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Chair: Mr. Michael Levitt



Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development

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• (1535)

[English]

The Clerk of the Committee (Ms. Erica Pereira): Honourable members, I see that we have a quorum.

To begin with, I must inform members that the clerk of the committee can only receive motions for the election of the chair. The clerk cannot receive any other types of motions nor entertain points of order, nor participate in debate.

We can now proceed to the election of the chair. Pursuant to Standing Order 106(2), the chair must be a member of the government party. I'm ready to receive motions for the nomination of the position of chair.

Mr. Spengemann, go ahead.

Mr. Sven Spengemann (Mississauga—Lakeshore, Lib.): Thank you very much, Madam Clerk.

I move that we have Michael Levitt as chair of this committee.

The Clerk: Thank you very much.

It has been moved by Mr. Spengemann that Mr. Levitt be elected chair of the committee.

Are there any further motions?

(Motion agreed to)

I declare the motion carried, and Mr. Levitt duly elected chair of the committee.

I'll invite Mr. Levitt to take the chair.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear!

The Chair (Mr. Michael Levitt (York Centre, Lib.)): Before we move forward with our routine motions, I want to thank colleagues from all sides for supporting me today as chair.

I also want to reflect. I was so incredibly proud to work with such a great group of individuals from all sides in the last Parliament, both as a member and then as chair of this committee.

We did great work. We really did. Looking back, I think Leona maybe is the only one who was...and Rob for part of it as well.... Bob was in Foreign Affairs? Yes? Good times.

I'm reflecting on some of the really incredible work we did, things like the Magnitsky report; Canada's Arctic sovereignty; and women, peace and security. All of them were unanimous reports.

To have the opportunity to sit here again and be part of this group...I'm sure there are going to be moments when we have some partisanship playing out, but the experience in the last Parliament, working with members from all parties, was just exceptional. I look forward to doing that kind of substantive, co-operative work again. You have my full commitment as chair that I will do everything possible to make sure we are plugging along and advancing Canada's role in the world and Canada's foreign policy as we report back to Parliament and to the government.

Thank you very much for your confidence. I really appreciate it.

With that, if the committee is in agreement, I invite the clerk to proceed with the election of the vice-chairs.

The Clerk: Pursuant to Standing Order 106(2), the first vice-chair must be a member of the official opposition.

I am now prepared to receive motions for the first vice-chair.

Mr. Epp, go ahead, please.

Mr. Dave Epp (Chatham-Kent—Leamington, CPC): I nominate Leona Alleslev.

The Clerk: Thank you.

Are there any further motions?

(Motion agreed to)

The Clerk: I declare the motion carried and Leona Alleslev duly elected as first vice-chair of the committee.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Leona Alleslev (Aurora—Oak Ridges—Richmond Hill, CPC): Thank you.

[Translation]

The Clerk: Pursuant to Standing Order 106(2), the second vice-chair must be a member of an opposition party other than the official opposition.

[English]

I am now prepared to receive motions for the second vice-chair.

Yes, Mr. Duvall.

Mr. Scott Duvall (Hamilton Mountain, NDP): I'd like to nominate Jack Harris.

The Clerk: Are there any other motions?

Mr. Spengemann.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Sven Spengemann: I nominate Stéphane Bergeron.

The Clerk: Thank you.

[*English*]

Are there any other motions?

Since more than one candidate has been nominated, pursuant to Standing Order 106(3), I'm required to preside over the election of the second vice-chair by secret ballot.

Before proceeding, I will very briefly explain the process.

[*Translation*]

My colleague—who is a procedural clerk of the House of Commons—will distribute a ballot to each member of the committee. You have to clearly indicate your choice by printing in block letters the first and last name of the candidate on the ballot and deposit it in the box.

[*English*]

We will then count the votes and announce the name of the successful candidate. If no candidate receives the majority of the votes, another ballot will have to be conducted in the same manner.

Allow me to repeat the names of the candidates nominated: Jack Harris and Stéphane Bergeron.

• (1535) _____ (Pause) _____

• (1540)

The Clerk: I declare that Stéphane Bergeron has received a majority of the votes.

[*Translation*]

He is duly elected second vice-chair of the committee.

[*English*]

The Chair: First of all, I want to congratulate MP Alleslev and MP Bergeron for their vice-chairmanships.

Let me also add that it's my understanding that sometime early next week, the Board of Internal Economy will be examining the issue of a third vice-chair. Certainly, if there's a decision made at that time, that will come back in here. I have a pretty good feeling where that member will come from.

So that is in the balance.

MP Bergeron.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron (Montarville, BQ): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I'd like to thank all of my colleagues for choosing me as second vice-chair. I appreciate this show of confidence.

I am not at all upset that my friend Mr. Harris was nominated by Mr. Duvall. As you indicated, Mr. Chair, I am well aware that discussions are underway, and I hope that this issue can be resolved to the satisfaction of all political parties.

In any event, I thank you once again.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Bergeron.

[*English*]

We can now move on to the routine motions.

Mr. Spengemann, I believe you'd like to present those.

Mr. Sven Spengemann: Mr. Chair, thank you very much. It's my pleasure to present the customary routine motions.

[*Translation*]

I have them with me, and I can distribute them in both official languages.

[*English*]

The Chair: I would like to recognize and welcome MP Harris to the table.

Mr. Jack Harris (St. John's East, NDP): Thank you, Mr. Chair. I just got off a plane from Montreal, but this time on the way from Brussels. We had a very interesting meeting with the Canadian NA-TO Parliamentary Association.

The Chair: Welcome to the table.

MP Spengemann, please proceed.

Mr. Sven Spengemann: Chair, thank you very much.

We have the routine motions in front of us. Some of them are quite lengthy, so I'm in the hands of the the committee whether I should read these into the record.

Let's start with the first one, which is about the analysts:

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

• (1545)

The Chair: Can I see a show of hands?

(Motion agreed to)

The Chair: At this point I would like to please call up our analysts.

Thank you.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear!

The Chair: Please proceed, MP Spengemann.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Sven Spengemann: Mr. Chair, here is the second motion, regarding the Subcommittee on Agenda and Procedure:

That the Subcommittee on Agenda and Procedure be established and be composed of five (5) members; the Chair, one member from each party; and that the subcommittee work in the spirit of collaboration.

[*English*]

The Chair: Can I see hands for those in favour of the motion as read?

(Motion agreed to)

Mr. Sven Spengemann: The next one is on the Subcommittee on International Human Rights. Is it the will of the committee to have this read into the record? I'd be very happy to do that. Otherwise we can just review it and then agree.

The Chair: Can I get a show of hands? Are we okay to have a quick read and then take the vote?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Chair: On the formation of the Subcommittee on International Human Rights, those in favour?

Mr. Robert Oliphant (Don Valley West, Lib.): Can we add "as indicated in our package"? I would feel happier if it was put into our minutes as though it were read.

Ms. Leona Alleslev: In that case, let's just read it.

Mr. Robert Oliphant: Does it have to be read to be in the minutes?

The Chair: Let's read it.

Mr. Sven Spengemann: I will be happy to.

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

[Translation]

That the subcommittee be chaired by a member of the government and be composed of eight (8) members or associate members of which four (4) shall be government members, two (2) shall be from the Conservative Party, one (1) from the Bloc Québécois, and one (1) from the New Democratic Party, to be named following the usual consultations with the whips;

[English]

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

[Translation]

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

[English]

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

The Chair: Thank you.

All those in favour?

(Motion agreed to [See Minutes of Proceedings])

The Chair: Please proceed.

Mr. Sven Spengemann: The next motion is on reduced quorum:

That the Chair be authorized to hold meetings to receive evidence and to have that evidence printed when a quorum is not present, provided that at least four members are present, including one member of the opposition and one member of the government, but when travelling outside the parliamentary precinct, that the meeting begin after 15 minutes, regardless of members present.

The Chair: All those in favour?

(Motion agreed to)

Mr. Sven Spengemann: The next motion is on the questioning of witnesses:

[Translation]

That witnesses be given 10 minutes to make their opening statement; that, at the discretion of the Chair, during the questioning of witnesses, there be allocated six (6) minutes for the first questioner of each party as follows: round 1: Conservative Party; Liberal Party; Bloc Québécois; New Democratic Party.

[English]

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

Conservative Party, five minutes,

Liberal Party, five minutes,

Conservative Party, five minutes

Liberal Party, five minutes,

Bloc Québécois, two and a half minutes,

New Democratic Party, two and a half minutes.

The Chair: Thank you.

(Motion agreed to)

Mr. Sven Spengemann: Thank you, Chair.

The next motion is on documents distribution:

That the Clerk of the Committee be authorized to distribute documents to members of the Committee only when the documents are available in both official languages and that witnesses be advised accordingly.

(Motion agreed to)

• (1550)

Mr. Sven Spengemann: The next motion, Chair, is on working meals.

[Translation]

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

[English]

The Chair: Thank you.

(Motion agreed to)

Mr. Sven Spengemann: Chair, we will move to witnesses' expenses:

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

The Chair: Thank you.

(Motion agreed to)

The Chair: It is passed.

[Translation]

Mr. Sven Spengemann: Here is the motion regarding staff at in camera meetings:

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

[English]

The Chair: Thank you.

(Motion agreed to)

Mr. Sven Spengemann: Chair, the next motion is on in camera meetings transcripts:

That one copy of the transcript of each in camera meeting be kept in the Committee Clerk's office for consultation by members of the Committee or by their staff.

(Motion agreed to)

The Chair: Mr. Harris, please.

Mr. Jack Harris: I know we've finished with all these, but could I ask a question on the subcommittee on international human rights? Are these subcommittees permitted to publish their own reports, or do they have to come to the committee?

I'm just wondering whether that—

The Chair: I chaired that for a while. The reports are brought here.

Generally, that committee operates by consensus. They then present the report to the full committee, to our committee. Then we adopt it at this committee here and it's published under our auspices.

Mr. Jack Harris: But it's their report, not our report.

The Chair: Correct.

Well, it's our report. We adopt it here. It's our report, but it's done by the subcommittee.

Mr. Jack Harris: We don't amend it.

The Chair: We could, but we haven't.

It's my understanding that, going back quite a ways, there has not been.... Certainly, in the last Parliament we didn't amend them, because all of the reports brought here were consensus reports; they were unanimous.

MP Alleslev.

Ms. Leona Alleslev: However, if there isn't consensus and we want to make recommendations, it's still within our purview to do so.

The Chair: Correct. We could do that. That's right.

Next we go to notice of motions, MP Spengemann.

Mr. Sven Spengemann: Thank you, Chair.

[*Translation*]

Here is the motion on notice of motions:

That a 48 hours notice, interpreted as two nights, shall be required for any substantive motion to be considered by the committee, unless the substantive motion relates directly to business then under consideration, provided that (1) the notice be filed with the Clerk of the committee no later than 4:00 p.m. (EST) from Monday to Friday; that (2) the motion be distributed to members in both official languages by the Clerk on the same day the said notice was transmitted if it was received no later than the deadline hour; and that (3) notices received after the deadline hour or on non-business days be deemed to have been received during the next business day, and that when the committee is travelling on official business, no substantive motions may be moved.

[*English*]

The Chair: Thank you.

(Motion agreed to)

The Chair: I think we have one final one.

Mr. Sven Spengemann: Chair, the last one is on independent members, clause-by-clause:

That, in relation to Orders of Reference from the House respecting Bills,

(a) the clerk of the committee shall, upon the committee receiving such an Order of Reference, write to each Member who is not a member of a caucus represented on the committee to invite those Members to file with the clerk of the committee, in both official languages, any amendments to the Bill, which is the subject of the said Order, which they would suggest that the committee consider;

[*Translation*]

(b) suggested amendments filed, pursuant to paragraph (a), at least 48 hours prior to the start of clause-by-clause consideration of the bill to which the amendments relate shall be deemed to be proposed during the said consideration, provided that the committee may, by motion, vary this deadline in respect of a given bill;

[*English*]

and

(c) during the clause-by-clause consideration of a Bill, the Chair shall allow a Member who filed suggested amendments, pursuant to paragraph (a), an opportunity to make brief representations in support of them.

• (1555)

The Chair: Thank you very much.

(Motion agreed to)

The Chair: There's another one that we adopted in the previous Parliament relating to gifts:

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

It just didn't make it into the package. If it's the will of the committee, we'll adopt this as well. It was something that was just handy for the clerk to be able to do.

(Motion agreed to)

The Chair: Thank you.

MP Alleslev.

Ms. Leona Alleslev: I would like to propose an additional routine motion for consideration.

The Chair: Sure.

Ms. Leona Alleslev: It is that all meetings, other than those deemed in camera, would be televised or, if that's not possible, then webcast wherever possible.

The Chair: Is there any discussion?

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

Ms. Leona Alleslev: Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you, MP Alleslev.

MP Alleslev.

Ms. Leona Alleslev: I would like to put some motions on notice for what we might be doing. I'm wondering whether now is a good time to do so.

The Chair: This is a good point for discussion.

What I was going to suggest, based on previous operating procedure, is that we take those into the subcommittee, as we did in the previous Parliament, to have an initial discussion, working with the smaller group, on bringing them in. Of course, they will then come back in here, either as massive agreement among the members or, of course, if there's not agreement, they would come back in here anyway.

Would it be possible to have them tabled or have them brought for discussion next week?

Ms. Leona Alleslev: I would like to have an initial discussion with all the members here present, so that we can start exploring this, so that all committee members have an idea of what might be some of the “art of the possible” in terms of what we might discuss. Then we could decide what we want to do with them throughout the discussion.

The Chair: Okay.

Do I see agreement to do this?

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron: I would rather that you don't see any disagreement.

The Chair: Okay.

Ms. Leona Alleslev: Okay, and I won't belabour it, obviously.

The first one is timely. It would be that the foreign affairs and international development committee invite the Minister of Foreign Affairs to appear in person before the committee for a two-hour televised meeting no later than Friday, March 13, and that the minister be given 10 minutes for his opening statement and that the remaining time be allotted for questions and comments from members of the committee—particularly in light of the fact that the supplemental estimates have been tabled.

The Chair: MP Oliphant.

Mr. Robert Oliphant: I'm just wondering whether this is a request for the minister to appear on estimates, or whether it's a request for the minister to appear on his mandate letter, or on...

I just want this to be clear, because we usually have the minister come, at some point, on mandate letter and we usually have the minister come at some point on estimates. We could combine the two in one, if that were the understanding.

I just wasn't sure, because the estimates were added in. We have received estimates. We have to report back—I'm just looking at the clerk—

Ms. Leona Alleslev: May 1. It's a floating deadline.

Mr. Robert Oliphant: It's a floating deadline based on opposition days, etc.

What's our best guess, in your...?

The Clerk: It's three sitting days before March 26, unless the last opposition day changes—

Mr. Robert Oliphant: Right.

Ms. Leona Alleslev:—hence, the timeliness of this March 13 deadline, to ensure that we have the opportunity.

The motion is for a two-hour meeting. That was the thinking: that we would be able to have two hours to do this but would con-

sider supplementary estimates in the course of it and therefore meet the deadline of whatever it is—March 21?

Mr. Robert Oliphant: I just wanted to clarify.

It's primarily, the estimates, then, what the request is about. I just wanted to be clear.

Ms. Leona Alleslev: It's the estimates and everything else.

The Chair: MP Bergeron, please.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron: I was just about to ask the same type of question that Mr. Oliphant just asked. First of all, on the question of consideration of estimates, I must admit that two hours to consider both the mandate letters and the estimates seems short to me.

To give you an example, as Minister of Public Safety in the National Assembly, I was on the hot seat for five hours, and the Minister of Health could be there for 12 or even 20 hours. So, two hours to consider both the estimates and the mandate letters seems very short to me.

I need clarification on another matter. Would we receive the Minister of Foreign Affairs only or the Minister of International Development as well? Will it be possible to hear from the Minister of International Development at some stage?

We need clarification, but yes, it's interesting to have this discussion among ourselves.

• (1600)

[*English*]

The Chair: MP Bergeron, if you would like both ministers to attend, you could amend MP Alleslev's motion.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron: It was more of a question than an intention.

Ms. Leona Alleslev: Usually we only get the minister for an hour. Asking for two hours to hear both ministers at the same time is a bigger request. Normally, we do not have two hours to discuss estimates.

[*English*]

The Chair: MP Oliphant.

Mr. Robert Oliphant: I was just seeking clarity, because in my years here, since 2008, ministers have come for an hour. That is the practice of standing committees of the House of Commons. That is what has happened. If someone wants to change that, I understand, but we need to think about that. The normal practice is that ministers come for one hour and are subject to questioning, and their officials stay and are available for the second hour.

We are open. If the committee wants, we can request that the minister come for two hours. That is certainly fine. If it is for two hours, that would be a long time on estimates. It would depend on how open the chair is to having members go off topic at the estimates discussion, and there seems to be some freedom given by some chairs on the estimates. However, scheduling is always a problem. The estimates cover both development and foreign affairs, so it may be appropriate to have both ministers and have two hours. Have them at the same time, and you can take on both of them.

The Chair: We'll go back to MP Bergeron's postulation, and that was whether we can add the international development minister to the motion, if there's a willingness.

MP Harris.

Mr. Jack Harris: My question is about whether this is on the estimates. As Mr. Oliphant pointed out, some chairs are lenient in this regard, but they do not have to be. If someone objects to a question because it's not strictly on the estimates, then the chair would have to make a ruling.

I'm not sure what the intention is here. Is it going to be open ended? Well, let's make it open ended and not call it just on the estimates. That way you can ask questions on the estimates and anything else, because if you call it on the estimates then you're relying on the goodwill of the chair, and I have no reason to doubt goodwill, but chairs also have to follow the rules if someone calls upon them to do so.

The Chair: MP Alleslev, go ahead, please.

Ms. Leona Alleslev: Again, the motion is to have the minister for two hours to discuss anything and everything that we feel we need to hear from him. Obviously, we're in a situation where foreign affairs has taken on an increasingly larger part of the Canadian domestic conversation at this point, in terms of what's going on at the UN Security Council, in Iran and in China. We do have a China committee, but at the same time we have lots of foreign affairs questions, including the estimates. That's why we think we need two hours to deal with both topics.

If we also want the international development minister, then that would be a separate motion for a separate occasion, because ultimately we as a committee for foreign affairs need to have the opportunity to really understand everything that's going on in foreign affairs, including the financial aspect. That's why I'm putting forward a motion for the two hours.

• (1605)

The Chair: Thank you. MP Alleslev provided clarity on the intent. It's the estimates and the broader discussion, so that wouldn't be limited to just the estimates.

MP Spengemann, go ahead, please.

Mr. Sven Spengemann: Mr. Chair, I'm new to the committee but I'm advised that the relationship in the past Parliament was extremely constructive and that this committee has indeed done some great work. Past practice doesn't bind this committee, but what has been done in the past in terms of inviting either both ministers or a sequence of those two ministers? How did it work in the past Parliament?

The Chair: I'm trying to think of how we did the estimates the last time around. We had them separately.

Mr. Sven Spengemann: The only question would then be whether there might be issues on which you really would want both ministers to be present together. If that's the case, how do we tackle those?

The Chair: The officials would be able to address any questions that had a scope beyond one minister or the other. We have MP Alleslev's motion. We can deal with this now or it's been put on the table and we can deal with it next week through the subcommittee and then bring it back in. I think we've had a good discussion around it. What's the will of the committee?

MP Alleslev.

Ms. Leona Alleslev: The only reason I ask if we could is that I know that because foreign affairs is a really big deal at the moment, we have a foreign affairs minister who is extremely busy. We're looking at a March 13 deadline and we're sitting for only two weeks between now and March 13, so in the interests of time, I wonder if it would be possible to deal with this today.

The Chair: Thank you.

MP Sahota, go ahead, please.

Ms. Ruby Sahota (Brampton North, Lib.): I was just wondering if Ms. Alleslev could read out the wording of her motion again.

Ms. Leona Alleslev: It reads:

That the Committee invite the Minister of Foreign Affairs to appear in person before the committee for a two hour televised meeting no later than Friday, March 13, 2020, and that the minister be given 10 minutes for his opening statement and that the remaining time be allotted for questions and comments from Members of the committee.

Ms. Ruby Sahota: Thank you.

The Chair: MP Oliphant, go ahead, please.

Mr. Robert Oliphant: For clarity and for the minister to be prepared, perhaps it could say to discuss matters "including but not limited to the Supplementary Estimates (b) 2019-20". Would you agree with that?

The Chair: Is there agreement to amend, MP Alleslev?

Ms. Leona Alleslev: Yes.

The Chair: We've heard the discussion around the table. MP Alleslev made the point that the reason she's suggesting we not wait and use the usual previous practice—which we're hoping will be the practice—on this one is that there's a time sensitivity to this. I think we all accept that. Can I call the question?

All those in favour of the motion put forward by MP Alleslev, as amended?

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

Ms. Leona Alleslev: Thank you very much.

In the interests of time and the will of the committee, I will hold my other motions and send them in for further discussion at a later date.

The Chair: Thank you very much. I appreciate that.

Is there any other business around the table?

MP Oliphant, go ahead, please.

Mr. Robert Oliphant: On that matter, would it be helpful, if we have a whole bunch of ideas for studies—and I'm sure everyone has ideas about studies—for us to suggest that they be received.... They can be received anytime with 48 hours' notice and so on, but everybody could get some motions in so the agenda committee could meet and have a discussion for the first couple of studies. I suspect there are going to be 10 different studies and then the agenda committee could work on them.

The Chair: Thank you. That actually was our practice in the previous Parliament. We would have members send ideas for studies to the clerk, who would then distribute them in both languages with enough time that they could then be discussed again in the subcommittee. Then obviously back in the room here we'd bring a report from the subcommittee, which generally went pretty well.

With that in mind, I think it's a good suggestion if we could ask members—and I'm sure members from all parties have been thinking about ideas—to submit them maybe by end of day tomorrow.

• (1610)

Ms. Leona Alleslev: How about end of day Monday?

The Chair: If we could submit them by end of day Monday, we will then take them into account and schedule a subcommittee meeting maybe a little bit later in the week to give everybody a chance to review them and discuss them on Wednesday or Thursday. I want to make sure that people's schedules are okay and clear. We will have the clerk reach out to find appropriate times that work for everyone. I know that Mondays are not good generally for those additional meetings. People have a heavy burden on Mondays, so we'll try to accommodate later in the week.

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron: So far I'm now okay with Mondays.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Chair: All right. Okay, it's being sensitive to members' needs.

Let's do that. With that in mind, please submit your study ideas in both languages to Erica by Monday afternoon, and then we'll have a very good meeting in the subcommittee, and then bring all that hard work back in here. With that, I want to thank members. We've had a good first session, and seeing no additional business, I shall....

Oh, there's one point from MP Spengemann.

Mr. Sven Spengemann: Just before you do that, I wonder if we could, first of all, give a very warm welcome to our clerk and our

table officers. If they choose, maybe they would like to say a few words about what their interests are and what their background is, just so that we can get to know each other a bit.

Ms. Allison Goody (Committee Researcher): Hello. My name is Allison Goody. I'm one of your analysts from the Library of Parliament. I first started working for this committee in 2009 and I worked with the chair and Ms. Alleslev in the last Parliament. I'm looking forward to working with all of you. I should say that I also work for the Special Committee on Canada-China Relations.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Nadia Faucher (Committee Researcher): Good afternoon. I'm Nadia Faucher. This is my first year with the House of Commons Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development, but I have worked on the Senate committees on foreign affairs and health. I have more than 15 years' experience in international development and international affairs.

I also support the work of the ParlAmericas Association. We may be called upon to travel in some cases.

[*English*]

The Chair: I can tell you, from experience over the last four and a half years, that we've always had exceptional table officers helping us, analysts and, of course, our clerk. That's really been represented in the quality of the reports that we've all worked on together. So again, I thank you for all....

Oh, sorry, Erica. I was thinking you had led off.

Please.

The Clerk: It's okay. My name is Erica Pereira. I'll be the clerk of the standing committee for this Parliament. I've worked with the chair, Ms. Alleslev, Mr. Oliphant and a few of you before. So it's good to be back. I've been a clerk here for 13 years with various committees and it's important to note as well that we have one more analyst with us. He's at the back of the room, B.J. Siekierski.

The three analysts will be trading off for the duration of the Parliament.

The Chair: Wonderful. Okay.

Ms. Christine Holke (Committee Clerk): I'm just accompanying Erica today. My name is Christine Holke and I am the clerk for the Special Committee on Canada-China Relations.

[*Translation*]

I've been working on Parliament Hill for 20 years. I have worked for all three institutions: the Library of Parliament, the Senate and the House of Commons. I've been a committee clerk for 13 years.

[*English*]

The Chair: Thank you very much.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear!

With that, we shall adjourn.

The Chair: Again, we have exceptional table officers.

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