



HOUSE OF COMMONS
CHAMBRE DES COMMUNES
CANADA

Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development

FAAE • NUMBER 070 • 1st SESSION • 42nd PARLIAMENT

EVIDENCE

Thursday, September 21, 2017

—
Chair

The Honourable Robert Nault

Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development

Thursday, September 21, 2017

• (1105)

[English]

The Chair (Hon. Robert Nault (Kenora, Lib.)): I now call to order this meeting of Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development.

Welcome to our new members. Peter is filling in. Of course, Wayne, it's good to see you again, and members on the government side who are new, Anita and Borys. René is filling in for Mr. Levitt.

The first order of business this morning is to elect the vice-chair of the committee. Erin is not here. That doesn't matter. We'll still vote for him and elect him and get on with it unless—

Hon. Peter Van Loan (York—Simcoe, CPC): I move that Erin O'Toole be made vice-chair of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development.

The Chair: Ziad Aboultaif seconds it.

Is everyone in favour? Agreed.

Mr. O'Toole is the new vice-chair.

We usually wait for the member to show up, but we said we could do it this way anyway and we'll just carry on. We'll congratulate Erin when he gets here.

The second order of business, and we're going to go in camera after this, is the 15th report of your subcommittee on agenda and procedure. There are 16 items that we're reporting on, on behalf of the subcommittee, that will need your approval of the recommendations. If you haven't seen the draft or the report, please have a look at it, because I'll go through it fairly quickly.

It's proposed that the draft schedule of meetings for September to December be agreed to as a draft calendar for the committee work schedule. As you already are aware, this is a draft schedule and it's quite fluid. Sometimes these things change, but at least it's a document that we can work from. Already you'll notice there is a slight change regarding the meeting on Tuesday, September 26, with the President of Venezuela's National Assembly, as they are unavailable. That's different from what it was when the subcommittee looked at the agenda and schedule. I'd just remind you of that one small change.

The other thing is that the committee will hear from Minister Bibeau in relation to the study on DFI, the development finance initiative, for one hour. As those of you who were in attendance will know, DFI was a motion put forward by our Conservative colleagues

and we have studied that. We're almost at the end of that discussion and we'll start to see a draft report after the minister makes her presentation to us vis-à-vis DFI. That will happen on September 28.

The committee will travel to Mexico, New York City, and Washington, D.C., from October 22 to 28. Just as a heads-up, so far no one is travelling to Mexico. I understand that the international trade committee has had their meetings cancelled because, of course, as we all know, there are some very serious matters that are confronting the Mexican government, and even the Congress. I understand the building has been somewhat damaged with what's unfolding. We're going to track that.

I asked the clerk what the drop-dead date would be for us to go or not go to Mexico. We will continue on still with our New York City and Washington, D.C. part of the trip if that's to happen. As of today, we'll consider Mexico still on, but I have a strong suspicion that might be difficult to manage three weeks from now.

The fourth matter is that the committee have a briefing with officials from Global Affairs in relation to the trip.

The fifth matter is that the committee commence a study on consular affairs on Tuesday, October 3, pursuant to a motion adopted on February 9, 2017, and that the members be invited to submit lists of possible witnesses to the clerk's office. Just as a heads-up, we might be able to start the consular affairs study earlier than that date. That is certainly the objective of the chair. If we can get started earlier, we will, so my advice is to get your witness list in as soon as possible.

I want to remind the committee that this chair and committee have an open witness list, so we can add to it. We're not going to close it as some committees do. We just roll along, and if we come up with another witness that makes some sense, we're going to hear from them. I think that's a more appropriate way. There's no real stress; just get your key witnesses in who you want to start with, so that the table can do its job.

Sixth, as soon as Bill C-47, an act to amend the Export and Import Permits Act and the Criminal Code, regarding amendments permitting the accession to the Arms Trade Treaty and other amendments, is referred to the committee, study of the bill will commence. I think that bill is being debated in the House today.

As you're all aware, if we get a request by the House to study a particular piece of legislation, that will take precedence over other matters. It's our objective to get into Bill C-47 once it is sent to this committee.

It may come a little earlier than I had anticipated because it seems to be moving in the House now. I understand it will be debated today. I suspect the House leader will report to the official opposition that we will look at it again next week. If that's the case, then I think we'll probably get to a point where we'll see this bill fairly soon.

Then, if you turn over the page, it says "pursuant to a motion adopted by the Committee on December 14, 2017, a maximum of six meetings to be held to study the bill".

That will be a decision of the committee based on how many witnesses and what exactly the in-depth part of this will be. It may be less than six meetings, but it's intended to be a maximum. That relates to, I think, probably the consular affairs, not so much Bill C-47. Is that a mistake in how it was written?

• (1110)

The Clerk of the Committee (Ms. Angela Crandall): No. The motion does say a maximum of six meetings for the bill. They don't have this version format. They have it on one page. They're still on the first page.

The Chair: All right. Sorry about that, guys.

Seventh is that a draft study plan for a study on Canada's engagement in Asia be redistributed.

You have had that distributed to you, I assume. Was it distributed to the new members?

A voice: Not yet.

The Chair: Not yet. Okay, we'll do so after we approve it.

Eighth is that the committee travel to China, Vietnam and Indonesia from November 26 to December 6, 2017.

Ninth is that members meet with Julio Borges, president of the Venezuelan National Assembly, on Tuesday, September 26, 2017, for one hour. That is now no longer part of the agenda. You can cross number nine off.

Tenth is that the Committee meet with Ojārs Kalnins, the chair of the Latvian foreign affairs committee, on Tuesday, October 31, 2017, for one hour. I think that has been confirmed, so that's moving forward.

Next it says that the committee will meet with President Santos on Tuesday. I think, colleagues, that will be very much in camera or away from a committee generally. I met with the ambassador to Colombia this morning, and it seems that it's very likely going to be part of his overall agenda, but that could change because the agenda has not been totally approved just yet.

Twelfth is that the chair arrange a meeting with Paul Farmer, head of Partners in Health, on Tuesday, October 31, 2017, to be held in the chair's office.

As you will recall, sometimes these things don't fit, so we just invite members to come to the office, to the boardroom, and sit down and have conversations, if they don't fit into our regular order of business, especially if we think it makes some sense. I leave it to you to make the decision on your availability, but obviously I will be there and I hope some other members will be there as well.

Last, there are four matters that relate to studies and budgets: that in relation to the study of Canada's engagement in Asia, the proposed budget in the amount of \$27,100.00, be adopted; that the committee adopt a budget for a contract of service in the amount of \$3,500.00, to design a special cover for the report related to the study on the situation in eastern Europe and central Asia 25 years after the end of the Cold War.

I have mentioned this before and I just want to mention it again. The cost of doing a cover for any study is about \$300. That's the cost we've been getting ours done for, because I look after that for you. I don't know where the \$3,500 came from.

I can assure you that we won't have a need to spend \$3,500. It will be about \$300 because that's all it costs.

Hon. Peter Van Loan: Amend the motion.

The Chair: I don't think we can. I think it has to stay that way because that's what the officials think is the price or the going rate, but we will just give the money back of course.

Hon. Peter Van Loan: [*Technical difficulty—Editor*] whatever we want—

The Chair: That's true.

Hon. Peter Van Loan —and that's what's authorized.

The Chair: I would be very willing and accepting of the idea of changing it to \$300.

An hon. member: I so move—

Hon. Peter Van Loan: [*Technical difficulty—Editor*] for the next 10 years, Mr. Chair.

• (1115)

The Chair: Just a minute. We can have an open debate about this. I don't have any problem with it, because that's the cost. Between \$250 and \$300, I think, were the two or three we've done.

Hon. Peter Van Loan: Adopt a budget for a contract of services in the amount of \$400 to give you a little flex in each of items 14, 15, and 16.

Mr. Ziad Aboultaif (Edmonton Manning, CPC): I second that.

The Chair: Okay. I don't have any problem with that personally. That will look after it. All those in favour of the amendment?

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

The Chair: I thank you for that, because that makes it sound like it costs a lot of money to do a cover page, when we all know that's not the case.

That's the conclusion of the amendments to the 15th report of your subcommittee on agenda and procedure of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development.

Can I get someone to move the concurrence in that report as amended? Mr. Sidhu and Mr. Stetski.

All those in favour of acceptance of the report?

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

The Chair: That will conclude the discussion about the 15th report, unless there is further discussion at some other point. You're free to do so.

Since Mr. O'Toole has walked into the room, we want to congratulate him on being the new vice-chair of our committee.

Congratulations.

Hon. Erin O'Toole (Durham, CPC): See what happens when you don't show up?

The Chair: He's lucky, because he could have been elected the chair if he had been away a little longer.

Congratulations, Erin. We look forward to working with you.

We're going to take a couple of minutes to suspend to go in camera and get into the discussion of this draft report. I think that concludes the business that necessitates our being live for everyone's interest.

[Proceedings continue in camera]

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

SPEAKER'S PERMISSION

The proceedings of the House of Commons and its Committees are hereby made available to provide greater public access. The parliamentary privilege of the House of Commons to control the publication and broadcast of the proceedings of the House of Commons and its Committees is nonetheless reserved. All copyrights therein are also reserved.

Reproduction of the proceedings of the House of Commons and its Committees, in whole or in part and in any medium, is hereby permitted provided that the reproduction is accurate and is not presented as official. This permission does not extend to reproduction, distribution or use for commercial purpose of financial gain. Reproduction or use outside this permission or without authorization may be treated as copyright infringement in accordance with the *Copyright Act*. Authorization may be obtained on written application to the Office of the Speaker of the House of Commons.

Reproduction in accordance with this permission does not constitute publication under the authority of the House of Commons. The absolute privilege that applies to the proceedings of the House of Commons does not extend to these permitted reproductions. Where a reproduction includes briefs to a Committee of the House of Commons, authorization for reproduction may be required from the authors in accordance with the *Copyright Act*.

Nothing in this permission abrogates or derogates from the privileges, powers, immunities and rights of the House of Commons and its Committees. For greater certainty, this permission does not affect the prohibition against impeaching or questioning the proceedings of the House of Commons in courts or otherwise. The House of Commons retains the right and privilege to find users in contempt of Parliament if a reproduction or use is not in accordance with this permission.

Also available on the House of Commons website at the following address: <http://www.ourcommons.ca>

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

PERMISSION DU PRÉSIDENT

Les délibérations de la Chambre des communes et de ses comités sont mises à la disposition du public pour mieux le renseigner. La Chambre conserve néanmoins son privilège parlementaire de contrôler la publication et la diffusion des délibérations et elle possède tous les droits d'auteur sur celles-ci.

Il est permis de reproduire les délibérations de la Chambre et de ses comités, en tout ou en partie, sur n'importe quel support, pourvu que la reproduction soit exacte et qu'elle ne soit pas présentée comme version officielle. Il n'est toutefois pas permis de reproduire, de distribuer ou d'utiliser les délibérations à des fins commerciales visant la réalisation d'un profit financier. Toute reproduction ou utilisation non permise ou non formellement autorisée peut être considérée comme une violation du droit d'auteur aux termes de la *Loi sur le droit d'auteur*. Une autorisation formelle peut être obtenue sur présentation d'une demande écrite au Bureau du Président de la Chambre.

La reproduction conforme à la présente permission ne constitue pas une publication sous l'autorité de la Chambre. Le privilège absolu qui s'applique aux délibérations de la Chambre ne s'étend pas aux reproductions permises. Lorsqu'une reproduction comprend des mémoires présentés à un comité de la Chambre, il peut être nécessaire d'obtenir de leurs auteurs l'autorisation de les reproduire, conformément à la *Loi sur le droit d'auteur*.

La présente permission ne porte pas atteinte aux privilèges, pouvoirs, immunités et droits de la Chambre et de ses comités. Il est entendu que cette permission ne touche pas l'interdiction de contester ou de mettre en cause les délibérations de la Chambre devant les tribunaux ou autrement. La Chambre conserve le droit et le privilège de déclarer l'utilisateur coupable d'outrage au Parlement lorsque la reproduction ou l'utilisation n'est pas conforme à la présente permission.

Aussi disponible sur le site Web de la Chambre des communes à l'adresse suivante : <http://www.noscommunes.ca>