



House of Commons  
CANADA

# **Subcommittee on International Human Rights of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development**

---

SDIR • NUMBER 001 • 1st SESSION • 39th PARLIAMENT

---

**EVIDENCE**

**Tuesday, October 3, 2006**

—  
**Chair**

**Mr. Kevin Sorenson**

Also available on the Parliament of Canada Web Site at the following address:

**<http://www.parl.gc.ca>**

## Subcommittee on International Human Rights of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development

Tuesday, October 3, 2006

•(1735)

[Translation]

**The Clerk of the Committee:** Honorable members, I see a quorum. We will begin.

[English]

I'm ready to receive motions for the nomination of the chair of the subcommittee. The chair has to be a member of the government.

Ms. Minna.

**Hon. Maria Minna (Beaches—East York, Lib.):** Okay, that's been decided. In that case, I don't know who they decided on.

**Mr. Ted Menzies (MacLeod, CPC):** I would like to, if I may, nominate Kevin Sorenson as the chair.

**The Clerk:** There is a motion to nominate Kevin Sorenson as the chair.

Are there any other nominations?

The committee has heard the motion. Is it the pleasure of the committee to adopt the motion?

(Motion agreed to)

**The Clerk:** Would the committee like to proceed to the election of the vice-chair at this time?

I'm ready to receive nominations for the vice-chair.

**Hon. Maria Minna:** I nominate Mr. Silva be the vice-chair of the committee.

**Mr. Kevin Sorenson (Crowfoot, CPC):** Do you need one or two vice-chairs?

**The Clerk:** That's up to the committee. The subcommittee has seven members, and we can have two, as we do in the main committee.

**Mr. Kevin Sorenson:** I'll nominate Caroline St-Hilaire.

**The Clerk:** Okay. We have two nominations.

**An hon. member:** Can we not just have two vice-chairs and that would be it?

**The Clerk:** Yes, we can.

Let's deal with the motion for Mr. Silva's nomination. Is it the pleasure of the committee to adopt the motion?

(Motion agreed to)

**The Clerk:** Mr. Silva will be the vice-chair for the opposition.

The nomination is for Madame St-Hilaire to be the other vice-chair for the opposition.

(Motion agreed to)

**The Clerk:** So we'll ask Mr. Sorenson to take the chair.

**The Chair (Mr. Kevin Sorenson (Crowfoot, CPC)):** Thank you, colleagues.

We do have some routine motions. Do you want to deal with them tonight, or do you want to wait until our next meeting?

Mr. Menzies.

**Mr. Ted Menzies:** Mr. Chair, do we need to deal with some of the structure of the committee as far as putting motions forward with 48 hours' notice?

**The Chair:** I think that's in the routine motions.

**Mr. Ted Menzies:** Okay, sorry, I didn't mean to get ahead of you.

**The Chair:** First of all, I'll just go through them.

There is a motion that the subcommittee retain the services of one or more analysts from the Parliamentary Information and Research Service of the Library of Parliament, as needed, to assist the committee in its work, at the discretion of the chair.

All in favour?

(Motion agreed to)

**Hon. Maria Minna:** The chair doesn't have to read them all. I think we know them.

**The Chair:** We haven't had a chance to preview this before, so it's just so we all have a chance....

**The Clerk:** These are the same motions they had in the last Parliament.

**The Chair:** All right.

Are we all in favour of the second motion, that the chair be authorized to hold meetings to receive...?

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

**The Chair:** The next motion is to hear witnesses for ten minutes and then the allocation of party questions after, that they be allocated for seven minutes for the first round.

Is there any discussion on that? I know in other committees you do this a little differently. In some it's five minutes and more people get a chance, but seven minutes should be....

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

**The Chair:** This is that 48 hours' notice be given....

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

**The Chair:** All right. The next one....

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

**The Chair:** Next one, all in favour?

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

**The Chair:** That the clerk of the subcommittee be authorized to distribute to members of the subcommittee...in both official languages.

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

**The Chair:** Working meals when needed....

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

**The Chair:** That one copy of the transcript of all in camera meetings be kept.

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

**The Chair:** All right, we have consensus on that.

I'm going to ask our clerk...because we just got this going and the meeting tonight was really only to elect the chair and the vice-chairs.

What time allocation do we have or can we get?

**The Clerk:** The subcommittee normally meets once a week and can meet only when the main committee isn't meeting. The time set aside is 5:30 to 7:30, but you can meet at other times if all members can find a time when everybody is available.

**An hon. member:** Please.

**The Chair:** "Please" is right.

**The Clerk:** I've looked just generally at the membership, and it seems that Thursday morning most people don't have a committee meeting.

**Mr. Mario Silva (Davenport, Lib.):** I have Environment from nine to eleven.

**The Clerk:** There's Monday as well, I think.

**Mr. Mario Silva:** Monday is out, but Thursday I could do maybe from eleven to twelve.

**The Chair:** We need a two-hour slot.

**Mr. Ted Menzies:** I have the trade committee from nine until eleven, usually on Thursday also. Are you nine to eleven?

• (1740)

**Mr. Mario Silva:** Yes, nine to eleven.

**The Chair:** Now that we know the membership of this committee, it might be worthwhile to submit to our clerk which

committees you serve on and the times when you meet, and we'll take a look to see what options are there.

**The Clerk:** Yes, let them work it out. I think that's best.

**The Chair:** They can work out those details. If not, we may be looking at Tuesday from 5:30 to 7:30—and I know that's a terrible time.

So get those to the clerk. Probably at the next meeting we will talk about putting forward a steering.... We would have a mandate from the committee, but as far as witness lists and specific topics of study are concerned, I know I've had a couple of letters already about human rights violations in the Philippines and other places that somebody should be looking at, according to them.

Would the proper process be to have a steering committee sit down, or no? Do we do it at committee business, future business? All right, let's do that. There's no use for a steering committee in a small group. So at a future meeting, then, we could deal with future business. Do you want to deal with that tonight?

**Hon. Maria Minna:** No, I think maybe the next meeting would be better.

**The Chair:** It gives you time to think about it a little bit.

I wasn't even certain who all was on this committee until tonight, so welcome here. I think it's a great committee. Not just for your people back home, but I think when you leave Parliament, you want to be able to say you tried to make a difference in some area. This is a great area that we can be involved in to better not just human rights problems here but around the world. So I commend you all for either signing up for this committee or for being drafted.

**Mr. Ted Menzies:** I'm jumping aside on protocol. Do we have a bit of a summation of what the previous committee looked at, so that we don't re-plough the same ground?

**The Clerk:** Yes. I distributed it to the offices.

**Mr. Ted Menzies:** I guess have it here. I just haven't had the chance to read it then. Okay.

**Mr. Gerald Schmitz (Committee Researcher):** On this point, there's also an unfinished business section about some of the pending possibilities, from where the last subcommittee left off. But that doesn't preclude the new subcommittee from going in another direction altogether.

**The Clerk:** My office has received requests from groups to appear before the subcommittee on human rights as well. I'm having those requests translated so that I can distribute them to all the committee members.

**Hon. Maria Minna:** Maybe we could have that at our offices and think about them, and at the next meeting we can have a proper discussion about the future business. We haven't had a chance to think about things.

**The Chair:** Are there any other points of business that you want to deal with tonight?

If not, we are adjourned.







**Published under the authority of the Speaker of the House of Commons**

**Publié en conformité de l'autorité du Président de la Chambre des communes**

**Also available on the Parliament of Canada Web Site at the following address:  
Aussi disponible sur le site Web du Parlement du Canada à l'adresse suivante :  
<http://www.parl.gc.ca>**

---

**The Speaker of the House hereby grants permission to reproduce this document, in whole or in part, for use in schools and for other purposes such as private study, research, criticism, review or newspaper summary. Any commercial or other use or reproduction of this publication requires the express prior written authorization of the Speaker of the House of Commons.**

**Le Président de la Chambre des communes accorde, par la présente, l'autorisation de reproduire la totalité ou une partie de ce document à des fins éducatives et à des fins d'étude privée, de recherche, de critique, de compte rendu ou en vue d'en préparer un résumé de journal. Toute reproduction de ce document à des fins commerciales ou autres nécessite l'obtention au préalable d'une autorisation écrite du Président.**