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The Honourable David Kilgour

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• (0905)

[English]

The Chair (Hon. David Kilgour (Edmonton—Mill Woods—Beaumont, Lib.)): Ladies and gentlemen, I think we have a quorum now.

Before we start to hear our witnesses, I believe Mr. Broadbent has a motion or point of order.

Hon. Ed Broadbent (Ottawa Centre, NDP): Mr. Chairman, following our last discussion with the people who had contact with the indigenous people in the Philippines who were affected by the Canadian mining company, we talked about having them come before the committee on December 16. The representatives of the indigenous people can't come in December, but they could come in February.

So I would like to make a motion to change the date from December 16, when it was scheduled, to sometime in February next year.

(Motion agreed to)

The Chair: We're honoured to have some very distinguished witnesses on a vitally important topic this morning. I think everybody understands they have five minutes. I know that's terribly short for this subject, but we'll hopefully have more time for questions and answers.

If you don't mind, we'll start with Mr. Mendes.

Thank you for being with us.

Prof. Errol Mendes (Professor, International and Human Rights Law, Adviser to the Office of the Secretary General of the UN, As Individual): Thank you, Mr. Chairman and honourable members of Parliament.

I'll be very brief. I will not go over my whole paper, in the interest of time. I'll start at page three for those of you who actually have the paper.

The conflict in the south of Sudan and the Darfur region is foundationally a battle for power, resources, and money across this tragic land. The focus of the international community's effort to stop the genocide has been on power sharing and resource sharing, including a future referendum on independence. There has been an abject failure to focus on what I consider to be potentially the most powerful lever against the Khartoum government; namely, to make

the burgeoning external debt of Sudan a lever against crimes against humanity and genocide taking place there.

The British government—and I've given an appendix where this is stated—has stated that the Sudanese massive and unsustainable external debt is an important incentive for peace, but will require exceptional efforts from the international community. The external debt level stands at \$24 billion U.S., \$20 billion of which is in arrears. The debt is owed to commercial and bilateral creditors of the Paris Club and the Arab creditors, as well as multilateral agencies.

The British Department of International Development thinks that normalization of relationships with international creditors and debt relief under HIPC, the highly indebted poor countries initiative, could bring about an effective peace if there were large injections of cash from the international community to the multilateral agencies once the arrears are dealt with. What the British government does not say expressly is that if there is a will, the international community can use the external debt as massive carrots and sticks to ensure the Khartoum government stops manufacturing genocide by stealth.

What is shocking is that according to the UNDP, Sudan is actively engaging with the international financial institutions to normalize relations, without having the international community demand that it stop its actions amounting to crimes against humanity and genocide in Darfur. The UNDP is stating that in 2002 Sudan began to normalize relations with the IMF, the World Bank, the OPEC Fund, the African Development Bank, and the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development. Astonishingly, despite its actions in the south of Sudan and in the Darfur region, in recognition of its progress in structural reform, the IMF restored Sudan's voting and related rights.

Canada is presently urging the world to accept the principle that with sovereignty comes the responsibility to protect the citizens of each sovereign country, and if a state fails to do so, the possibility of international humanitarian intervention should be envisaged.

If ever a country satisfied the conditions of international humanitarian intervention, it is the country brought into tragedy by the government in Khartoum. Even before such intervention takes place, the international community should bring into play the full force of the international financial levers against such governments.

There is a simple human rights logic to this position. If the Sudanese government has the ability to lessen its debt burden, what guarantee is there that it will not use the extra resources to buy more military equipment to further its genocidal goals? Lessening the debt of a genocidal government without stringent conditionalities and effective monitoring could indirectly lead to financing the government's action against its own people. In addition, the lack of effective monitoring of debt rescheduling obligations could also line the pockets of the corrupt regime in Khartoum.

Indeed, the IMF had already recognized this logic when it rescheduled Sudan's arrears in 2002 so that the Khartoum government could repay the loans to the Arab Fund. As part of the rescheduling agreement, Sudan agreed to reduce its military spending, as well as make the management of its oil revenues more transparent. Given the Khartoum government's actions since 2002, these commitments seem like a tragic farce played upon a stage of unspeakable human tragedy.

Canada can take a leadership role in bringing the international financial institutions and debtor clubs into an effective strategy against the Khartoum government. Prime Minister Paul Martin is a respected leader in the international financial community, having been the chair of the G-20 group of finance ministers that included the most influential participants in the IMF, the World Bank, and the Paris Club, together with the home jurisdictions of some of the largest commercial creditors.

Canada and the Prime Minister could use their moral authority and leadership roles in the G-20, their close ties with the present leadership of the World Bank and the IMF, and the impending visit of George Bush to Ottawa to call for an international conference—perhaps of the G-20, together with the World Bank and the IMF—on linking any assistance on the external debt of Sudan to real steps taken by the Khartoum government to stop the actions of the Jangaweed proxy militias against the Darfur civilian populations, and to negotiate in good faith with the rebel groups in Darfur.

● (0910)

If the root causes of the global human tragedy in Darfur involve battles for power, land, and resources, the crushing external debt will make these gains illusory for the Khartoum government in the long run. It is time we realize the potential of one of the most powerful levers that the international community has to stop the bloodshed in Darfur before a precious part of the human family is substantially driven from their homes and potentially wiped out.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: Thank you.

I should have noted that Professor Mendes is a professor of international and human rights law at the University of Ottawa, and an adviser to the Office of the Secretary General of the UN.

Our second witness, I believe, is Lieutenant-General Richard Evraire.

[*Translation*]

Lgén Richard Evraire (président, Conférence des associations de la défense): Mr. Chairman, thank you for inviting me to speak before your Committee.

● (0915)

[*English*]

Allow me to address possible Canadian responses to the humanitarian crisis in the Darfur region of Sudan. I will focus on the Conference of Defence Associations' view of the government's much discussed and yet to be formally implemented 3D approach to foreign policy—defence, diplomacy, and development. I'll discuss the essential role that the military plays in this trio of government functions and suggest how limited military resources have reduced Canada's foreign policy options.

The humanitarian crisis in Sudan requires immediate international attention. Unfortunately, the United Nations has thus far been slow in taking concrete measures to improve the security situation there. The most important and long-overdue task, of course, is to stop the killing. Establishing a secure environment is the task of the military and a prerequisite to nation building in Sudan. Hopefully, troops from the African Union countries will be able to provide a secure environment and the sooner the better.

The basis for humanitarian intervention in Sudan and in countries where gross human rights abuses have taken place, such as in Rwanda, Kosovo, and Afghanistan, should come, I believe, from the concept of the responsibility to protect, a concept supported by the Canadian government, a concept that involves a rethinking of the traditional notion of state sovereignty, a concept that advances the idea that states are responsible for the protection and security of their own citizens, a concept that also advances the principle that when states cannot or will not ensure the protection and security of their citizens, the traditional principle of non-intervention in state affairs should yield to the responsibility of the international community to act, preferably with the blessing of the United Nations Security Council, but without this blessing if it not forthcoming.

The International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty, author of the report on the responsibility to protect, asked which authority should authorize military intervention. While the UN is the first port of call, the question is whether it needs to be the last port of call. The current situation in Darfur will hopefully be resolved by the Security Council, but it should not be held hostage to the inability of the Security Council to take appropriate action.

The situation in the Darfur region calls for the establishment of a secure environment. Humanitarian aid cannot be usefully and effectively deployed by aid workers in a region until a competent military force is deployed to prevent the killing of the very civilians who are in need of humanitarian assistance. A secure environment will also facilitate diplomatic efforts aimed at resolving the crisis in this region and elsewhere in Sudan.

Our Prime Minister is today visiting Sudan. The Canadian government might wish to recommend a 3D approach to the crisis in that country, in Darfur and south and east Sudan, and for that matter in other countries where gross humanitarian rights abuses are taking place, an approach that must benefit were Canada to be involved militarily from a high degree of coordination between the Department of National Defence, Foreign Affairs Canada, and the Canadian International Development Agency, each responsible for executing the 3Ds of defence, diplomacy, and development, respectively.

Interestingly, but unfortunately for Canadian citizens surfing the Government of Canada website, the impression is given that these same three activities, defence, diplomacy, and development, very much in evidence in Afghanistan, are being carried there independently of each other while the aims and actions of Foreign Affairs Canada, the Canadian Forces, and CIDA are clearly enunciated on the website. In CDA's view, the website fails to explain the linkages and synergies that must and do exist between the functions performed by these three departments.

The net result of this portrayal of mission separateness is that the extraordinary work of the members of the Canadian Forces and of other military forces in ISAF and Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan are not shown as contributing in a direct and essential way to the success of the diplomatic and humanitarian aid missions.

In Afghanistan, the delivery of humanitarian aid, D for development, and the holding of democratic elections, D for diplomacy, could hardly have been successful without the presence of the military, D for defence.

Of course, it must be recognized that there are problems associated with the 3D approach. These include the appointment of a lead department, agreeing on the primary objectives, and, most importantly, providing adequate resources.

The Conference of Defence Associations believes that Canada should not attempt a 3D approach unless it has the buy-in of all departments concerned and a fully functional coordination cell staffed by representatives from all participating departments and agencies of government. Each one of the 3Ds must be properly resourced if the effort is to be crowned with success, or even considered in the first instance. For example, current limited military resources may well have eliminated or limited the government's options for humanitarian and/or diplomatic initiatives.

Does Sudan fall into this category? There currently exists a shortfall in the number and training levels of personnel in Canadian Forces to meet the demands placed on them, one result of which has been the government's decision to reduce offshore commitments to allow the Canadian Forces the time they require to recover from over-extension.

If the 3D approach is to become an element of Canada's foreign policy of the future, the CDA urges the government to ensure that there is adequate funding for these efforts. Michael Ignatief has suggested and Andrew Cohen, in his book *While Canada Slept: How We Lost our Place in the World*, has highlighted the need for increased resources for all 3Ds if Canada is to have a higher profile in the world. The defence component of the 3Ds is certainly essential

to a humanitarian intervention in the Darfur region. More broadly, though, the establishment of security by African unity forces, for the time being at least, must surely be the first objective. On this point, the CDA wishes to make it quite clear that soldiers are not social workers with guns. The two disciplines, defence and development, should be linked, of course, but they should not be combined. This principle will surely apply to the development of the soon-to-be-announced deployment of provincial reconstruction teams, the PRTs, in Afghanistan.

It is clear that the UN has proven thus far unable to act effectively on the issue of Sudan. Hopefully, the eventual deployment of a large number of African unity groups will bring much-needed security and stability to that country. But the slowness of deployment and the resulting appalling loss of life is an indictment of the lack of a capable and rapidly deployable military force. This is a role that Canada and other industrialized nations, the G-20 countries, for example, could play through the application of the concept of the responsibility to protect and by providing meaningful military support to the African unity force, for instance, to secure the Darfur region by providing humanitarian assistance and by deploying diplomatic efforts to resolve the internal crisis. Our Prime Minister has repeatedly called for a more prominent role for Canada in the world. The treaty approach might serve as a framework for such a role.

The government's long-awaited international security policy statement will hopefully provide us with some clear direction on Canada's foreign and defence policy. The CDA urges the government to ensure that sufficient funding is provided for such an approach.

● (0920)

[Translation]

Mr. Chairman, ladies and gentlemen, the Conference of Defence Associations recognizes that the security of civilian populations should be the first priority of this crisis which is occurring not only in Darfur but also in the south and the east of Sudan.

[English]

In conclusion, we therefore support the deployment of a competent African Union national military force to restore security and protect innocent civilians in Darfur. We also believe that engaging in a 3D foreign policy approach would provide Canada with an opportunity to undertake a larger role in the world. This must be accompanied by an increase in resources for the 3Ds involved. In this context, I make no apologies for singling out the Department of National Defence and the Canadian Forces and their well-known and chronic problem of underfunding. Canada must be a responsible citizen of the North American continent and of the world. Canadians expect it. They also expect their government to provide the men and women who serve this country in our diplomatic, humanitarian aid, and military missions abroad to be given the resources they need to carry out their assigned responsibilities.

Thank you very much. Merci.

The Chair: Thank you, General.

We have the next group of witnesses: Kathy Vandergrift, director of policy for World Vision; Lina Holguin, from Oxfam; Alex Neve, secretary general of Amnesty International; Frank Jewsbury from the Canadian Friends of Sudan, appearing as an individual.

Who is going to speak? I believe you are, Ms. Vandergrift—or would everybody like to speak?

Ms. Kathy Vandergrift (Director of Policy, World Vision Canada): Is there time for each of us?

The Chair: Let's see how we do. Who would like to start?

Ms. Lina Holguin (Advocacy Officer, OXFAM): I'll go first.

Ms. Kathy Vandergrift: I'll go next.

Ms. Lina Holguin: Mr. Chairman and honourable members of Parliament, first, I'd like to thank you for the opportunity you have given us, Oxfam Quebec and Oxfam Canada, to share our views on the great humanitarian crisis that is affecting Darfur.

I was in Darfur in October. I witnessed what Kofi Annan has called the world's worst humanitarian crisis. I talked to people who had lost everything, who had nothing to eat, very little water to drink, and just one piece of plastic as a shelter. Oxfam has been working in Sudan for over twenty years. In all our humanitarian activities we seek to promote the principles of respect for international humanitarian law and protection of civilians. We are committed to delivering independent humanitarian assistance on the basis of need.

Today we would like to encourage the Canadian government to use all means at its disposal to ensure international humanitarian law is upheld and civilians in Darfur are protected from violence, coercion, and deprivation. One of the settlements I visited when I was in Darfur was Kalma. It is 45 minutes from Nyala, the capital of south Darfur. It is the largest camp for displaced people in Darfur. Originally built for 25,000 people, in July its population was 50,000. But by October the number reached 93,000, and people are still arriving. In Kalma camp people are living in miserable conditions, and high rates of malnutrition, bloody diarrhea, and hepatitis E are present. The threat of cholera or malaria epidemics remain a critical concern across Darfur.

People's ability to improve conditions depends on security, and the security situation has deteriorated over the past three weeks. There have been renewed attacks on villages in west and south Darfur, and increased banditry and further fighting between rival armed groups. This has meant that over 150,000 people are cut off from vital aid supplies. The only way for an Oxfam team to get to some towns is to use helicopters. Decent security poses daily threats on civilians. Women and girls who venture outside camps are subject to extreme forms of harassment and violence, including beatings, abduction, and rape. When men leave the safety of the camps, they risk being killed. Terrified people say that police and government soldiers have been unable to protect them from those attacks.

Oxfam is working with displaced people to decide how best to provide essential items by contributing to their protection. In Kass, in south Darfur, for example, Oxfam is distributing wood so women do not need to go out and risk being raped while collecting it.

Our integrated approach to water, sanitation, and public health is now helping over 370,000 people in Darfur and Chad, but resources

are limited. The scale of the crisis is enormous, and we are barely coping with it. The situation is said to grow worse. As the rainy season came to a premature end, there are indicators of widely spread crop failures and food shortages throughout Darfur. The world food program estimates that two million people will be needing food aid in the coming months.

Oxfam welcomes the priority Prime Minister Paul Martin has given to the crisis in Darfur and to Sudan as a whole. We hope it will remain high on his agenda until the emergency is resolved and a lasting peace is achieved.

Following the UN Security Council's failure to agree on a stronger solution on Darfur in Nairobi last week, we urge Canada to continue pressuring all the warring parties to cease attacks on civilians and agree to a way forward to reach a political settlement. We also urge Canada to insist that the Government of Sudan upholds its commitments and responsibilities regarding effecting protection of civilians in Darfur and rapid conclusion of the political negotiations in Abuja and Naivasha.

Oxfam welcomes Canada's support in the deployment of over 3,000 African Union personnel to monitor the ceasefire and protect the civilians. Canada should pressure the African Union to accelerate the deployment of the African Union force to highly critical areas in Darfur. The AU should be working inside camps like Kalma, where shootings occur regularly, and other places where forced relocation is happening. It should also be deployed to west Darfur and to major access roads where the high presence of armed groups surrounding the villages and camps is effectively holding people captive.

●(0925)

Canada's assistance—both humanitarian aid and support for the African Union—to protect displaced people has been critical, yet so much more is needed. We urge you to increase Canada's contribution.

Oxfam local partners in Darfur also asked me to urge Canada to not lose sight of the bigger challenge of helping the Darfurians rebuild their shattered lives and helping Sudan address the root causes of the conflict. Long-term development work might not be feasible today, but the building must begin even in the midst of conflict.

When I was in Kalma a woman approached me, saying, "I am glad you are here." She explained that Oxfam's presence made her safer. While our presence may offer some short-term protection from violence and coercion, this will not be sustainable unless law and order and justice are restored. That responsibility lies with the Government of Sudan and the international community.

The visit of the Prime Minister to Sudan has raised expectations that Canada will remain engaged in the search for peace. We hope it will help move the international community from promises to concrete action.

Thank you very much.

• (0930)

The Chair: *Merci beaucoup, madame. Muchas gracias.* Thank you.

Who's next?

Ms. Vandergrift.

Ms. Kathy Vandergrift: Mr. Chair, thank you for focusing attention on Sudan and for inviting us to meet with you.

World Vision has worked in Sudan for more than twenty years, through good years and lean years, and most of them have been lean years in Sudan. I personally have been before this committee to speak about Sudan three times within the last four years. While the furor is in the headlines now, the crisis in Sudan is not new and it will not be short term.

For several years in Canada, the Sudan Inter-agency Reference Group, a coalition of more than twenty organizations who work with partners in Sudan, has called for a more robust Canadian policy on Sudan. As convener of that coalition, I can inform you that we intend to persist until there is sustainable peace and respect for human rights in all parts of Sudan. That should also be the driving motivation for Canadian policy.

I thought it might be useful for the committee to be aware of the shifts that have taken place in Canadian policy over recent years. I think they are instructive for how we approach human rights in Canadian foreign policy. I'll only focus on two of those.

The record of this committee includes statements by Canadian officials from a few years ago that human rights abuses in Sudan were, in their opinion, an unfortunate side effect of the conflict. If the conflict was solved, then human rights abuses would disappear.

That approach has fortunately changed. Recent statements do indicate acceptance of the fact that human rights abuses are one of the causes of the conflict and therefore need to be addressed in order to resolve the conflict, not as an afterthought. This change has been welcomed by most NGOs. Its implications for Canadian action, however, warrant further attention by this committee for Sudan and for learning how to strengthen Canada's approach to human rights in the upcoming international policy review.

Secondly, less than a year ago there was reluctance to deal with Darfur for fear of the implications for the south-north peace process. The crisis in Darfur could have been prevented. All the warning signs were there, and we informed our government of them. International policy and Canadian policy were piecemeal. After Darfur broke, reported and documented violations of the ceasefire in southern Sudan were then ignored because all eyes were on Darfur, putting at risk the gains in confidence made in the south.

Now officials show us charts of a whole-of-Sudan approach. This is a step forward. We welcome the intention to take the concerns about tension in the eastern part of Sudan seriously. We welcome an analysis that focuses on governance and respect for human rights throughout Sudan. Hopefully, we will see a strategy that does not allow for the continued manipulation of international attention to avoid accountability for actions under international law. I hope this approach will also characterize this committee's recommendations.

I think that gives this committee a lot of scope. To be more strategic, I would suggest that an immediate focus on the Darfur side might be how Canada can help to create conditions for a voluntary return of people who have been forcibly displaced. Protection of civilians remains a priority, but protection goes beyond access to assistance and safety in camps. No one wants to see entrenchment of the displacement.

A look across the border at northern Uganda is instructive. Over 1.6 million people are also in IDP camps. Many have been there for over ten years and are forgotten by the world.

The people of Darfur are concerned about losing land and losing the chance to plant crops, which will mean long-term hunger and long-term dependence on international aid. A strategy for voluntary return means more support for the African Union protection forces and attention to how they are deployed. It means the assessment of conditions for return, insisting on a plan for voluntary return, not the forced relocations as there have been in recent weeks, and support once people do return. Forced displacement of people must not be allowed to be successful. It is dangerously successful in Darfur at the moment.

For the south, it means robust action by Canada to support and strengthen the recent weak Security Council resolution on the peace process. Calling for a comprehensive peace agreement by December is nothing new. Insistence and persistence on the implementation of agreements by the international community would demonstrate that responsibility to protect is more than rhetoric. A common theme in both situations now is the documented reports of violations of agreements with no consequences.

• (0935)

Check the website of the African Union. You will find documented reports of violations. Check the recent report by Human Rights Watch to find evidence from interviews with troops on the ground who are frustrated, because they monitor and report, but nothing is done at the political level.

In the south, it took some time to get the monitoring mechanisms up and running. Within the last year there were investigations. There were documented reports of violations of the ceasefire in the Shilluk Kingdom, violations that resulted in new displacements, attacks on humanitarian workers, and denial of access to assistance long after those parts of the peace agreement were signed. As far as the people of south Sudan, the people impacted, are concerned, nothing has been done about it, threatening their level of confidence in any of these peace agreements.

I focus on these areas with full knowledge of the tension that can exist between getting peace agreements and insisting on compliance with international human rights law. It is a challenge.

May I suggest that this committee could make a substantive contribution to strengthen Canadian international policy by focusing some attention on this challenge by insisting that Canada no longer sacrifice human rights, because there will be no sustainable peace in Sudan without respect for human rights, and then exploring and developing some practical strategy recommendations.

For the short term, successful voluntary return of the IDPs to their homes in Darfur would be a measure of success. For the medium term, implementation of the peace agreements, which include improvements in governance, would be a measure of success. For the long term, the directions for the upcoming international policy review could lead to a more robust and practical Canadian approach to human rights that could benefit other situations as well.

I want to close by offering whatever assistance we can give to strengthen Canada's strategies for international engagement in these areas. I will just offer an observation and a little bit of added information on the strategy of using the IFIs and debt relief.

Our group of NGOs presented to the Canadian government a suggested list of benchmarks to use for debt relief. In fact, there was a fairly positive response by the Department of Foreign Affairs about that, so you could explore that as a committee. Together with our other colleagues, we also have pursued this in the European Union. It will take some convincing, but take a look also at what the NGOs in the European Union have proposed there. They have a more complex set of benchmarks that they have advocated for debt relief and re-engagement with the IFIs.

Those are some bits of information you can pursue.

Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you very much.

I understand, General, that you have to leave by 9:45. Is that correct?

LGen Richard Evraire: Yes, but Colonel Pellerin will be sitting in my place.

The Chair: Okay. We'll continue.

Who is next?

Alex Neve, on behalf of Amnesty International.

Mr. Alex Neve (Secretary General, English Speaking, Amnesty International (Canada)): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Good morning, committee members. Amnesty International very much appreciates the opportunity to be with you here today.

Darfur is without a doubt a human rights tragedy of immense proportions. Sadly, it is only one of many such chapters in Sudan's tragic human rights history. Like so many dire human rights catastrophes, there was ample warning of the mounting crisis, and a failure on the part of the Sudanese authorities and, critically, on the part of the international community to avert it early on. Since the escalation of conflict in Darfur in early 2003, more than 50,000 people have been killed. At least 1.4 million people, mostly from farming communities, have been forcibly displaced, their villages burned, and their herds and other possessions looted. Thousands of women have been raped.

Finally, in the past few months there has been obvious and substantially increased international concern and scrutiny, but the crisis has not abated. The human rights situation in Darfur remains precarious, and abuses are very much ongoing.

There is a profound gulf of trust and security between the displaced people of Darfur, who have understandably lost all trust in

their government, and fear leaving their camps without international protection, on the one hand; and the government, which remains in denial about the extent of the killings and violence, and its own responsibility for the crisis, on the other hand. This gap can only be bridged and insecurity confronted by a total change in Sudanese government attitudes and action, along with continued and increased robust engagement by the international community.

There are a number of concrete recommendations and initiatives that Canada should press, in fact champion, as part of the crucial global effort to restore human rights protection in Darfur. You've already heard a number of suggestions from my colleagues. The Prime Minister's presence in Sudan, as we meet, offers an important opportunity, and we have all shared these recommendations with his office in advance of his visit. Canada's high-level engagement with the Darfur crisis must extend beyond today.

First, there is no question that abuses will not end until the government reigns in the army-backed Jangaweed militia, which has been responsible for so much of the violence and human rights violations. At every turn, Canada must make it absolutely clear to the Sudanese government that they must act immediately to disarm and dismantle the Jangaweed.

We are concerned that the UN Security Council resolution adopted in Nairobi on Friday leaves out the explicit reference to this critical goal. Canada must actively ensure that this does not get lost, and that there are no further excuses or delays with respect to disarmament and the dismantling of the militia.

Second, there must be a mandatory arms embargo imposed on the Government of Sudan to stop military and related supplies from reaching all parties to the conflict in Darfur. That embargo must remain in effect until meaningful safeguards are in place to protect civilians from grave abuses and war crimes. At present, there is a weak UN arms embargo that only covers armed groups and has no enforcement or monitoring mechanism. A new comprehensive UN embargo should be accompanied by an adequately resourced UN monitoring mechanism, including an expert group that reports regularly to the UN Secretary General and the UN sanctions committee. The monitoring body must be able to deploy investigators internationally, and field monitors, who would be posted at the main ports of entry to Sudan to help ensure that the UN embargo is respected. Canada should press the Security Council to take this step.

Third, more should be done to ensure the safety and security of civilians. Canada has provided important financial support to the African Union, but more is needed. It is crucial that Canada now follow up to ensure that AU monitors in Darfur are sufficiently resourced, trained, and instructed to be able to robustly comply with their mandate, limited as it is, to protect civilians it encounters under imminent threat.

Amnesty International has received recent reports that AU monitors who were present at the time that Sudanese police attacked, beat, and used tear gas against internally displaced persons in the al-Geer camp the week before last did not intervene beyond an attempt at verbal mediation. We're pressing for further investigation of that incident, but it raises troubling questions as to the ability of the monitors to fulfill their mandate to protect civilians under imminent threat.

• (0940)

Canada should intensify its efforts to ensure that the support that is being provided is adequate and being appropriately utilized and deployed. It should increase the level of support that has been provided. The goal should be to work toward having AU monitors present in every administrative unit in Darfur.

Justice is crucial. Sudan has known nothing but decades and decades of impunity for widespread, horrifying human rights abuses in every part of the country. It is impunity of that nature that so easily allows further crises like Darfur to take hold. It is vitally important, therefore, that those responsible for abuses in Darfur face justice and be held accountable. It is time to break Sudan's vicious circle of impunity.

That has not been the case to date. Amnesty International continues to call on the Sudanese government to live up to its obligation to deliver justice—and so should the Canadian government. However, we all have clear, grave doubts about the capacity and willingness of Sudanese authorities to do so. Therefore, it is vitally important that the international commission of inquiry currently under way propose a variety of options for ensuring there is justice in Sudan, including the use of the International Criminal Court and the possible establishment of mixed Sudanese and international tribunals.

Canada is an acknowledged international leader in the campaign to confront impunity, and should actively involve itself in the efforts to establish an appropriate mechanism for delivering justice in Sudan.

• (0945)

[*Translation*]

Finally, a national solution must be found to the crisis in Sudan. This crisis must be approached globally, with the goal of ensuring protection and respect of human rights. The international community has tried to deal with the most urgent issues by going from one area to the other rather than adopting a more uniform and global approach at the level of the whole country. Similar attacks of civilians and forced displacements continue to be reported in other areas of Sudan. Therefore, it is essential that Canada works with other countries to reinforce human rights protection in all areas of Sudan and break that vicious circle.

[*English*]

For far too long the situation in Sudan has stood before the world community as a massive, seemingly intractable human rights and humanitarian emergency that could have been prevented. Amnesty International hopes that the Prime Minister's visit to the country today—a visit that is indeed a welcome sign of high-level concern in Canada—will be followed by increased action and clear determina-

tion to work with the international community to bring the current crisis to an end and build an approach to governance in Sudan that ensures that human rights are widely and equally respected throughout the country.

Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you very much.

Mr. Jewsbury.

Lieutenant-Colonel Frank Jewsbury (Canadian Friends of Sudan): Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

It's a pleasure to be here on behalf of the Canadian Friends of Sudan to speak about a couple of points.

The Canadian Friends of Sudan believe there are three keys to improving the security situation in Sudan. First is the signing of the peace accord in southern Sudan, and implementing it in all its aspects. Second—I bow to Amnesty International—is the disarming and disbanding of the Jangaweed militia. Third is modifying the mission of the AU force to give it a more robust role in protecting civilians, and to properly support it.

During the next few minutes I'd like to concentrate on talking about the AU force, since we consider that the essential step in stopping the problem in Darfur is for the Government of Sudan to honour its commitments and immediately disarm and disband the Jangaweed, which they had agreed to do.

The alien force came into being when, on 8 April, the Government of Sudan and the rebel groups signed a humanitarian ceasefire agreement. In addition to the requirement to neutralize the militias, the agreement provided for a complete cessation of military activity, unrestricted humanitarian access to the IDPs and refugees, the concentration of armed rebel groups in identified areas, and the formation of a ceasefire commission and monitoring force. By the end of May they'd signed an agreement on how to establish the commission and the monitoring force, and the monitoring force began to be deployed in June.

The situation did not improve with the small monitoring force. This was increased in August. Finally, at the end of October, they agreed to increase it from 300 personnel to some 3,500 personnel, which includes 2,300 military, 800 police officers, and a few civilians. These deployments started at the end of October. They will continue over the next few months and they will need more help.

If security is provided in the near term, then the mandate of the AU force must be changed to include protection of civilians, and such a change would likely require a much larger force. When you think about Sudan, it's the largest country in Africa, as you know. It has a size equivalent to the United States east of the Mississippi River. The region of Darfur itself is 1,500 kilometres north to south, and almost 1,000 kilometres east to west. The part that the AU force is deployed in is some 800 kilometres in each direction. That is the distance from Ottawa to Windsor, and the area itself is the equivalent of Ontario south of Sudbury. So it's a huge area. And when you think about Kosovo, NATO deployed some 45,000 troops into an area the size of Algonquin Park, whereas the AU is putting 3,500 troops into an area the size of southern Ontario. It is just not really feasible to do what we're asking them to do with a force of that size. Invariably, it will have to be expanded, and it will need international community support.

The nearest support centre to this operational area is more than 1,000 kilometres away. There are essentially no roads and no built-in telephone electronic communications. There is no radio system. What you're looking at is a small force equivalent to being deployed across the high Arctic in Canada and being supported from Ottawa. The main base is going to be a long distance away.

The harsh conditions, which are mud in the rainy season and blowing sand and dust in the dry season, will increase the maintenance requirements on this force considerably, far in excess of what most people would anticipate. So there's going to be a real increase in the demand for logistics and maintenance support just to keep the vehicles, the equipment, and the helicopters operating.

Under the original plan for the force, a lot of the infrastructure was to be provided by the Government of Sudan. With the increased numbers of people, we don't think that's feasible. We would put forward that Canada has some experience in deploying forces at long distances from a main support base, and the Canadian Forces have good communications. As you may remember, Canada has built a reputation for logistics communication support to UN forces in the past. When I served in the Gaza Strip, we were part of that logistics-type support to the force and we had a good reputation. It's time we got back into that particular business.

● (0950)

It's worth mentioning that the AU force will have both francophone and English-speaking contingents from various countries, and we can provide a bridge to help with that.

We recognize that the Canadian Forces have just entered their much-needed operational pause for rest, re-equipping, and training. They've been severely overtasked and under-resourced for the past few years. They've used up their equipment and, more importantly, their people. We think they're almost exhausted.

We also recognize that Canada must be mindful of its commitment to the standby high-readiness brigade for the UN. This force may and likely could be deployed as part of a UN force that's called up when the peace agreement in southern Sudan is signed. Nonetheless, we believe a limited number of specialist resources could be available—logistics and communications expertise, technical expertise to assist the AU; some communications detachments; long-range communications from the signals regiment of Kingston; and a

mapping detachment from the mapping and charting establishment, since reasonable maps, which don't exist for the Darfur region, are going to be central to the success of a monitoring force where you're going to have to make reports and pin a geographic location on the ground. So these are resources that we see as essential.

We know Canada has pledged a significant monetary contribution to the force, and the provision of helicopters from that contribution is an excellent approach to providing an essential operational mobility, but I would submit that Canada has developed a civilian contract system for supporting military missions in the field, referred to as CANCAP. The security situation in Darfur is equivalent to or better than the security situation in Afghanistan, where CANCAP performed well. While there may be a limit on the ability of the Canadian Forces to deploy logistics assets to support the AU force, there are no such limits on CANCAP or equivalent contractors, other than money.

In closing, the Canadian Friends of Sudan join with the other witnesses in recommending that the Government of Sudan be pressured to sign the peace accord in southern Sudan, as a first step; that the Government of Sudan be pressured by all possible means to disarm and disband the Jangaweed; that the mission of the AU force be amended to include protection of civilians and again expanded as necessary; and that Canada increase its support to the AU mission by providing technical advice and logistics of communications, communications detachments, mapping and charting, and contractor support for logistics.

I had some introductory remarks that I did not make. I can provide those to the members of the committee if they wish.

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

● (0955)

The Chair: Thank you, Colonel Jewsbury.

I believe the only person yet to speak is Nicolas Palanque, on behalf of CARE Canada.

[*Translation*]

Thank you for coming. You may speak French if you wish.

Mr. Nicolas Palanque (Head of Emergency Operations, CARE Canada): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Ladies and gentlemen members of the Committee, CARE is honoured of this opportunity to appear before you this morning.

[*English*]

While my colleagues have focused on the situation in Sudan, I would like to take the opportunity to present to the committee the situation on the Chad side of the crisis.

As you might know, there are currently approximately 200,000 refugees in eastern Chad, the majority of them now living in 11 camps managed by various NGOs and international organizations. We all work under the overall coordination of the UNHCR, and a few agencies work solely outside of the camps with refugees who have declined to be relocated to the camps and who live along the border. Most of those camps are occupied beyond capacity, as is the case in Sudan. Some of them were built to house 8,000 refugees, yet we see more than 12,000 or 13,000 refugees living in them. The location of the camps themselves is far from being ideal with respect to the basic rights and needs of the refugees.

The rains have compounded the very poor sanitary conditions and have brought increased risk of serious disease. There have been outbreaks of cholera, and recently hepatitis E has appeared in a few camps. One of our expatriate coordinators actually had to be evacuated to Paris to be treated. The levels of malnutrition are some of the highest in the region. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, we see between 36% and 39% malnutrition in eastern Chad—and that implies both the refugee population and the local population.

Eastern Chad has a very limited absorption capacity, and even before the crisis it was one of the least developed parts of the country. Although the population initially was very welcoming and helpful in supporting the refugees—who share a common ethnic and historic background and have very strong links—without any form of assistance either from the Government of Chad or the international community, many tensions now occur.

There are a few important points that we need to raise looking at the Chad situation. First, we think it's key for the international community and Canada to prevent political instability in eastern Chad. Since May of this year, there have been two unsuccessful attempts to overthrow the president and the government. Some of the discontent that already existed in Chad before the current crisis has been exacerbated by the refugee influx and its impact on the local infrastructures. The local government, governors, and prefects have been cooperative to a certain extent, but direct mediation by the president was needed in a couple of instances to defuse some very tense crises. We've seen very significant reinforcement of the Chadian military and gendarmerie forces in Abéché and other locations along the border.

In many areas now, an official curfew has been put in place following a series of incidents between the refugees and the local population. The French military that are prepositioned in Chad, mainly in Abéché, in virtue of bilateral agreements between France and Chad, are key to the stability of the region. They run the airports and conduct extensive patrols along the border to “monitor potential incursions by Ghanaian militias and reduce the presence of unknown armed elements”. In talking to some of the French military in charge, I heard that one of their roles is to reduce the circulation of small weapons in the region and to reduce cross-border traffic towards Sudan.

It is crucial to ensure Chad does not get further destabilized by the crisis, or the international community might have to deal with a regional crisis that could have a devastating humanitarian impact. The second point, which maybe should be one of the solutions to prevent that, is the importance of a really rapid peaceful solution to

the conflict. I will not repeat what my other colleagues have said, but strongly encourage Canada to use all the diplomatic, and maybe economic, tools to put all the parties at stake in the conflict...to reach the goal of finding peace all over Sudan, whether it's southern Sudan, Darfur, or eastern Sudan, which is boiling up.

The third point I would like to raise is that when a peaceful agreement is found, we would like assurances that a return can be made in a safe environment.

● (1000)

The very last point, as my time is limited, is that we would really like Canada to ensure that the UNHCR uses all the means at its disposal so that it can comply with its core mandate of the protection of refugees. It is a shame to see that the UNHCR took a month to deploy the protection of peacekeepers in eastern Chad.

Thank you very much.

[*Translation*]

The Chair: Thank you very much. I deeply regret that you were given so little time for such a serious subject.

Now I give the floor to Mr. Day.

[*English*]

Mr. Stockwell Day (Okanagan—Coquihalla, CPC): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Thank you so much to each of you, not only for your presentation but for your patience and your perseverance. In spite of what you have seen and what you know needs to happen, you are being very patient with the lack of action that you see all around you.

We have members who are not here today. Part of that is due to an emergency debate last night that went into the late hours regarding another crisis that is going on right now in Ukraine.

I would like to make some comments, Mr. Chair, and I want to be non-partisan. There have not only been reflections on the United Nations, there have been reflections on our own government here, so we are here with a spirit of unanimity, I believe, and want to see something happen. It is not easy, speaking for myself, but I think I share with my colleagues, to sit and listen to what is happening without feeling a sense of responsibility.

Some themes resonate with all of you. It is interesting that we have a combination of peace, relief workers, and soldiers here, because sometimes in times of crisis like this, soldiers and relief workers see the same things at the same time and want to see these things prevented and never happen again.

When Lina talks about two million people in need, when Alex talks about a UN resolution that still leaves out the question of the issue of the Jangaweed, and when Kathy says the groups have been three times before this committee, we need to take some action here. Small as we may be as a committee, we can come to a resolution; we can agree on a resolution in this committee and hopefully move it up the line into Parliament and see some action.

I have a resolution I have prepared. Some if it is lifted right from the words and testimony of what some of you have said, but I want to give my colleagues time for their questions.

You people should know that when we discussed this in our planning meeting last week, the feeling was that we've talked long enough, we've listened long enough, we don't have the perfect answer but some things have to get moving. It was with this sense of urgency that this meeting today has been convened.

I will wait and hold off the resolution that I will present. I don't care how it gets changed or amended and I don't care whose name gets stuck to it, but it is proposing some steps or actions that have come directly from your words. I would like my colleagues to consider, as I pass the question on, Mr. Chairman.

I am not going to take any time for questions. I'd like to see if my colleagues have anything they want to ask or say before we move to a possible motion here. However, five words haunt me. I think three or four of you repeated these five words. The five words are simply "It could have been prevented".

When I sit here and think about people who don't have houses today, could have been living in houses; when people who are diseased and dying, as Nicolas has talked about, could have been healthy today; when women who've been raped and robbed of their dignity could be living in peace today; when people who are starving now or have already died of starvation could have full stomachs today; I am haunted by those words, "It could have been prevented".

If we could keep these words in mind as we go around the table, at some point, Mr. Chair, I would like to present a resolution.

Thank you.

•(1005)

Hon. Ed Broadbent: A point of order, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: Mr. Broadbent.

Hon. Ed Broadbent: Mr. Chair, it might be useful if my colleague's resolution were presented beforehand, because it might provide a context for either questioning or for witnesses who have provided us with some new information. I think it would be useful.

[Translation]

The Chair: Do you agree on that?

Ms. Diane Bourgeois (Terrebonne—Blainville, BQ): I do not mind provided we can still ask our questions and make some comments.

The Chair: You agree?

Ms. Diane Bourgeois: Excuse me. It could be put aside until the end of this meeting.

The Chair: Sir, do you agree?

[English]

Mr. Navdeep Bains (Mississauga—Brampton South, Lib.): I share the same sentiment, as long as we have the ability to ask a few questions, as well. But I think it would be a good talking point.

Mr. Stockwell Day: I'm going to distribute this.

The Chair: Do you want to read it so everyone in the room can hear it?

Mr. Stockwell Day: I will read it. I just put this together, so I don't have the French version, but the translator, upon my reading it, will be able to do that. I'll distribute it.

Again, this is here for any adaptation. We just, I believe, need to get moving.

Different ones of you may hear or see something that's lacking or something that's missing, but I'm trying to get some movement on this.

The motion would read:

That Canada use its leadership role in the G-20, its close ties to the present leadership of the World Bank and the IMF, as well as the impending visit of George W. Bush, to forge an agreement linking any assistance on the external debt of Sudan to real steps taken by the Khartoum government to stop the actions of the Jangaweed militias against the Darfurian civilian population, to implement the peace agreements, to negotiate in good faith with representative groups in Darfur, and that Canada would also initiate integrated actions combining, but not limited to, the departments of foreign affairs, development, and defence to assist the African Union in resolving the Sudan crisis.

The Chair: That's absolutely out of the blue, but does Mr. Mendes want to make a comment, or anybody else on the panel?

Prof. Errol Mendes: I completely agree with it.

Mr. Stockwell Day: I thought it might have a familiar ring to you, Mr. Mendes. Some of your words are there.

The Chair: Does anyone else on the panel want to make a comment?

Ms. Vandergrift.

Ms. Kathy Vandergrift: I don't know if there's time before you pass it. I wish I had known that a focus had been those conditions, because, as I said, the NGOs have presented benchmarks for the debt issue and they have in the European Union. So it might be worth looking at what those were, because they were quite well developed in terms of being appropriate for the debt relief proposal. I don't have them with me. I could supply them to you, but unfortunately I don't I have them.

•(1010)

[Translation]

The Chair: Ms. Bourgeois.

Ms. Diane Bourgeois: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Ladies and gentlemen, thank you very much for being here this morning and tell us about what is happening on the ground.

I stand to be corrected, but I am very surprised that the representative of World Vision Canada, Ms. Vandergrift, is saying that this Committee has been studying the situation in Sudan for the last four years. I understand that this is your third appearance before this Committee and I find it surprising that it did not result in a more robust response and that this Committee could not get the government to move forward more significantly to a resolution of the conflict. I would prefer if you answer later. I shall first ask my questions because I might not have enough time.

My second question is for Mr. Mendes. In your brief, you said: The Sudanese government in Khartoum has made the international community impotent in the face of the government orchestrated crimes against humanity and genocide in Darfur.

I would like you to explain exactly what you mean. There are a few details that I did not understand.

Prof. Errol Mendes: On what page?

Ms. Diane Bourgeois: It is the document entitled « The Critical Role of the International Financial Institutions and Debtors' Clubs in Curbing the Crimes Against Humanity and Genocide in Sudan ». This is on page one and I would like to get more details.

Thirdly, I wish to make a comment to the Chair. As a new member of this Committee, I do not know if this is acceptable, Mr. Chairman. If we have this meeting on the situation in Sudan it is thanks to you. It is because you find it extremely important. This morning, we heard from experts who have been on the ground, highly knowledgeable people suggesting three or four things that the government should do, and they all agree on the steps to be taken. I could give you the list later.

I cannot say that I do not like the proposal from my colleague of the Conservative Party but I find it a little vague. I just would like for us to go further. I would like that before we leave this room, we put on paper some proposals that our Committee might pass on to other Committees dealing with Justice, Human Rights and International Trade. We might also send them directly and as soon as possible to the Office of the Prime Minister who is in Sudan today. So the people who came here this morning to give us a comprehensive and very real picture of what is happening there will not go away without the assurance that our Committee will take concrete measures aimed at improving respect for human rights and helping the local population and NGOs working in the field.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am waiting for your answers.

[English]

The Chair: Monsieur Mendes.

[Translation]

Prof. Errol Mendes: Ms. Bourgeois, allow me to answer in English.

[English]

It's a very important question, and it's something I wish I had another hour to speak about. The Sudan government has basically tied up the international community in preventing, as my colleague and friend Alex Neve said, any real action on crimes against humanity and genocide. They are playing a power card that we have not discussed at all so far. They have very strong allies, one in particular who they know will obstruct any Security Council action in this matter, and that one ally is China.

Do you want me to explain it further for the members, or is it apparent?

•(1015)

Mr. Stockwell Day: No, go ahead, please.

Prof. Errol Mendes: China is a major investor in the oil and gas fields in the south of Sudan. From my sources, my contacts, it is actively involved in building roads and building infrastructure that could potentially also be used by the military in the south of Sudan, and potentially in Darfur also. They pretty much are relying on the fact that China—and after what happened yesterday, mayhap even Russia—could very well impede any Security Council resolutions. That is why the resolutions in Nairobi were, and I agree with my friends, very weak. In the south, it was basically an agreement to

agree. We've seen that before. We'll see what happens on December 31.

I completely agree with my colleague Alex Neve that the actual wording on Darfur—I have this in my paper—is so weak it's not worth the paper it's written on. It only warns of appropriate action against any party failing to fulfill its commitments. It means nothing, in essence.

That is why I decided some time ago not to focus on the humanitarian or the military solutions to this, but to see where are the weakest points of this very Machiavellian government, which is basically acting outside the bounds of civilization. What are its weakest points, and how can you use those weakest points to bring them into the fold? The one conclusion I came to was their external debt.

[Translation]

Are you satisfied with that answer, Ms. Bourgeois?

Ms. Diane Bourgeois: Yes, this is perfect. Thank you very much.

[English]

The Chair: Ms. Vandergrift.

Ms. Kathy Vandergrift: We could talk a long time about politics here as well, but just very quickly, I think part of it has to do with the question I've named—that is, how far do you put pressure on the human rights issues at the same time that you want to be a peace broker? I do want to give credit to the role of the Canadian government in supporting the IGAD peace process in the south. They have provided a lot of resources for that, and they have done some very excellent diplomacy around that. For a part of that time, there was a lot of difficulty because Talisman Energy was invested in Sudan, and some of the debate was about that.

The last time we were here, the members of this committee had hoped to take a trip to Sudan. We gave advice on what they might go and see, and how that might inform Canadian policy-making. Events here then prevented that trip from happening. I am encouraged that there is a commitment by the committee to put it through this time, because for a human rights committee, Sudan begs for that kind of action. As parliamentarians, I think there is a range of areas in which you could be very effective.

I agree certainly on the issue of China. For that, I am pleased that Paul Martin, our Prime Minister, raised the issue along with trade issues at APEC, when the Chinese were there. I think that's a plus. In our meetings with the government prior to departure, we asked, what can Canada do to try to influence China, and what can Canada do to influence Russia, who ships a lot of arms to Sudan?

So we do need to look at where Canada might have some influence with other players. The EU position on Sudan has been problematic at some points. Perhaps there are things Canada can do in that regard as well.

The Chair: Does anybody else wish to speak to that?

Colonel Jewsbury.

LCol Frank Jewsbury: Yes.

One of the members of Canadian Friends of Sudan has also looked at this situation, recognizing that two of the main international players are in Sudan because of the oil—that is, India and China. We think they have to come onside if we are to make progress.

Canada has, I think, reasonably good relations with China and India, so it can approach them.

The other suggestion that was coupled with that goes with the idea of external debt. If we can devise a mechanism to put the oil revenues into an escrow fund of some sort, thereby assuring India and China that they still get the oil, the revenues could then be used to at least partially defray the costs of the AU mission and the humanitarian aid that is required in Darfur, making it a lose-lose situation for Sudan if it doesn't clean up the situation there.

That was a suggestion that came forward as something that could be practical. Whether or not it's a feasible mechanism, I don't know. That would be for economics people and others to deal with.

I see the good professor shaking his head, so that may not be feasible in the short term. However, it would provide a lever with which you could influence, perhaps, the Chinese and the Sudanese to come onside for humanitarian reasons—as long as you don't endanger their oil supply.

• (1020)

The Chair: Thank you, Colonel.

[Translation]

Have you finished, Ms. Bourgeois?

Ms. Diane Bourgeois: Thank you very much. I'll come back later.

[English]

The Chair: Mr. Broadbent.

Hon. Ed Broadbent: Thank you.

I would like to add my appreciation for all the contributors this morning. There was, as we would all have noted, considerable overlap. I don't mean redundancy, obviously. It's not hard to get a common consensus, at least on a number of details that the various witnesses presented.

I would like, though, to go back to the resolution, if I may, and I thank my colleague from the Conservative Party for presenting it. I would propose three short amendments, if I may at this point. One would call them friendly amendments, derived from what we heard this morning, which would give some greater specificity to what I want to say at the outset is a very good resolution. I am quite convinced we can get all-party agreement on this committee on this resolution.

Let me begin by speaking to the first one, and that is the reference to the militias. I would prefer stronger wording, if you like, to real steps taken by the Khartoum government to “completely disarm the militias”, not simply “stop the actions of”. I think that underlines the point of the continuing violence a little more.

Mr. Stockwell Day: The intent is certainly friendly. I don't know if anybody on the military side could add to this. As far as you know, do the militias in Sudan form a part of the constitutional fabric?

They, don't? Okay. Then if that's the case, I don't have a problem with that.

The Chair: Yes, Mr. Neve.

Mr. Alex Neve: I don't know if I'm allowed to propose this.

The Chair: We're a friendly group.

Mr. Alex Neve: If I could just add, “to disarm and dismantle”, because I think it's important that they not only be disarmed, but they also be either dismantled or disbanded, whichever word you prefer to use.

Hon. Ed Broadbent: One of them would probably be redundant.... Why wouldn't we use both, say “disarm and dismantle”?

The Chair: Okay.

Mr. Alex Neve: Yes.

Hon. Ed Broadbent: Then I would add two further points at the end of the resolution as it now exists, and I will read them out slowly. One is that Canada take steps to ensure that those responsible for the gross violations of human rights in Sudan are brought to justice. This will deal with the impunity point, which I think is very important.

The Chair: Is that acceptable?

Mr. Stockwell Day: That's totally acceptable, Mr. Chair.

Hon. Ed Broadbent: And the next one would be that Canada take action at the United Nations to bring about a comprehensive arms embargo in the Sudan.

The Chair: Colonel Pellerin, would you like to speak to that?

Colonel Alain Pellerin (Executive Director, Conference of Defence Associations): No, not really. I would agree with the principle of total embargo. The problem with an embargo in the country the size of Sudan, as Colonel Jewsbury has raised, is you need to implement it, and that is not an easy task.

Hon. Ed Broadbent: Mr. Chair, I would welcome, particularly from, but by no means exclusively from, our military experts here, any modification of this proposed wording.

• (1025)

Col Alain Pellerin: I think as wording, it is fine—

Hon. Ed Broadbent: It's the implementation, isn't it?

Col Alain Pellerin: —it's just the implementation of such a...

Mr. Alex Neve: And maybe if I could add, I think to bring that point home about implementation and enforcement, it might be useful to stress that we need not only the embargo, but there needs to be a comprehensive monitoring mechanism established.

The Chair: Can we add that on then as well?

Mr. Broadbent, would you add that thought?

Hon. Ed Broadbent: Yes, indeed. If we could just pause, maybe the clerk could add the appropriate words to add a monitoring mechanism.

Mr. Chair, to get back to the resolution again, two of the three points seem to me to be friendly amendments that would bring a greater degree of concreteness and add some points that witnesses have made, but I would welcome very much our witnesses who are here..... Were they all given copies, by the way, as members of the committee were, of the resolution?

The Chair: No.

Hon. Ed Broadbent: They weren't. It might be useful, because, as I have already indicated, I think it's a very good resolution. It's short, but if the witnesses could be given copies it doesn't take long, and given their expertise they may see another relevant point or so that could be added to this resolution and which we could get easy agreement on.

The Chair: Could we leave that open, then, the motion, until the end of the meeting?

Hon. Ed Broadbent: Absolutely.

The Chair: We still have half an hour. Would you like to ask any questions or anything of the witnesses?

Hon. Ed Broadbent: No, I don't at this point. I made lots of notes on what was presented and I don't have a follow-up question.

The Chair: Mr. Bains.

Mr. Navdeep Bains: Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

First of all, I'd like to take this opportunity to thank all the speakers, and I want to echo the sentiments of my colleagues and say that we really appreciate your input and value today in terms of your expertise on the issue.

There's a consistent theme that everyone has echoed, and that is of grave human rights violations, of thousands of people being killed, millions of people being displaced. I want to echo the sentiments of my colleague that I personally am very disappointed that the government, or at least in the past the committee, hasn't taken any serious steps or actions. Maybe we might have, but not as aggressive as we should have been, and it's very disappointing that you've been here many years echoing the same concerns and that we haven't taken any concrete actions. I want to make sure this is very clear, that I'm very disappointed, in that, however, I can see that all of us today are really eager to make sure that we pass a motion that will hopefully bring about some of the concerns that are being expressed here today.

I do have questions. I have basically three questions, and they'll be open to everyone and whoever chooses to answer may do so. I know that Mr. Jewsbury extensively talked about the role of AU in Sudan, so I'll ask all my questions and you may choose to answer and how you choose to do so.

First of all, I have a question on the role of the AU. Do they have the expertise? Obviously, we will provide the resources to them in terms of funding and so forth, but do they have the expertise, the knowledge base, and so forth to really implement a sustainable peacekeeping mission in that region for an extended period of time?

Secondly, I'm very troubled at the fact that the Sudanese government is in denial of what's taking place with the Jangaweed militia. How much trust can we put in them?

This feeds into my third question. If we do bring about reducing their debt, how can we be reassured that they don't use that reduction in debt to further finance this type of genocide? Because frankly, they're in denial. We'll eliminate this massive debt from them, and what guarantees do we have? If we don't have trust and faith in this government in the first place, I'd be highly reluctant to reduce the debt of such a regime.

Those are the concerns I share. I would really appreciate your feedback and comments on those.

Ms. Kathy Vandergrift: Certainly there are questions about the capacity of the AU, but I think many of us do find that it is important that there is African leadership in dealing with this. So we support strengthening and supporting it, not taking away the African leadership. I think it is a real plus this time around, that we have the other African countries in the lead.

So our stance is very important. From some of the discussions we have had, it's my sense that members of the Department of National Defence are playing a useful role. Their mandate, however, needs to be stronger from the Security Council and then backed up.

In terms of your concern about reducing the debt and further financing, that has been very strongly on our minds. That is why we also looked at this proposal: could the oil revenue be put in accounts where there would be accountability and so on? I think it's one of the reasons we proposed benchmarks, so there would not be a full forgiveness. It was a progressive measure.

Also, we wanted to make the initial bar low enough that we might get progress, but then continue it. So that's why we proposed a set of progressive benchmarks to maintain accountability until we have seen good governance really established in Sudan.

• (1030)

The Chair: Professor Mendes.

Prof. Errol Mendes: Going to the question of benchmarks, I agree with Kathy. It's one thing to propose benchmarks, but it's another thing to have governments accept them. It has been tried elsewhere, and the governments have just refused to accept them.

The closest we've come to governments accepting the benchmarks was interestingly enough in Chad under the World Bank project, the Chad-Cameroon pipeline, where the World Bank insisted that certain revenues from the pipeline went into health and education activities. Even that is now coming under stress, I gather, but I am sure that Nicolas probably knows more than I do on the implementation of that.

That's why I'm suggesting no debt relief until there is effective action on the ground that can be monitored. That's where the AU could come in. Those monitors could be the eyes and ears of the international community to see whether these things are actually being implemented.

As part of that monitoring, given that just last week the government was still dropping bombs on villages—and I gather 50 metres away from CARE Canada's feeding centres—I would add to the resolution that there be a no-fly-zone implemented immediately, which could, with little additional resources, be effectively enforced by a neighbouring power with the help of western countries.

Secondly, there should also be discussions of a travel ban imposed, with exemptions for peace talks, obviously, on certain individuals who are using the ability to travel to get the debt relief, etc., going.

And, finally, there should be a discussion, in terms of the financial weapons we could have against them, of an asset freeze outside Sudan, and they do have substantial assets outside Sudan too.

Going to the AU question, I think we should take some lessons from the experience of ECOMOG, led by Nigeria, who basically.... There were problems. There were accusations of human rights abuses against the military forces of ECOMOG led by Nigeria, but they did help in stopping the bloodbath in Sierra Leone, albeit with the help of the British. So there is military capacity in parts of Africa that could be used to match.... And again I'm straying outside my competencies. The military experts could look at it and see what military capabilities there are in West Africa led by Nigeria, what military capacities there are in South Africa, which has a significant military capacity, to come up with some sort of logistical framework that could be supported by the international community.

The Chair: Would you, by the way, mind sketching those out while someone else is speaking, those suggestions to the motion, and we'll see if we can get the mover and the friendly amender to accept them.

Mr. Nicolas Palanque: On the African Union force, I was in Liberia a year or a year and a half ago, just after Charles Taylor left and when the ECOWAS forces came, and I have to say they did a very good job. The level of professionalism on the part of the Nigerians and other troops who were involved.... There was a mix of francophone and anglophone troops that was very good.

Eastern Congo, with the MONUC, is not running as smoothly as it could, but there are lots of South African troops there doing a very good job. So the level of professionalism in these kinds of peacekeeping missions, even with a robust mandate....

I think in Darfur the mandate is the key. They have to have a very robust mandate to make sure violation of human rights cannot take place any more. If they don't have this mandate, we will see what happened in Rwanda.

The resources are there in Africa for that—with financial support, definitely, from the international community, from western countries, but human resources are there and the troops have the training and the capacity to do that.

• (1035)

The Chair: Merci.

Is there anything further?

Ms. Lina Holguin: I have just one quick comment. Another point is that Canada supports the UN and the African Union efforts to get the rebel groups to respect human rights, to protect civilians, and to participate in good faith in the political negotiation. And on the African Union, as I mention in my presentation, it has to be deployed where the risk is greatest.

The Chair: Colonel Jewsbury.

LCol Frank Jewsbury: I just have two very short comments. Our assessment—or my assessment, since I'm the adviser to Canadian

Friends of Sudan—is that there is a level of military capacity in Africa. Their primary weaknesses appear to be in staff planning for mounting the operation, transportation, communication, and logistic support assets. But in terms of the force, there are forces available in Africa.

As the force gets much larger, the problems of command and control will become more difficult. This may be a weakness where they will need assistance or support from outside in terms of the African Union force, but yes, they certainly have resources. They have the troops, and it's a very good thing, because Sudan is not likely the last country where the AU is going to have to deploy forces. We have to develop the capability in Africa.

In response to another question, with reference to the government being in denial, I would have to ask what “denial” means, since we consider them to be the architects, the facilitators, and in many cases the implementers of what we call a genocide in Darfur.

The Chair: Mr. Bains.

Mr. Navdeep Bains: That's exactly my point, that it's a matter of trust and credibility with the government, who are the architects. Therefore, I'm highly concerned about the fact that we are going to eliminate or reduce their debt. I think what we need to do is to attack them personally, that is, freeze their assets abroad. They should be brought to international courts, and then ultimately in the long run we can reduce the debt if there's a new regime or if there's a substantial change in their mindset. But that's not one of the first actions I would personally recommend, and I'm highly concerned about that. I want to make that very clear today.

I also want to echo what Mr. Broadbent and Stockwell Day said. I personally believe that this is a reasonably good motion and that there are some good talking points we can work with. Your input would be very much appreciated, and I think it would be nice if we could have it on some of the key components of this today.

The Chair: Absolutely. I think there's a consensus on that.

Madame Bourgeois.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Diane Bourgeois: Mr. Chairman, this motion is certainly very interesting, but you will understand that it makes my work difficult because I speak French and this motion is in English.

Earlier, I asked that your requests, ladies and gentlemen, be clearly stipulated in the resolution so that you won't have to come back a fourth time to ask for some action on the part of the Canadian government.

I cannot evaluate this motion now. I would appreciate if from now on we could get a French version of motions if possible. I am the only French-speaking member and I want to be able to do my work. I would like that our recommendations to the Government of Canada be clearly enunciated and I want to make sure that my colleagues will do the same.

Then, I would like to know what this Committee will do with that proposal once it will be properly written.

•(1040)

The Chair: You are perfectly right. You are entitled to get the motion in both official languages. We only have 20 minutes left. I hope that it will be possible to get the translation before 11 o'clock. If not, we will do it later.

Ms. Diane Bourgeois: I recognize that it is not possible this morning. I only wish to ask my colleagues to think about it. I am used to work with prepositions. I am not used to work with such a vague proposal. I do not mean that those words have no meaning, but I find them very vague.

I would like us to get more deeply into this matter. As we have stated this, it is important that we have that discussion.

The Chair: Could our friends the interpreters help us if we read the motion slowly? Would it be possible...? No?

Ms. Diane Bourgeois: I am counting on our witnesses to help us improve this motion so that it goes in the direction they are hoping for. It is important and we are here for you.

Prof. Errol Mendes: If a French translation is done, I would also wish to read it.

Ms. Diane Bourgeois: Yes, words are important.

Prof. Errol Mendes: There are sometimes differences between English and French.

Ms. Diane Bourgeois: Exactly.

[English]

The Chair: Mr. Day.

Mr. Stockwell Day: I absolutely concur with what our colleague has said. The normal process is that there is at least a day's notice on motions, and because of that then everything is sufficiently translated. The committee does also have the ability to unanimously agree on a motion at any time without the prior timeframe.

The reason there was no motion before now is because I wanted—we all wanted—to hear what each of you had to say. As the chairman said, I don't know if our translators have already translated it as I was talking. I don't know whether that can be done. But I certainly appreciate the concern our colleague from the Bloc Québécois has raised. It's absolutely legitimate.

Also, as earnest as I am in saying let's do it if there are other things to be added, please keep in mind that there is nothing more painful than a committee writing a speech. If there is something compelling that's missing or could be added, then by all means... If it's a lack of the deepest possible intellectual articulation, then forgive me for that and maybe overlook it, but if there's something that's clearly missing that could improve this, then don't be shy.

The Chair: Mr. Broadbent.

Hon. Ed Broadbent: As the person, I think, who first raised the question about getting our witnesses to propose suggestions, I'm about to back away from that a bit too. I think it is important, and I totally respect and understand the point our colleague from the Bloc Québécois has made about the availability of the motion in both official languages. That being said, unless—to use a phrase from past constitutional debates—there's an egregious error here somewhere, I would almost favour us stopping at this point if it is required to get this resolved at today's meeting.

I think it is important to get something out of today's meeting. We've added some toughening up of content already, and I was very happy with the general framework. I didn't think it was too general at all, but we've added some detail.

Maybe if we paused now to make sure it's available in French as a necessary step to getting agreement today, I would favour that, Mr. Chairman, if that's necessary.

The Chair: Could we perhaps ask our researcher, who has been trying to take in what everybody has been suggesting, to read what he has—very slowly.

Mr. Marcus Pistor (Committee Researcher): I've tried to incorporate everything that has been suggested here.

The motion would read along the following lines:

That Canada use all available means and channels, including its leadership role in the G-20, its close ties to the present leadership of the World Bank and the IMF, as well as the impending visit of President George W. Bush to forge an agreement linking any assistance on the external debt of Sudan to real steps taken by the Khartoum government—

•(1045)

Mr. Stockwell Day: Could you just hold on a second?

[Translation]

Ms. Diane Bourgeois: It's okay.

[English]

Mr. Marcus Pistor: —“to disarm and dismantle the Jangaweed militias against the”.... I'm sorry; we don't need the rest of that.

Hon. Ed Broadbent: You don't need those. The next five words could be eliminated.

Mr. Marcus Pistor: to disarm and dismantle the Jangaweed militias, to implement the peace agreements, to negotiate in good faith with representative groups in Darfur;

that Canada would also initiate integrated actions combining, but not limited to, the departments of foreign affairs, development, and defence, to assist the African Union in resolving the Sudan crisis;

that Canada take steps to ensure that those responsible for the gross violations of human rights in Sudan are brought to justice;

that Canada take action

—and it could include “at the UN”, but that could be left out as well—

to establish a full no-fly zone to protect civilians, to bring about a comprehensive arms embargo, and put in place an appropriate monitoring mechanism;

that the government consider putting in place travel bans against targeted individuals and a freeze on Sudanese assets as a means to pressure the Government of Sudan.

Then there should be a sort of concluding sentence there, along the lines of “living up to its obligations”—we haven't finished that last part—“to...” something or other.

The Chair: It could be “to establish peace in Sudan”, or something like that.

Ms. Kathy Vandergrift: Perhaps “to comply with international law”?

Mr. Marcus Pistor: Or “to comply with its obligations under”.

[Translation]

The Chair: What do you think of it, Ms. Bourgeois?

Ms. Diane Bourgeois: Mr. Chairman, first of all, I thank you for coming back to this proposal and help me to understand it. If you will allow me, I shall ask our witnesses if they see other things that we could add. Do you think that this Committee could go further to help you in your work?

Prof. Errol Mendes: I think that it is...

Ms. Diane Bourgeois: Are you okay with it?

Prof. Errol Mendes: I like it the way it is because if we added other elements, we might break...

Ms. Diane Bourgeois: It is not important. Sometimes you have to ask a lot to get very little.

Prof. Errol Mendes: Exactly.

Ms. Diane Bourgeois: The words chosen should also be satisfactory to you and very accurate.

Prof. Errol Mendes: Yes, I find them satisfactory.

[English]

Ms. Kathy Vandergrift: I would suggest two that I think are quite friendly and could be quite easily done.

For “to implement the peace agreements”, let me suggest either “to implement completely” or “to implement a comprehensive peace agreement”, because what we have seen are some pretty superficial peace agreements. In fact, the Canadian government has been instrumental in insisting that this IGAD peace agreement now be a comprehensive peace agreement, not a superficial one. So either “completely implement” or “comprehensive peace agreement” would be one.

A second one, again friendly, is “to negotiate in good faith with representative groups in Darfur and elsewhere”. It's about who they should negotiate with. Could we suggest “with representative groups in Darfur and elsewhere”? That's because we have a brewing situation in the east. Darfur rose in reaction to the south, and we are saying we need to deal with all of the Sudan; we can't continue a piecemeal approach.

• (1050)

[Translation]

The Chair: Ms. Bourgeois.

Ms. Diane Bourgeois: Mr. Chairman, I shall speak on behalf of Mr. Palanque and Madam because we should take a global approach on this issue. What Madam has just said is extremely important, I think.

I am totally satisfied. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

[English]

The Chair: Colonel Pellerin.

Col Alain Pellerin: I'd like to go back to the last sentence of the original text. It gives the impression when you read it that we're asking Foreign Affairs, CIDA, and National Defence to assist the African Union in resolving the Sudan crisis. It gives the impression that we're abdicating our overall responsibility to the crisis in Darfur and passing it on to the African Union. I think that is probably too much of a mouthful for the African Union. The resolution of the crisis is beyond the role of the African Union in Darfur.

Those are two separate thoughts. I agree we should do as much as we can to support the African Union in its eventual role on the ground in Darfur, but the Sudan crisis I think is a larger responsibility of Canada.

The Chair: Let me just ask this, as chair. I think the leader of Canada has never committed Canada to put any boots on the ground, unlike Britain and Australia. What other countries have committed to send troops, if asked by the African Union? Can you tell us that?

Col Alain Pellerin: I don't know for sure.

The Chair: Does anybody know that?

Colonel Jewsbury?

LCol Frank Jewsbury: No, I don't, sir. Canada has not committed to troops, for sure.

Mr. Marcus Pistor: They have committed to advisers.

The Chair: Okay.

Mr. Marcus Pistor: That was the last I heard today.

The Chair: Did it come out of Sudan?

Mr. Marcus Pistor: Yes.

The Chair: We have about five minutes left, and then I think we have to give up the room.

Can you read it one more time? Would you mind?

If we can all agree, including our witnesses—I'm sure we'll voice problems if we don't—we'll try to pass it in the next five minutes.

Mr. Marcus Pistor: The motion would read:

That Canada use all available means and channels, including its leadership role in the G-20, its close ties to the present leadership of the World Bank and the IMF, as well as the impending visit of President George W. Bush, to forge an agreement linking any assistance on the external debt of Sudan to real steps taken by the Khartoum government to disarm and dismantle the Jangaweed militias, to implement a comprehensive peace agreement, to negotiate in good faith with representative groups in Darfur and elsewhere

—and the option would be to start a new sentence at this point to make it more readable.

The second paragraph would be:

That Canada would initiate integrated actions combining, but not limited to, the departments of foreign affairs, development, and defence to assist the African Union in resolving the Sudan crisis.

The Chair: Is that okay?

Col Alain Pellerin: It's the same wording as before.

Mr. Stockwell Day: You could add something like “and other legitimate parties”.

Mr. Navdeep Bains: Or “and other stakeholders”?

Mr. Stockwell Day: Yes, or “and other stakeholders.”

Hon. Ed Broadbent: As one member of the committee, I'm quite happy with the original wording. I think it puts the emphasis where it should be. I don't see it as taking us away from our responsibility. I'd opt, Mr. Chairman, for retaining the wording.

• (1055)

The Chair: Okay.

Col Alain Pellerin: I can live with that.

Mr. Marcus Pistor: The next paragraph would be:

That Canada take steps to ensure that those responsible for the gross violations of human rights in Sudan are brought to justice; that Canada take action to establish a full no-fly zone to protect civilians, to bring about a comprehensive arm's embargo, and to put in place an appropriate monitoring mechanism; that the government consider putting in place travel bans against targeted individuals and a freeze on Sudanese assets, as a means to pressure the Government of Sudan to comply with its obligations under international law and the peace agreements.

The Chair: Is that agreeable? *Est-ce que nous sommes tous d'accord?*

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Chair: Can our witnesses vote? I guess not.

I guess that's it. Thank you for coming. *Merci 10 000 fois.* It's been a very useful session.

The meeting is adjourned.

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