive at some less formal consensus to introduce additional subjects at the next meetings of the committee. There seems to be interest in doing more. Again, I want to make sure we get a reality check from the office of the clerk and analysts in terms of what capacity we have in terms of briefings on urgent matters that are fluid, but also bigger studies in addition to what has already been agreed upon.

My recommendation to the committee—and again it's in your hands—would be to quickly approve Mr. Chong's amendment in light of the support that seems to be there, and then potentially consider either introducing additional amendments or additional studies, which the committee is also very much free to do.

Mr. Oliphant.

• (1245)

Hon. Robert Oliphant: I was going to say the same as a suggestion.

My fear on this is that the loudest first voice gets in, and then we're going to do things. I still think we're getting enough on the agenda. We probably should add one or two more things, and then give that back to the subcommittee and say that we've done the work that we had hoped the subcommittee could have gotten done and didn't get done. That's fine. We came with one idea and then we can build a bigger agenda. I would just suggest we move on the China and Taiwan issue, and then be open to a few more ideas that could then get into the mix and give some credibility, including the ministers' mandate letters. We're going to have estimates and supplementary estimates and all those things before long as well.

I do still want to speak to the final amendment too, if we ever get to there, the very first part of the committee report.

Thank you.

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

I just received a very helpful note from the clerk, which is that in a previous Parliament the committee had given the chair the authority to schedule briefings as urgent issues arose. The committee may wish to consider giving the chair and the clerk and analysts the authority to schedule briefings on Ethiopia and Haiti, because there seems to be an interest in those. That's something you could contemplate, in addition to finalizing the subcommittee report as amended.

Is there any further discussion at this point on Mr. Chong's amendment?

I see Mr. Oliphant's hand, but I think that's unrelated to it.

Seeing none, Mr. Chong, we have approved your amendment unanimously. Congratulations.

(Amendment agreed to)

The Chair: That takes us back to the main motion. I understand that Mr. Oliphant wants to come in on that point, so I will give him the floor, and then Ms. McPherson.

Hon. Robert Oliphant: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

There may still be further amendments. I accept that, but I just want to go over the terms of reference of that to-be-scheduled meeting with the ambassador, who is our permanent representative at the United Nations. It's very clear in the original motion that the meeting would be with respect to his public remarks on Quebec's secularism law—also known as Bill 21—to appear no later than...blah blah...for a period of three hours.

I have a question about that being a three-hour agenda item. I know it is of strong concern to some people. However, if we want the ambassador to speak on something else, we should be very clear about it, recognizing, however, that I'm not sure it's appropriate to have the ambassador who represents Canada speak before the ministers have a chance to speak on their mandate letters. Anything that the ambassador to the United Nations would be saying would be derivative from the policies of the government.

You go to the place where the policies are being articulated, which is from the ministers and the mandate letters. If we wanted him to speak on the secularism law that is a provincial law within the mandate of Quebec, I frankly do not see that a three-hour meeting on that topic would be of good use for federal politicians. I don't think that that would be an appropriate use of our time.

I would propose an amendment to change that from three hours to two hours to have some better use of my own time, at least. There is an amendment on the floor.

• (1250)

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

Just for clarification, the subcommittee report as it was framed prior to amendment does not include language that makes reference to the secularism law in Quebec.

Hon. Robert Oliphant: I'm sorry, I don't have that report in front of me.

The Chair: You have the predecessor version, perhaps.

Hon. Robert Oliphant: I have the original motion, number 13, in front of us. Could I ask what the actual motion is then, that was passed to the subcommittee?

The Chair: I'll read it again for clarity.

That, pursuant to Standing Order 108(2), the Committee request the appearance of Bob Rae, Ambassador of Canada to the United Nations, to appear between January 17 and January 28 to entertain questions from the Committee in regard to his mandate and experience, for a period of 3 hours.

Hon. Robert Oliphant: I would still support my amendment of two hours then, even given that. I just think three hours is way too long for an effective meeting.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Oliphant—

Hon. Michael Chong: Mr. Chair, on a point of order, I believe Mr. Oliphant also implied that he was supportive of striking the reference to the dates in that section of the report as well.

The Chair: Thank you for that, Mr. Chong.

I'm already seeing nods. If we change the time to two hours and remove the dates, is there any opposition?

I think I have a speakers list. Before doing anything, I want to make sure Madame McPherson, Mr. Morantz, Madame Bendayan and then Monsieur Bergeron have a chance to speak.

Ms. McPherson, please go ahead.

Ms. Heather McPherson: I'm worried about the lack of time.

Of course, I'm happy with that. I just wanted to bring forward an amendment to ensure that vaccine equity is included in our list of things that we will be studying. With time being as it is, can I bring it as a subamendment to this? Is that possible at this point?

The Chair: Do you mean a subamendment to Mr. Oliphant's amendment?

Ms. Heather McPherson: Yes.

The Chair: In theory, yes. I don't know how members are for time. We may be able to extend briefly, if it's really the will of the committee to put that forward now.

Ms. Heather McPherson: I would be happy to bring forward a different amendment if there was a willingness to extend.

The Chair: Could I take a quick straw poll in terms of members being available for an additional five minutes? Are there any severe constraints? Yes, no or maybe?

So far, I see thumbs up. Let's see if we can do that. If it's the will of the committee to go to 1:15, we may be able to put that in as an additional amendment. In any event, thank you, Ms. McPherson.

I have Mr. Morantz, Madame Bendayan, Monsieur Bergeron and then Dr. Fry.

Mr. Marty Morantz: I'm taking my hand down. I was going to make the point that we had broadened the motion on the ambassador as well.

Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Morantz. That's helpful.

Madame Bendayan.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Rachel Bendayan: Mr. Chair, I just want to mention that we talked earlier in the meeting about inviting the ambassador to appear at a time that would be convenient for him. So I wanted to pull out the specific dates.

I also want to come back to Mr. Oliphant's proposal. My understanding is that he is suggesting that the minister herself should appear before the ambassador. I do not know whether that has been noted or whether it is in the proposed amendment that we are dealing with at the moment.

The Chair: Thank you, Ms. Bendayan.

[*English*]

For clarification, as far as I could tell, it's not part of the amendment, but there was some nodding of heads when that was mentioned. We didn't land on a specific answer.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Bergeron, you have the floor.

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron: Mr. Chair, first of all, I want to mention that I am in favour of keeping the three hours originally planned. In addition, I would like to point out that, at the subcommittee meeting, the intent was that the ministers and the ambassador would be heard from on completely separate occasions. For this reason, I do not see why anyone would want to link these two things today.

Finally, I would suggest again that we ask our analysts and our clerk to see, given the time we have left, how we could schedule at least one briefing regarding the situation in Haiti and Ethiopia.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

• (1255)

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Bergeron.

[*English*]

Dr. Fry.

Hon. Hedy Fry: To clarify, did Ms. McPherson put a motion on the floor with regard to vaccines, or did she not?

The Chair: Not yet.

Hon. Hedy Fry: Mr. Bergeron is therefore putting a motion on the floor with regard to Haiti. Is that true?

The Chair: We can certainly entertain that. I'm making a recommendation, and it's in your hands, but if we can dispense with Mr. Oliphant's amendment, we then have capacity to either add that to the work plan or—

Hon. Hedy Fry: All right. Thank you.

The Chair: —for the committee to provide additional direction to have the chair organize briefings.

Is there any other discussion on Mr. Oliphant's amendment?

[*Translation*]

Mr. Bergeron, you do not agree that it should be a two-hour meeting. If necessary, we will put this to a vote.

[*English*]

Is there any other discussion on Mr. Oliphant's amendment?

Seeing none, are you ready to pass it on division?

Is there any additional opposition to Mr. Oliphant's amendment besides Monsieur Bergeron?

Ms. Rachel Bendayan: Mr. Chair, can you just clarify exactly what it is we are looking at?

The Chair: It is the change regarding the appearance of Ambassador Rae to reduce the period of testimony to two hours, and to remove the dates of January 17 and 28.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron: Mr. Chair, I request a roll call vote.

[*English*]

The Chair: We have a request for a recorded vote.

(Amendment agreed to: yeas 10; nays 1 [*See Minutes of Proceedings*])

The Chair: We are back to the main motion as amended.

Colleagues, you indicated that we may have the flexibility to go a bit past one o'clock, maybe 1:15 or 1:30 max.

We now have the option of adding additional items to that report, or passing that report, and then introducing an additional motion off the floor.

I think there is interest in receiving briefings on Haiti and Ethiopia. Would anybody want to put forward an amendment to the report? I suppose we have to do it as an amendment to the report because we haven't passed it yet. It would have to be in the form of other amendments that were put forward to receive briefings in the shortest possible order on either of those or others, as colleagues see fit.

Is anyone prepared to move a motion to that effect?

Ms. McPherson.

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

I would now like to submit an amendment to the committee report: "That, pursuant to Standing Order 108(2) the foreign affairs and international development committee undertake a study on the situation of vaccine equity and that the committee hold a minimum of four meetings on this study to talk about COVAX, the impact of intellectual property rights on global access to COVID-19 vaccines and that the findings are collected and reported to the House; and that, pursuant to Standing Order 108(9) the committee requests the government table a comprehensive response to the report."

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

There's an amendment on the floor.

We now invite debate on the amendment.

Mr. Oliphant.

Hon. Robert Oliphant: I would just say that I'm in favour of the amendment.

It does present scheduling issues, and I hope that we would entrust the chair and the clerk with working those out as we're getting a lot of things now on the table. However, I'm in favour of it.

• (1300)

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

Dr. Fry.

Hon. Hedy Fry: Thank you.

I want to speak in favour of this because I think we have so many urgent things on our table, including Ukraine and Taiwan.

I do think that unless we get vaccines to the world, we're never going to get rid of omicron or any further variants. We know that the longer this virus is allowed to stay without becoming endemic, it is actually mutating at a rapid rate.

I would like to say that Ms. McPherson's amendment is also urgent, quite urgent, actually.

I'm in favour.

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

Is there any other discussion on Ms. McPherson's amendment?

(Amendment agreed to [*See Minutes of Proceedings*])

The Chair: Members have adopted Ms. McPherson's amendment unanimously.

Congratulations, Ms. McPherson.

Just before I give the floor to Mr. Bergeron, colleagues, keep in mind that we need to have a quick discussion with our clerk and analysts on witness lists and witness deadlines for the work that's been put forward so they can start planning the substance that's now in front of us.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Bergeron, you have the floor.

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron: Mr. Chair, I would like to formally ask our analysts and our clerk to consider, in light of the calendar of the next few weeks, whether at least one briefing on the situation in Haiti and another on the situation in Ethiopia could be arranged. The committee can then decide what to do as it sees fit for the future.

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

At this point, is this just a request to the analysts regarding the schedule or do you wish to make a motion in that regard?

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron: Unless there is a consensus to have our analysts and our clerk do it, I will table a formal motion if need be, Mr. Chair.

[*English*]

The Chair: Let's first check with the clerk and analysts briefly to see, in terms of logistics, if receiving in relatively short order briefings on Haiti and Ethiopia would be possible given the guidance that's already before the committee on Ukraine. If so, we will make sure that this is reflected in a motion as well.

The Clerk: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I think the committee would certainly have the capacity to do that.

There are four meetings that have been asked for on Ukraine and four meetings on Taiwan. At this point with COVAX, there are a few more. Keeping in mind that there will be gaps in the schedule when we organize those hearings, we have 14 meetings until April, so I feel that filling those gaps in the schedule with one-meeting briefings would definitely be doable.

The Chair: Given that it is doable, we will then proceed, with the agreement of Mr. Bergeron, with a motion to that effect and invite discussion on Mr. Bergeron's amendment.

Mr. Oliphant.

Hon. Robert Oliphant: I was going to speak in support of it being a motion, so it's clearly in our record of proceedings as a motion as well as that we agree to requesting those.

Because the Minister of Foreign Affairs just held a ministerial meeting on Haiti last week with the Minister of International Development, we could very specifically ask for an update on what transpired at that ministerial meeting, which I think is quite important. With Ethiopia it's ongoing and changing but I am very much in favour of our having briefings on both of them and having a full meeting. I would say we would need two hours on each of them. That might then propel us to ask for more meetings because they're complex situations. We'll start with briefings.

I'm in favour.

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

[*Translation*]

Ms. Bendayan, you have the floor.

Ms. Rachel Bendayan: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I would also like to thank my colleague Mr. Bergeron, whose proposals I fully support. It is very important that these briefings take place.

If necessary, I will move a similar motion so that we have an update or briefings on the situation in the Xinjiang region.

• (1305)

[*English*]

As I mentioned earlier, I do believe that the situation of the Uighur people is extremely important. I think we could add to our briefing list a request to officials to come and give us an update on the situation in the Xinjiang region.

[*Translation*]

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

[*English*]

Let's treat that as a subamendment, then, to Monsieur Bergeron's amendment.

Is there any discussion on adding Xinjiang to the list of Haiti and Ethiopia?

Is there any opposition to Madame Bendayan's subamendment?

(Subamendment agreed to [*See Minutes of Proceedings*])

The Chair: We're back to Monsieur Bergeron's amendment as amended.

Is there any additional discussion on it?

Is there any opposition to Monsieur Bergeron's amendment as amended?

(Amendment as amended agreed to [*See Minutes of Proceedings*])

The Chair: We've adopted that unanimously.

Congratulations, Monsieur Bergeron.

[*Translation*]

Do you wish to add something, Mr. Bergeron?

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron: Mr. Chair, for everyone's benefit, can the amended proposal be read again?

[*English*]

The Chair: It's effectively to ask for briefings on the situation in Xinjiang, as well as Haiti and Ethiopia, in the shortest possible time frame. They would be meetings of one full session, two hours each.

Go ahead, Ms. McPherson.

Ms. Heather McPherson: Just for clarification, we seem to have a number of things that are in the shortest possible time frame.

The Chair: Right.

Ms. Heather McPherson: How is the decision on prioritization going to be determined?

The Chair: It's a very good point.

The committee may wish to delegate that task, as it has in the past, to the chair, the analysts and the clerk to find who's available. These are usually gaps between the longer studies, or when we compile our review, concept notes or witness lists, there may be openings to do those briefings. It's a combination of availability and urgency.

All three of them are important, are urgent, and if the committee chooses, it can delegate that task to me in collaboration with the clerk and analysts. They are understood to be high-priority items that will happen in the shortest possible order.

Ms. Rachel Bendayan: On a point of order, Mr. Chair, or perhaps a point of clarification, I think all members agreed to go beyond the meeting by a few minutes. I am just wondering; we are now at 1:07 p.m.

The Chair: Yes. I'm hoping to end by 1:15 p.m. unless there are significant other issues. Our maximum capacity goes to 1:30 p.m. Ideally, we won't have to go that far beyond.

Hon. Hedy Fry: On a point of order, Chair, I have to leave at 1:15 p.m. I'm already going to be late for another meeting by staying until then. I can't stay until 1:30 p.m.

Thank you.

The Chair: Understood. Thank you for that.

To address Ms. McPherson's point, I will ask the committee collectively: Is it the will of the committee to delegate the task of scheduling these three briefing requests—again, with urgency, substance, and availability of witnesses in mind—to me and the team?

Is there any opposition to that?

Ms. Heather McPherson: Mr. Chair, if I could, I have one quick question. There are these three briefings, but there is also the greater schedule, I guess. How is that going to be determined?

The Chair: The other option... The clerk has been very helpful in the past to put forward a draft calendar that takes us through the next couple of months on both the one-off urgent items and the longer-term studies. If it's the will of the committee, we can certainly review and receive one of those plans. If colleagues wish to make comments, they can then make them through that plan.

The only drawback there is that we would want to get some of this work onto the calendar literally within days or within the next week so that we have some discretion to schedule on Ukraine, on Taiwan and also on the urgent humanitarian cases we've just taken on board in the form of an amendment.

Ms. Heather McPherson: Also vaccine equity.

The Chair: Yes.

Let's go back to the amendment by Monsieur Bergeron as amended. Is there any other discussion? We have Haiti, we have Ethiopia and we have Xinjiang, all three as urgent briefings.

This now takes us back one more time to the report as amended. Madam Clerk, we have to vote one more time on the report in its entirety as amended. If there's no further discussion, let's take that step now.

Is there any opposition on the first subcommittee report as amended?

Seeing none, we have passed it unanimously.

(Motion as amended agreed to [*See Minutes of Proceedings*])

The Chair: Thank you, colleagues.

I will pass the floor to the clerk for guidance on witness lists. We should be able to finish by 1:15, no later.

• (1310)

The Clerk: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I would just like the committee's input on witness lists. Obviously, we would need the witness lists for the Ukraine study sooner rather than later; this week if possible. I would suggest Wednesday, if members are okay with that, but I would leave it in your hands.

The Chair: I think there might be a sense that we need a bit more time.

Monsieur Bergeron.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron: That is correct, Mr. Chair. I hardly see how we could achieve that before this Friday. We could schedule a briefing for this Thursday, if that is the wish of the committee, and hope that we can get some relevant information. Indeed, I don't think we are in a position to prepare our lists for this Wednesday.

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

[*English*]

Mr. Morantz.

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

In terms of scheduling the briefings, I'd be fine with your having the discretion to schedule them in consultation with the vice-chairs. I just thought I would mention that.

Also, I'd like to put the following motion on notice. As I'm reading it, my assistant will be emailing it to the clerk. It is in both official languages and reads: "While hybrid committee meetings are authorized by the House, any proceedings before the committee in relation to a motion to exercise the committee's power to send for persons, papers and records shall, if not previously disposed of, be interrupted upon the earlier of a completion of four hours of consideration or one sitting week after the motion was first moved, and, in turn, every question necessary for the disposal of the motion shall be put forthwith and successively without further debate or amendment."

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Morantz. That's on notice.

Is there discussion on Mr. Morantz's motion?

Mr. Oliphant.

Hon. Robert Oliphant: I will discuss it happily but I didn't hear the motion being put. I heard it being read as notice, so I don't think we need to discuss it now.

I would like to take time to read it and understand it a little better so I can get my head around it. Unless Mr. Morantz was prepared to actually move it right now, I would just understand that was a notice of motion.

Mr. Marty Morantz: That's correct, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: Thank you very much.

Monsieur Bergeron.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron: Under the circumstances, Mr. Chair, I do not think it is necessary to elaborate further on the motion, which, may I say, nevertheless seems entirely appropriate to me, given what we experienced at the very end of the previous Parliament and at the very beginning of this one.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

[*English*]

Are there any other items or points before we adjourn the meeting?

I see none.

[*Translation*]

Thank you very much for your co-operation, colleagues.

[*English*]

Please keep safe and healthy. We will see you at our next meeting.

We are adjourned.

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