



HOUSE OF COMMONS
CHAMBRE DES COMMUNES
CANADA

Standing Committee on International Trade

CIIT • NUMBER 010 • 1st SESSION • 41st PARLIAMENT

EVIDENCE

Thursday, November 3, 2011

—
Chair

The Honourable Rob Merrifield

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• (1105)

[English]

The Chair (Hon. Rob Merrifield (Yellowhead, CPC)): We'll call the meeting to order. The other members are on the way.

It is a disjointed kind of day, and it messes up our committee considerably. We understand there's a short debate going on in the House and then we'll be called back for another vote.

I apologize to the witnesses from the Department of Foreign Affairs. I know they're prepared to talk on a free trade agreement or a partnership agreement with India. I want to apologize for the House of Commons. We do that a lot.

Mr. Gerald Keddy (South Shore—St. Margaret's, CPC): You don't hear that often.

The Chair: They're a dysfunctional group. It's sort of like your own baby—an ugly baby and you have to love it; it's yours.

Nonetheless, we want to thank you for coming in, and we will bring you back at our earliest convenience to continue. Out of respect to our witnesses, we want to allow you enough time to properly share your information with the committee and have a full opportunity to participate in a question and answer session appropriately. I have talked to the opposition members and we won't be able to accomplish that today. So I'm sorry about that.

Mr. Easter.

Hon. Wayne Easter (Malpeque, Lib.): I think you misspoke. I don't think you meant Parliament is dysfunctional. I think you meant the government is dysfunctional.

The Chair: Yes, well, I know you've got a cold and you're in a weakened condition, so we're going to ignore that.

Now, before we become dysfunctional and ugly here, we'll turn it over to the clerk. We have business that we want to take care of in public and then we'll go in camera for some committee business. We'll ask the clerk to accomplish that now.

The Clerk of the Committee (Mr. Paul Cardegnà): We're here for the election of the first vice-chair of the committee. Pursuant to Standing Order 106(2), the first vice-chair must be a member of the official opposition.

[Translation]

I am now ready to receive nominations for the position of first vice-chair.

[English]

Mr. Mathieu Ravignat (Pontiac, NDP): I'll move that the honourable Brian Masse be first vice-chair.

[Translation]

The Clerk: It has been moved by Mr. Ravignat that Brian Masse be elected as first vice-chair of the committee.

[English]

Are there any other nominations?

There being no other nominations, is it the pleasure of the committee to adopt the motion?

(Motion agreed to)

The Chair: We will suspend for a few moments as we move in camera.

[Proceedings continue in camera]

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