SENATE
COMMITTEES DIRECTORATE



SÉNAT
DIRECTION DES COMITÉS

CANADA

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

OTTAWA, Monday, October 26, 2026
(28)

[*English*]

The Standing Senate Committee on Human Rights met this day at 4 p.m., in room B45, Senate of Canada Building, the chair, the Honourable Paulette Senior, presiding.

Members of the committee present: The Honourable Senators Arnold, Arnot, Ataullahjan, Bernard, Karetak-Lindell, Robinson, Senior and Wells (*Alberta*) (8).

Participating in the meeting: Robert Mason and Madalina Chesoi, Analysts, Library of Parliament; Chelsea DeFazio, Communications Officer, Communications, Broadcasting and Publications Directorate.

Pursuant to the order of reference adopted by the Senate on Tuesday, May 26, 2026, the committee began its consideration of Bill S-235, An Act respecting the National Strategy to Combat Human Trafficking.

WITNESSES:

The Honourable Senator Salma Ataullahjan, sponsor of the bill.

The Canadian Centre to End Human Trafficking:

James McLean, Director, Research and Policy *(by videoconference).*

Métis National Council:

Victoria Pruden, President *(by videoconference)*.

As individuals:

Genevieve LeBaron, Distinguished Professor of Global Supply Chain Governance, School of Public Policy, Simon Fraser University *(by videoconference)*.

Nicole Barrett, Director, International Justice and Human Rights Clinic, Peter A. Allard School of Law, University of British Columbia *(by videoconference)*.

Alexa Maierle, Student Clinician, International Justice and Human Rights Clinic, Peter A. Allard School of Law, University of British Columbia *(by videoconference)*.

The Honourable Senator Salma Ataullahjan and James McLean each made a statement.

At 4:14 p.m., the committee suspended.

At 4:14 p.m., the committee resumed.

James McLean made a statement and the Honourable Senator Salma Ataullahjan answered questions.

At 4:47 p.m., the committee suspended.

At 4:59 p.m., the committee resumed.

Victoria Pruden, Genevieve LeBaron, Nicole Barrett and Alexa Maierle each made a statement and answered questions.

At 5:57 p.m., the committee suspended.

At 6:02 p.m., pursuant to rule 12-16(1)(d), the committee resumed in camera to discuss a draft report.

It was agreed that the committee allow the audio recording of the in camera portion of today's meeting, that one copy be kept with the clerk of the committee for consultation by committee members or by the committee analysts, and that the audio recording be destroyed by the clerk when authorized to do so by the Subcommittee on Agenda and Procedure, but no later than at the end of this parliamentary session.

Pursuant to the order of reference adopted by the Senate on Thursday, February 5, 2026, the committee continued its study on the impact of artificial intelligence on human rights and economic security in Canada, especially in relation to vulnerable groups and the international human right to work.

It was agreed that the draft report, as amended, be adopted, in both official languages, and that the Subcommittee on Agenda and Procedure be empowered to approve the final version of the report, taking into consideration this meeting's discussions, and with any necessary editorial, grammatical and translation changes required.

It was agreed that the chair be authorized to table the report in the Senate or with the Clerk of the Senate, in both official languages, at the earliest opportunity, and to request a complete and detailed response from the government.

It was agreed that the Subcommittee on Agenda and Procedure be empowered to make decisions on behalf of the committee to publicize the report with the support of the Senate Communications Directorate.

It was agreed that the Subcommittee on Agenda and Procedure, with the support of the Senate Communications Directorate, prepare a news release for publication on the committee's website and for distribution upon tabling of the report in the Senate, or with the Clerk of the Senate.

At 6:40 p.m., pursuant to rule 12-16(1)(d), the committee considered a draft agenda (future business).

At 6:52 p.m., the committee adjourned to the call of the chair.

ATTEST:

Ericka Paajanen

Clerk of the Committee