



Joint Interparliamentary Council

Conseil interparlementaire mixte

Minutes

Meeting No. 132

October 23, 2013

The Joint Interparliamentary Council met this day at 3:35 p.m., in room 356-S of the Centre Block, Mr. Joe Comartin, M.P., presiding.

Representing the Senate: Hon. Norman Doyle for Hon. Gerald J. Comeau, Senator.

Representing the House of Commons: Joe Comartin, Dave Mackenzie, Hon. Rob Merrifield, Sadia Groguhé, Frank Valeriote, Gordon Brown and Randy Hoback, MPs.

In attendance:

From the International and Interparliamentary Affairs Directorate: Jeremy LeBlanc, Deputy Principal Clerk, Parliamentary Associations; Gérald Lafrenière, Deputy Principal Clerk, Parliamentary Exchanges; and Marie-Andrée Rainville, Manager, Resource Planning and Administration.

From the Senate: Sloan Mask, Financial Advisor, Planning and Corporate Reporting, Finance and Procurement Directorate.

From the House of Commons: Gilles Larocque, Senior Financial Advisor, Policy and Financial Planning.

1. Approval of Minutes:

On motion of Mr. Mackenzie, the minutes of the meeting of April 24, 2013 were approved.

2. Supplementary Funds (Canada-France):

The Chair reported that in June the Chair of the Canada-France Interparliamentary Association had written requesting an additional \$16,500 to finance the Association's annual meeting with its French counterparts which was hosted in New Brunswick. Costs for this activity were projected to be higher than anticipated due to recent travel policy changes. Pursuant to Section 2.2 of the Financial Management and Policy Guide for Parliamentary Associations which authorizes the Co-Chairs to advance up to \$20,000 in

funding to a parliamentary association in exceptional cases when the JIC is unable to meet, the Co-Chairs agreed to allocate an additional \$16,500 to the Association's budget. On motion of Mr. Valeriotte, it was agreed to ratify the Co-Chairs' decision.

3. APF Requests:

The Chair provided an overview of two requests from the Chair of the Canadian Branch of the *Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie* (APF) to have a single parliamentarian accompanied by a staff member on an outgoing activity. The first request, in July, concerned the Francophonie Games in Nice, while the second, in early October, concerned the meetings at the International Secretariat in Paris and the XXVIth Europe Regional Assembly in Chisinau, Moldova. The Co-Chairs declined to grant the first request and agreed to the second, having evaluated the nature of each activity and the role that the Chair of the Canadian Branch would be called upon to play.

Senator Doyle moved that the Co-Chairs' decisions be ratified.

After debate, the question was put on the motion and it was agreed to.

4. Activity Budget Status Report:

The Clerk provided an update on the status of the envelope for association activities. It was agreed that, at its next meeting, the Council consider requests for additional funds from associations projecting a shortfall.

5. JIC Annual Report:

The Chair drew members' attention to the fourth report on Parliamentary Associations' Activities and Expenditures, related to activities for the 2012-2013 fiscal year.

On motion of Mr. Mackenzie, it was agreed to forward the report to the internal economy committees of both Houses and then make it publicly available via the International and Interparliamentary Affairs' section of the Parliamentary Web site.

6. JIC and Senate/House Internal Economy Committees:

The Chair drew members' attention to the order of reference given by the House of Commons to the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs to study the Board of Internal Economy (BOIE) with a view to replacing it with an independent oversight body. The Chair felt that the relationship between the JIC and the BOIE should be raised with the Committee, so that it may be considered as part of their review.

On motion of Mr. Mackenzie, it was agreed that the Co-Chairs write to the Chair of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs to raise the role of the BOIE in the governance of parliamentary associations and its relationship with the JIC.

7. IPU:

The Clerk provided a review of developments with regard to Canada's participation in the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU). The Council's recommendation that Canada withdraw from the IPU as of December 31, 2013, was considered by the internal economy committees of both Houses in June. Both committees asked the Council to reconsider the matter and review the international contributions of all associations who pay them. At the 129th IPU Assembly in October, the Canadian Group made representations to the international executive committee on the need to cut contribution rates. It garnered support for this proposal and was elected to chair the Sub-Committee on Finance, which has been charged with a review of the IPU's finances and asked to develop a proposed budget for the 130th Assembly in March 2014.

After discussion, Mr. Brown moved that the Co-Chairs write to the Chairs of the Standing Senate Committee on Internal Economy, Budgets and Administration and the House of Commons Board of Internal Economy reaffirming the JIC's recommendation that the Parliament of Canada withdraw from the Inter-Parliamentary Union as of December 31, 2013.

Debate arose thereon.

Mr. Valeriotte moved that the motion be amended by deleting all of the words after "Inter-Parliamentary Union" and adding the following:

"if, as of March 31, 2014, the JIC has been briefed by the Canadian Group of the Inter-Parliamentary Union on the work of the Sub-Committee on Finance, and that the JIC be of the view that insufficient progress has been made in responding to concerns about member contributions."

After debate, the question was put on the amendment and it was defeated by a show of hands: Yeas: 3; Nays: 5.

The question was put on the main motion and it was agreed to by a show of hands: Yeas: 5; Nays: 3.

8. Other Business:

Mr. Hoback requested an update on the implementation of the recommendations of the Subcommittee on the Restructuring of Parliamentary Associations. It was agreed to consider this issue at the next meeting of the Council.

At 4:49 p.m., the Council adjourned to the call of the Co-Chairs.

Eric Janse
Clerk