



House of Commons
CANADA

**Subcommittee on Human Rights and
International Development of the Standing
Committee on Foreign Affairs and International
Trade**

SDEV • NUMBER 011 • 1st SESSION • 38th PARLIAMENT

EVIDENCE

Thursday, February 24, 2005

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Chair

The Honourable David Kilgour

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•(1105)

[Translation]

The Chair (Hon. David Kilgour (Edmonton—Mill Woods—Beaumont, Lib.)): Good morning. I think we have a quorum.

It is my pleasure to welcome our witnesses, Rohinton Medhora, Vice-President, Program and Partnership Branch, and

[English]

Colleen Duggan, senior program analyst from the world-renowned—is that putting it too strongly—International Development Research Centre.

Thank you very much for joining us today. You have the floor.

Mr. Rohinton Medhora (Vice-President, Program and Partnership, International Development Research Centre): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

No, we won't disagree with your assessment on that one.

I thought I'd take just two or three minutes to situate the work of the International Development Research Centre before turning over to my colleague, Colleen Duggan, who will address the specific issue of the day.

IDRC is a crown corporation that was created in 1971 with a specific mandate to support research on contemporary development issues in developing countries, for the most part, themselves.

To give you an indication of the ambit of our work, this fiscal year we spent about \$85 million Canadian on our program research activities, of which approximately 50% would have gone to sub-Saharan Africa, the Middle East, and North Africa; 25% in Asia; and 25% in Latin America. This is spread across three broad program themes in which we operate: environment and natural resource management, social and economic policies, and information and communications technologies for development.

I should stress that we have a cross-cutting focus on connecting our partners in the south with Canadian institutions, and that it isn't just our money that makes the difference, but it's our specialized staff, people like Colleen, as well as the links we make between our partners in the south and other networks in other countries, both in developed and developing countries. So it's the package, which we then call capacity building.

Our work in Latin America is run primarily from our regional office for the region, which is based in Montevideo, Uruguay, with a

significant component here from head office in Ottawa. In Colombia, specifically, we seemed to spend on average in the last five years between \$500,000 and \$750,000 per year in the country. This is not a lot of money, but again it's not just the money that's making the difference. That is the point I'm going to make.

With those brief introductory remarks, I'll turn over to my colleague, Colleen Duggan, who specializes in peace and conflict issues in the country.

Colleen.

Ms. Colleen Duggan (Senior Program Specialist, International Development Research Centre): Thank you.

Mr. Chair, before starting, I was wondering if it would be okay with the members of the subcommittee to hold questions until the end, and then we could have a full round.

The Chair: That's normally what we do.

Ms. Colleen Duggan: Okay. Super.

IDRC's peace, conflict, and development program initiative has been in existence since 1996. Initially it was called the peace-building and reconstruction program. However, under a new five-year perspective, it's now known as peace, conflict, and development. This is the title that we believe better reflects the long-term challenges of working in the peace-building field as well as the fact that conflict-to-peace transitions are seldom linear.

PCD's programming works to enhance accountability within peace-building contexts as well as to support the development of peace-building research in the south. For PCD, accountability for peace-building happens at several levels. Citizens need to be encouraged to build honest and constructive relationships among themselves. However, states and the international community in general should also be held accountable for the deals and concessions they negotiate on behalf of citizens during peace processes.

•(1110)

[Translation]

For this reason, IDRC's goal is to support researchers generate evidence-based findings that can be used by these myriad actors involved in negotiating and implementing the parameters of peacebuilding policies and programs in countries affected by violent conflict.

Research projects supported by PCD aim to build domestic ownership and enhance the transparency of peace processes. The fact that we support a wide constituency of peacebuilding actors means that research can play a critical role in informing debates, shaping policies and most importantly in opening spaces for discussion and dialogue. This is of critical importance in war-affected societies that are suffering the long-term effects of polarization, trauma, political dislocation and interrupted economic development. These issues represent multiple challenges for IDRC supported research on conflict and peace and these have been clustered in four categories: democratic processes in peacebuilding and governance; political economy of peace and conflict; security and insecurity; violence, trauma, justice and reconciliation.

[English]

IDRC began supporting peace-building research in Colombia at the end of 2000, at a time when we perceived that a breakthrough in the former peace processes with the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia, FARC, and Ejército de Liberación Nacional, ELN, guerrillas could open spaces for post-war reforms akin to those that IDRC has supported in other countries.

We also believe that the sophistication of the Colombian research community might contribute much to global learning for peace and conflict research. Unfortunately, the FARC peace process under the previous administration of President Pastrana did not come to an end with a negotiated political solution.

However, our initial explorations in Colombia enabled us to understand two important lessons. First, the transition from violence to peace to development is neither linear nor formulaic. We realized that an in-depth understanding of the complexity of the conflict was not enough. IDRC programming for peace in Colombia would necessitate persistence, patience, and long-term accompaniment.

Second, we also realized that there are a host of longer-term peace-building issues, such as modalities of reconciliation, dealing with impunity, and experiences in the re-integration of combatants and displaced populations, that require multidisciplinary and applied research. These are not necessarily dependent upon the brokering of political peace in the short or medium term. Many of these issues constitute the building blocks of track two approaches to peace. In other words, there is much that civil society actors can do in order to pursue and support peace while diplomatic solutions are being sought.

Peace-building research, even in the midst of conflict, can assist in creating a critical mass of researchers who, if supported properly, can be instrumental in galvanizing peace positions in official policy circles. With this learning in mind, over the past four-plus years IDRC programming on peace and conflict in Colombia has basically focused on two goals: first, to contribute through research to ongoing national and international conflicts to deal with the humanitarian consequences of the crises; and second, to assist Colombians to visualize scenarios and build models for reform and reconciliation in the post-conflict period.

We have a number of priorities we focus on. These include ensuring that our program is guided by human rights principles and is coherent with international frameworks and agreements for assistance to Colombia; bringing diverse voices and perspectives

to what are often difficult and highly polarized and fractious peace policy debates; balancing our support to researchers and traditional academic research institutions with support to less traditional researchers and non-governmental and civil society organizations; and finally, supporting peace-building from the outside with a view to better informing Canadians about Colombia's conflict by creating opportunities for collaboration between Colombia and Canadian researchers.

Since our earliest explorations in 2000, IDRC's peace-building programming in Colombia has totalled just over \$1 million. As Rohinton mentioned, admittedly that seems like a modest sum, but we have been able to achieve more with less through our selection of partners and research niches together with the strategic partnerships that we've been building with other donors inside and outside of Colombia.

While we've supported ten research projects in Colombia over the last two years, the majority of our programming has been clustered around two major research areas that we consider to be of urgent importance for the brokering of equitable and lasting peace in Colombia. These can roughly be described as options for transitional and restorative justice and women's experiences in conflict and peace.

I'd like to take a moment of your time now to give you a few examples of the type of research that peace, conflict, and development programming has been supporting in Colombia. This past November IDRC supported the Universidad de los Andes in the organization of an international conference and production of a book on options for truth, justice, and reparation in Colombia. The conference brought together international and Colombian experts on issues of truth, justice, and international criminal law, and provided an opportunity to examine how countries such as Sierra Leone, Guatemala, Peru, and South Africa have dealt with past legacies of human rights and issues of impunity.

Providing civil society with this space for education and debate is critical, we believe, particularly since Colombia's Congress is now discussing no fewer than five different draft laws dealing with justice, reduced sentencing, and reparations for victims in the context of the government's current negotiations with the Autodefensas Unidas de Colombia, AUC, paramilitary forces.

For the past two years IDRC has also been supporting the Medellin-based NGO, Corporación Región, as it researches options for community justice and the reduction of violence at the local level.

•(1115)

Community justice is particularly important in Colombia. It's a little-known fact that 65% of cases of violent death and bodily harm can actually be traced to causes that fall outside of the purview of the armed conflict. Communities that are not equipped to mediate and negotiate private disputes are particularly vulnerable to being co-opted into the conflict by one armed actor or another. The restorative justice project with *Corporación Región* is helping civil society to better understand and make better use of existing community justice mechanisms for conflict resolution.

IDRC is also supporting a growing number of research projects on issues that deal with women's experiences in war. As documented by numerous national human rights organizations, and most recently by Amnesty International in its October 2004 report entitled *Scarred Bodies, Hidden Crimes*, Colombian women bear the brunt of violence, particularly sexual violence, as victims of war. These crimes continue to go unpunished by Colombia's justice system, and women victims do not receive compensation for their suffering.

In response to these concerns, in 2004 IDRC launched a major research competition on justice for victims of gender-based violence in Colombia. Two projects have been selected for further funding with Colombian-based research institutions. The first project, with a coalition of three women's rights NGOs, will examine the state of criminal justice in Colombia and the extent to which state institutions for justice investigate and prosecute gender crimes.

The second project, with the Universidad de San Buenaventura, will examine the experiences of internally displaced women and formulate a series of options for material and non-material compensation for the losses incurred as a result of being forcibly displaced.

IDRC has also been supporting research on how women participate in Colombia's armed conflict as active combatants. Although a significant number of women and girls make up Colombia's illegal armed groups, actually very little is known about what happens to these women while they are fighting and when they are eventually demobilized. It has been estimated that 40% of the FARC guerrillas are women, and many of these are quite young, between 14 and 19 years of age, and that 12% of paramilitary forces are also women.

With funding from IDRC, the Universidad de Antioquia has undertaken a comprehensive review of seven demobilization and reintegration programs that the Colombian state has financed between 1990 and 2003. The results emerging from this review indicate that women former combatants experience significant problems in reintegrating into their families and into civilian life. The final report of this project will produce a set of policy recommendations for state bodies and civil society organizations that are working with demobilized women and girls.

[Translation]

In concluding, I'd like to mention that the above lines of research generate important critical analysis and contribute new knowledge to two of the six thematic groups established by Colombian civil society, the government of Colombia and the international commu-

nity in their efforts to forge an international cooperation strategy for peace and development in Colombia.

I am referring to the discussions taking place in Colombia on the reincorporation into civilian life of illegally armed groups and discussions on strengthening the rule of law and human rights. As you know these issues continue to be discussed by Colombian and international actors who have come together in two meetings, first in London in July of 2003 and most recently in Cartagena on February 3 and 4.

IDRC consults widely with other Canadian partners, academic, governmental and non-governmental, in order to ensure that our efforts are in sync with international dialogue on political and international cooperation for peace in Colombia. For example, in 2001 and 2002 in collaboration with FOCAL and the Norman Paterson School on International Affairs, we co-hosted two international meetings on Colombia here in Ottawa. In addition, our programming in Colombia continues to be informed and enriched by our participation in an interdepartmental working group on Colombia that brings together CIDA, FAC and IDRC, on a quarterly basis.

•(1120)

[English]

Mr. Chair and members of the subcommittee, thank you for this opportunity. We believe that preparing for peace in Colombia will continue to be challenging for all of us. We also believe that research can play an important role in providing not only new knowledge but also new perspectives on the peace and conflict issues that have historically blocked the road to lasting and sustainable peace.

The Chair: Thank you very much, Ms. Duggan.

The first person for questions is Mr. Goldring.

Mr. Peter Goldring (Edmonton East, CPC): Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

Thank you for your presentation.

In your talking notes, you indicated roughly \$750,000 a year is being allocated to this project. Is that approximately the number?

Mr. Rohinton Medhora: To Colombia, generally, for all our programs, which also includes programs in environmental management and social and economic policy.

Mr. Peter Goldring: When you list ten research projects here, you categorize them under two categories. What is the breakdown of the ten projects for those two categories?

Ms. Colleen Duggan: Is that the two categories...the two goals, more or less?

Mr. Peter Goldring: Yes. The options for transitional, restorative justice, and women's experiences in conflict.

Ms. Colleen Duggan: I would say women's experiences in conflict, since that's a fairly new area we're developing, would represent about 30%, and the issues of justice would represent another 40% to 50%.

Mr. Peter Goldring: Are there options for transitional, or is that all to do with the restorative justice?

Ms. Colleen Duggan: Some of it has to do with options of transitional justice. For example, the conference I mentioned at Universidad de los Andes, last November, looked at different options that could be applied in Colombia—for example, truth commissions, criminal tribunals, how issues of peace and justice have been dealt with in other countries.

Mr. Peter Goldring: That's still shy about 20% of the projects. What area would they be—

Ms. Colleen Duggan: We've also financed projects in the area of information communication technologies. We have also financed an exploratory project; it was a review of past policies and practices on agrarian reform in Colombia.

Mr. Peter Goldring: What would be the breakdown on those two areas?

Ms. Colleen Duggan: The ICT project was approximately \$150,000, and the agrarian reform policies for peace was just over \$100,000. That was actually co-financed by what would roughly be considered the equivalent of IDRC in Colombia.

Mr. Peter Goldring: That's approximately \$250,000, or is that over the two-year period?

Ms. Colleen Duggan: That's actually since 2000—since we've been working in Colombia.

Mr. Peter Goldring: What exactly is that communications technology—what areas? Communicating is a pretty broad term.

Ms. Colleen Duggan: Yes. It actually looked at the use of the Internet. It looked specifically at how three armed actors in Colombia—namely the Colombian military, the AUC paramilitary, and the FARC guerrillas—use the Internet to generate either policies for war or policies for peace.

Mr. Peter Goldring: I see. In your brief, you also have information here on a tie-in with Industry Canada. Is this done in coordination, cooperation? Are there tie-ins for economic opportunities or trade opportunities? What exactly is the tie-in in communication with Industry Canada?

• (1125)

Mr. Rohinton Medhora: Industry Canada, with us, has created the Institute for Connectivity of the Americas, which is a program situated at IDRC, which supports a lot of our ICT work in the country. As such, there is no direct tie-in with economic benefits, if you will, for Canadian firms, but it may be that through some of the projects, business is generated.

Mr. Peter Goldring: So it's totally at arm's length, and operating in isolation from trade or industry, in terms of economic development or ongoing economic and business opportunities Canadians may wish to develop, or may be developing, in the country?

Mr. Rohinton Medhora: Industry Canada sits on the governing board, as it were, of the Institute for Connectivity of the Americas, but we're not directly tied in with the Canadian industrial establishment.

Mr. Peter Goldring: Also, it indicates in here—there was another note, but unfortunately I can't put my fingers on it—that the Colombian military.... It says from the ages of 15 on up, which would indicate it's probably following the recommendations of the

United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, which allows 15-year-olds to be in the military.

Has there been any work done or talks involved in trying to redress what I believe to be a problem—that the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child says a child is under the age of 18, but they're okay for the military if they're 15? That would be if they're brought into the military. The indication is they possibly could volunteer if they were younger. Has anything been done under this program to try to redress that, or at least monitor it and follow it along, and to enunciate in other ways?

Ms. Colleen Duggan: The Colombian military has actually raised the bar on that and they don't have combatants under the age of 18. So they do abide by the Convention on the Rights of the Child. However, unfortunately neither the FARC guerrillas, the AUC, nor the ELN abide by that convention. I know it's been quite a focus of intense work of the UN's special representative for children to try to get those illegal armed groups to abide by that convention.

Mr. Peter Goldring: And further into this, it certainly indicates—and it probably would be indicative of what percentage has been involved in funding into the country—that women's experiences in conflict and peace.... Do you have any stats from the country itself on how many men have perished under this conflict, as opposed to how many women? I understand there are side issues, of course, but do you have the actual mortality rates—on an annual basis or for the last year—for men, women, and children as a result of the conflict?

Ms. Colleen Duggan: I don't have any specific statistics at hand, but I think it would be safe to say that because the vast majority of combatants in Colombia are men, you could feasibly say there is definitely a higher incidence of death and homicide of men within the Colombian armed conflict. However, women and children disproportionately suffer other forms of violence, such as internal displacement and sexual violence.

Mr. Peter Goldring: Well, it states here that the Colombian women bear the brunt of violence, which would in a sense indicate that they share disproportionately more violence than the men themselves. Understanding that this is a warring faction throughout the country, I would think that it would be shamefully shared by all.

Ms. Colleen Duggan: Well, actually, I think if you wanted to distinguish between victims and combatants, again I would say that more combatants who are killed are men, just because men generally make up more of the armed forces and the illegal armed groups in Colombia. However, I would have to insist that the statistics do reflect that more of the victims of war are actually women and children, because they are the ones who are forcibly displaced, have their homes burnt down, and are the victims of sexual violence and other forms of physical violence.

The Chair: I'm afraid your time is up, Mr. Goldring.

You said two-thirds of the victims are killed outside the conflict?

Ms. Colleen Duggan: No, I said that 65% of the homicides and cases of physical violence, according to the statistics of the Office of the Prosecutor General, aren't necessarily cases that happen within the context of the armed conflict, i.e., as a result of direct armed confrontation.

•(1130)

The Chair: And it's about 50,000 a year, isn't it, for homicides? At least it was the last time I was in Colombia.

Ms. Colleen Duggan: Yes, it's pretty high.

The Chair: Sorry, Madam Bourgeois.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Diane Bourgeois (Terrebonne—Blainville, BQ): Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Good morning, sir and madam. You are a research centre. On page 2 of your text, you write: "there is much that civil society actors can do in order to pursue and support peace while diplomatic solutions are being sought."

Am I to understand that you serve both the diplomats and civil society?

[*English*]

Ms. Colleen Duggan: No.

What I was actually trying to point out with that particular sentence is that while diplomatic solutions are being pursued, there is much that civil society and the research community can contribute to working toward and trying to build policies for post-conflict—and that is in specific areas.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Diane Bourgeois: On page 3, you write that you want to better inform Canadians. You are doing research. Who funds that research, if I may?

Mr. Rohinton Medhora: Parliament.

Ms. Diane Bourgeois: Parliament? Is it Parliament or the federal government? I am sorry, but I didn't have your documents. I just got them. I do not know if my colleagues had them, but I just got them.

[*English*]

Mr. Rohinton Medhora: We're a crown corporation and we're funded by the federal government. In fact, we're part of the international assistance envelope in each year's budget.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Diane Bourgeois: Okay.

You are a kind of government agency. Could you tell us about your budget? How much is it, may I ask?

[*English*]

Mr. Rohinton Medhora: This fiscal year our budget was \$115 million Canadian.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Diane Bourgeois: I just wanted to relate the research that you do on the conflict in Colombia and the impact that it may have. I want to know if you do enough research for the Government of Canada to be able to consult with you. For instance, there was that meeting in Cartagena recently. Did they consult with you to find out what is going on in Colombia?

[*English*]

Ms. Colleen Duggan: Yes, often the members of government do consult with us on what's going on in Colombia. However, I think it's

also important to underline the fact that we don't actually do the research; we fund research. And we fund research primarily in the south and primarily by southern-based institutions. That differentiates us a little bit from being a think tank on Colombia ourselves.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Diane Bourgeois: So you fund research. When that research is published, is it used by Canada to determine our position on Colombia? That is what I am trying to get at. Does the Canadian government use you, your expertise and your research with those civil society organizations? Is that research reflected in various treaties? I just mentioned Cartagena. I want to know if your research is being put to use.

Is my question clear?

Ms. Colleen Duggan: Yes, I think I understand your question.

[*English*]

Yes, we are consulted. However, we are different from other Canadian departments as a crown corporation. For example, we do not influence Canadian policy. For example, we did not have a direct role in what was negotiated and what went into the declaration of Cartagena. A number of organizations and institutions that we fund in Colombia, for example, did have input into the discussions in Cartagena, specifically the day before, when there was a parallel meeting in which civil society organizations in Colombia participated. Some of the people we support participated in that meeting.

But I think that's what makes us a little bit different from the Department of Foreign Affairs or CIDA per se—we do not form Canadian public policy.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Diane Bourgeois: I wish to ask two more short questions.

On page 4, you say that women victims do not receive compensation for their suffering. We could relate the impact on women of conflict in Colombia to the impact of globalization in Mexico, for instance. It is exactly the same thing. Women get killed in Mexico, in Ciudad Juárez. It is exactly the same phenomenon.

You also mention a little further the presence of women in the FARC. How do you explain that women are a majority in that movement?

•(1135)

[*English*]

Ms. Colleen Duggan: The FARC is a very closed armed movement; it's very difficult to get information on the FARC. However, the research that has been undertaken on the FARC estimates that up to 40% are women. Women are in the FARC for a variety of reasons. Some of them join voluntarily. The FARC is well known for forcibly recruiting people, and young people are particularly victims of this in Colombia.

Women, for example, whose communities have been attacked, have been the object of attack or taken over, often will join the FARC or another armed movement for reasons of protection, if male family members have been killed, for example, and they're left with nothing and no form of protection. That's one reason they will join up. Other times, unfortunately, they don't have the choice; they are forcibly recruited.

[Translation]

Ms. Diane Bourgeois: Could poverty, misery be one of the reasons for those women to join armed movements?

[English]

Ms. Colleen Duggan: Absolutely. Research also bears out that both women and men most unfortunately join armed movements in Colombia because they see it as a source of employment.

[Translation]

The Chair: Is that all, Ms. Bourgeois?

Ms. Diane Bourgeois: I have a last question. Could we get those reports explaining why there are so many women in the FARC? I think they would be of great interest. Other types of reports could also help the Sub-Committee make enlightened decisions.

Thank you.

[English]

The Chair: Ms. Torsney.

Hon. Paddy Torsney (Burlington, Lib.): Thank you.

Building on the same questions that Madame Bourgeois had raised, in terms of demobilizing some of these people, obviously the strategies are different, particularly if they're not paramilitaries. I know in the demobilization in some of the areas in West Africa there were problems, because the way to get access to services was that you had to hand in a gun, and if women don't have guns, they have nothing to hand in.

Are there specific programs that are going on? You're researching them rather than implementing them, I think, and I wonder if you would be able to elaborate on that.

Ms. Colleen Duggan: First of all, you need to distinguish between what they call collective demobilization programs and individual demobilization programs. The ones you refer to in Africa, for example, are collective state-sponsored demobilization programs.

Over the last decade, yes, Colombia has suffered many of the same sorts of problems. Women have been discriminated against and have fallen outside of state formal demobilization programs because they don't carry a gun, because they've actually been in fighting forces as cooks or porters. So that's definitely a difficulty.

What's going on right now in Colombia is that really, since the Uribe administration came to office, the government has been slowly disbanding the collective demobilization programs that were in place for demobilizing other former combatants from former peace processes—the M-19, for example.

That's difficult, because people that you see, women that you see, women and men, young women that you see being separated from the illegal fighting forces now often do so because they've been captured or because they have deserted. That leaves them in

particularly vulnerable circumstances because there's no formalized state structure there to ensure that they have the right to due process and that their needs are being looked after. So there is quite a bit of concern, for example, that combatants who are captured or who desert are actually held incommunicado for the first while, obviously because there's an interest in interrogating them and finding out.

The individual demobilization programs are quite problematic because there is not a lot of transparency on what's happening and how these people, often children, are being treated. There is also not in place a kind of official system for being able to trace what happens to them and if they're given re-employment training, if they're given the kinds of tools that they need to be able to reintegrate into civil society. So there's actually quite a large debate going on now in Colombia on the pros and cons of individual versus collective demobilization.

• (1140)

Hon. Paddy Torsney: I would imagine that some of them would be moms caring for children.

Ms. Colleen Duggan: Yes. In the study that I mentioned, aside from having this research team and the Universidad de Antioquia, aside from looking at past demobilization progress and the actual policies, they've been interviewing some of these girls who are actually living in hostels, ad hoc hostels that have been set up. Many of them are young mothers, and they're very stigmatized also because they're mothers who have given birth to babies who are considered enemies and enemies of the state. It's very difficult because there is not really a formal social safety net in place to reintegrate them back into society.

The Chair: Mr. Bains.

Mr. Navdeep Bains (Mississauga—Brampton South, Lib.): I have just a quick question with respect to your involvement in Colombia. I believe you've been involved since 2000. Is that correct?

Ms. Colleen Duggan: Yes.

Mr. Navdeep Bains: I believe you've worked with CIDA and other departments as well in terms of your research. I just want to know what other stakeholders you've been involved with in terms of your research—other countries, local authorities. Can you elaborate on that a bit, please?

Ms. Colleen Duggan: Sure.

The vast majority of institutions that we fund in Colombia are Colombian civil society or research institutions, either based in universities or NGOs. However, for example, we did partner up on the agrarian reform project that I mentioned. We partnered up with kind of the Colombian equivalent of IDRC, and that project was partially co-funded by them. We're actually hoping that institution in Colombia, which is called Colciencias, which is a funding body, will continue to carry that research along, because research on agrarian policies is also going to be incredibly important in Colombia in the post-conflict period.

We have not to date, I would say, partnered with other countries per se in Colombia to actually fund research. However, we are in close contact with what I would call like-minded donors. Specifically, for example, the Swedish government, through their official development agency, also funds a lot of work on women's experiences in war. So we're in close contact with them. While we don't officially partner up on projects, we do see to what extent we can coordinate our activities to take advantage of activities that they're doing at the same time with similar partners.

Mr. Navdeep Bains: What's the reason for not partnering up? Somehow I get the impression that we're reinventing the wheel possibly, or that there could be better synergies when you work with other countries, like-minded countries, on initiatives. I think that would be a compelling reason to partner up, and I was wondering why that hasn't taken place.

Ms. Colleen Duggan: I would say that there is some partnering going on. There has been less partnering for us in Colombia on the level of actual co-funding of projects. However, we have been able to achieve a certain amount of harmony in the kinds of activities we're undertaking.

Ideally, yes, that's our goal. We prefer to work with other like-minded donors not only so that we can bring more money to the same research, but also because some of the research that we fund is complex. It's at times dangerous research for local researchers, and it behooves us to have more countries within the international community standing behind these organizations and supporting them. So it's something we're working toward, and it's something that actually we're trying to work toward more strongly with our regional office in Montevideo.

We do have some restrictions because we don't have a field presence in Colombia. I personally travel there a maximum of four to five times a year, so it's difficult to build those kinds of relationships and that kind of trust, especially when other donors, their own representatives within the country, are cycling out.

Mr. Navdeep Bains: Is CIDA the only agency you deal with here locally, in Canada? Are there any other bodies that you deal with?

Ms. Colleen Duggan: There's CIDA, and we also deal with the Department of Foreign Affairs. However, we have a number of events that we've organized here. For example, aside from the work we do in Colombia, we also finance global work on issues of peace and conflict, and the whole area of justice and restorative transitional justice is something we're working at very much at the global level. On events that we have organized around issues of transitional justice, for example, we have invited other departments, including Citizenship and Immigration Canada and Justice Canada. They have attended some of our events.

• (1145)

Mr. Navdeep Bains: Thank you.

The Chair: Mr. Goldring.

Mr. Peter Goldring: I want to speak about this overview document that was presented to us, Mr. Chair. It makes it difficult for us to talk with real intelligence on the subject if we don't have the information beforehand. This is quite a bit of information that I would like to have had beforehand to be able to digest it. My earlier question about what we're involved with on projects is really

answered in here in part, so I just want to make this comment that it would help us all if we could get the information earlier.

In this document, "IDRC in Colombia", the recent project highlight is community justice and conflict management. In this one, it denotes the cost and that, but the research partner—and my Spanish isn't very good—is Corporación Región para el Desarrollo y la Democracia. I would think that would be a democratic corporation, but maybe you could tell me exactly what that is in English.

Ms. Colleen Duggan: It's an NGO, the Regional Corporation for Development and Democracy.

Mr. Peter Goldring: Yes, that's what I thought it was, so my question really is this. In that entire project, it's restorative justice or community justice and conflict management, but nowhere in that description are we talking about any type of democracy, research and development, or improvement of the democratic institutes in the country. I would think it's common in many countries of conflict—and I think we see it in Iraq and we see it in other countries—that one of the most essential areas for development is the democratic process. The question really is why there are no allotments toward the democratic research, particularly with an organization that has in its name and title "democracy"?

Ms. Colleen Duggan: Actually, the community justice project does, in itself, touch on some of what I would call the quasi-judicial or non-judicial institutions in Colombia. In Colombia, community justice mechanisms are actually made up of different figures: mediators, justices of the peace. A number of these—they call them justice operators—are actually trained up and affiliated with the ombudsman's office in Colombia and with other areas of the justice system. Some of them are actually state-trained and quasi-state, but others are not; others operate privately.

Part of the challenge in Colombia is that the administration of justice in Colombia is incredibly congested. Because people are often frustrated in trying to get justice through the courts, the danger is that people obviously will take justice into their own hands. However, there are a lot of alternative mechanisms like the justices of the peace, for example, who manage family conflicts, private disputes, disputes that really don't need to see the light of day in the formal court system, because they can be managed outside the court.

Mr. Peter Goldring: But looking at the needs of the country and looking at this as a situation we've been involved in for 25 years, and other countries for 50 years, I would think that one of the roads towards coming to an end is helping develop a sensitized democratic system throughout the country. And I find it rather unusual that in an area like this you wouldn't have a program or plan or initiative under way that would encourage the development of a more sensitized and more robust democratic institution.

Ms. Colleen Duggan: I guess that's where I would respectfully beg to differ. I think Colombia has one of the most robust democracies in the world, actually. It has a very strong and sophisticated constitution, with more than 200 articles.

The challenge in Colombia is, I would say, trying to convince citizenry—which I think is a challenge in a lot of democracies throughout the world—to actually actively engage and participate in democracy. So I don't really see the problem as being with the formal democratic structure.

• (1150)

Mr. Peter Goldring: We have just come through the Ukraine circumstances, with our chairman as well, and have seen on the ground there the differences—and even an evolution—in a short period of time, a couple of months, of where I really grasp the situation was. There was a lack of understanding of the value of the democratic institutions they had, and they learned this over a period of time. But prior to that, there was quite an engagement from the University of Alberta, doing quite a bit of sensitizing work within the country. And I believe that with the combination of that type of research, that type of involvement, and that type of engagement, one of the difficulties is you certainly have to have your politicians in the country sensitized to the importance of democracy. I would think that would be a natural place to be operating.

Ms. Colleen Duggan: Again, I guess my answer to that would be that unfortunately, because Colombia is a country that's been racked by conflict for about 40 years, even participating in politics is an incredibly risky venture.

In the early nineties, for example—

Mr. Peter Goldring: It is in the Ukraine too, or was.

Ms. Colleen Duggan: —when they had presidential elections, five presidential candidates were killed in one year. So it's an incredibly complex situation, in which even participating in formal politics is difficult.

I know there has been a lot of discussion around the table throughout these hearings on the situation of Ingrid Betancourt, who was a presidential candidate and who has been held captive by the FARC guerrillas for three years.

Mr. Peter Goldring: Also on these sheets I see once again the suggestion of expanding a trade policy network, and for quite a number of years working and engaged. It reads quite differently from your interpretation of information communication technology, as it was given to me. Your notes on this sheet rather suggest there is an active trade dialogue with the country.

I would think that would be a very important issue to engage in, given the fact that Canada's exports to Colombia have dropped off from 1994 to 1999 by 50%. Is there active participation or engagement of Canadian corporations to encourage economic participation within the country, as your brochure here suggests?

Mr. Rohinton Medhora: I should say that the trade policy network you refer to is not an information and communications technology network. It's really a network of Colombian and Latin American researchers and practitioners to better enable these countries to participate in regional and global trade fora. So it's to enhance the negotiating capacity in the region and in the country. And in that case, Colombian negotiators are linked with negotiators in other Latin American countries.

Mr. Peter Goldring: So we operate in complete isolation from Canadian export interests, because the trade has dropped off to 50% while we've been engaged in expanding a trade policy network.

Mr. Rohinton Medhora: This is capacity-building in the area of trade policy and trade research. It is not connected to Canadian exports to the country; that's true.

Mr. Peter Goldring: So it's in complete isolation from Canadian trade interests.

Thank you very much.

The Chair: Does anyone else wish to ask questions?

I'd like to ask a few, actually.

Madame Bourgeois.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Diane Bourgeois: Ms. Duggan, I try to understand. In your document, you say that CIDA is one of your partners. You talk about governance, equity and improving living conditions. It is exactly the same mission as CIDA's mission. Those elements are also found in the Millennium Development objectives. I have a difficult time trying to understand. You are a partner of CIDA. CIDA is an agency as you are an agency. Are there two agencies?

• (1155)

[*English*]

Ms. Colleen Duggan: When I say we're a partner of CIDA, what I was referring to is we have, as I mentioned, an interdepartmental working group that allows CIDA, the Department of Foreign Affairs, and IDRC to come together on a quarterly basis specifically for the purpose of discussing who we're funding in the country and who we're supporting as separate agencies and to try to bring some coherence and a kind of Canada chapeau to what we're doing in Colombia and also to exchange information on how the situation is unfolding and how we're dealing with operational complexities on the ground. However, we're not a partner of CIDA; i.e., we don't fund CIDA and CIDA doesn't fund us. Sometimes we do have arrangements in which we will co-fund projects, but that's a different kind of relationship.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Diane Bourgeois: I imagine that, like CIDA, you have decisions to make regarding the people with whom Canada will trade in Colombia. Do you give your opinion regarding those people?

[*English*]

Mr. Rohinton Medhora: CIDA is Canada's official aid agency. IDRC was created a year later with a more specific mandate, which is to support research and to support research for contemporary development issues in developing countries themselves. It is often the case that the two agencies connect, and we frequently work together. But CIDA's ambit is much wider than that of IDRC. As a result—and to answer your question directly—in any specific instance it is the case that IDRC is a part of the Canadian presence. We often say we're part of the Canadian foreign policy family, but we have a specific mandate to support research. We bring our own perspective, therefore, to Canada's economic and political interests in developing countries.

[Translation]

Ms. Diane Bourgeois: I am curious about a last point. About a fortnight ago, we voted in the House against the split between Foreign Affairs and International Trade. There were two bills, C-31 and C-32. We voted against those bills because we felt that when you deal with international trade, you also have to take into account the impact of our trade on foreign affairs, living conditions, etc. Have you been asked what your corporate opinion was as researchers on that split between those two elements, or would you like to express a position?

[English]

Mr. Rohinton Medhora: Our minister is the Minister of Foreign Affairs. We report to him.

We don't have a corporate position on those sorts of issues. I think the case can be made that trade and political foreign policy interests are completely interwoven, and the case can be made that they can be separated. Operationally, the case can be made either way. But we don't really take a position on that particular vote.

[Translation]

Ms. Diane Bourgeois: You have not researched that?

[English]

Mr. Rohinton Medhora: No.

[Translation]

Ms. Diane Bourgeois: Thank you.

[English]

The Chair: I agree with you, Ms. Duggan, that democracy in Colombia is a very determined product.

As an expert on Colombia, what do you see as the most likely direction for the end of the conflict, the slaughter, and the tragedies that take place every day? What's your middle-term or longer-term view on where we might hope to see some peace being built?

Ms. Colleen Duggan: I wish I could be optimistic, but unfortunately it's one of the things about working on Colombia: the longer you work on it the more you realize how complex it is.

There has been some discussion—and I didn't really touch on it in my presentation—on the whole issue of the drug trade. The drug trade is part of the political conflict in Colombia. The effect the drug trade has had is that it has fueled and accelerated the conflict. It has done that in a moment in which the Cold War is no longer in place. Illegal actors need to look for other sources to finance their activities. They obviously look to sources like drug trafficking and extortion.

My own point of view is that if you can find a definitive solution for the drug problem in Colombia, which I think is incredibly complex, because drug policies, interdiction, etc., have to date not worked in Latin America.... If you could take the drug traffic out of the equation, I think you could lower the intensity of the conflict significantly. However, I think there are other issues. I think we need to be working more on global and regional issues. There is an issue of arms flows, in that someone is providing these combatants with arms. Unfortunately, we often like to try to separate these issues out, but they're issues that need to be dealt with.

I also think that there is perhaps more that can be done under the purview of the OAS. I think there's a very worrying situation going on right now in the Andean region. There's a lot of tension between those countries, not only as a result of the Colombian conflict, but the Colombian conflict is part of it. I think there could be longer-term hopes for more diplomatic efforts within the OAS and other multilateral organizations to put together, for example, a stronger group of friends to the Colombian conflict. Unfortunately, it's a conflict that is often reduced to being a problem of drug trafficking, and those who very much work on the conflict know that it's not just a matter of that. I think diplomatic solutions need to be brought to bear on that.

• (1200)

The Chair: Thank you very much for that.

You mentioned the drugs. I used to think the drugs left by way of airplanes. Apparently, they go down the rivers and out the trails. Is that your impression as well?

Ms. Colleen Duggan: The drugs go every which way. They can get out, unfortunately.

Yes, they do go down the rivers. Colombia's borders are very porous. A great percentage of the country is Amazon. It has incredibly difficult and complex geography, mountains, etc. It's a little bit similar to Afghanistan in that way. Trying to stop drug trafficking in a country like that, due to sheer geography, is an incredible challenge. Some of it goes out by air. For example, I think you're seeing increasingly that this kind of thing is being filtered out and caught in the United States, as they have put up more stringent policies as a result of homeland security, etc. But it's certainly not just by air.

The Chair: What about the trade unionists, for example, who are being murdered every day or so? What can Canada or any of us do about that kind of violence?

Ms. Colleen Duggan: I think Canada needs to send a very firm and clear message that trade unionism, as in any democracy, is an important part of democracy, people's right to organize. I think we need to reiterate the importance of extending protection to trade unionists. There are some protection programs in place, sponsored by the Colombian government, but they have a lot of problems. They are very underfunded. I also think it would be important to encourage and to remind the Colombian government of the importance of investigating incidents of violence and assassination of trade unionists.

The Chair: Do you know if we have any arrangements to get people, say trade unionists, out of the country very quickly if they need visa arrangements?

Ms. Colleen Duggan: I do know that a lot of trade unionists have come to Canada through its refugee program. But again, Colombia suffers from the same problem that most countries in the world suffer from, in that there's a quota system and there are only so many who can come out.

What I think could be interesting is looking at more flexible arrangements. What really helps in Colombia is getting people out of the country for a while. Trade unionists are under incredible pressure. They're under threat all the time. Sometimes it helps to be able to go out of the country on an exchange, just to recharge your batteries for six or eight months. Those kinds of arrangements I think are something that should be looked at.

The Chair: What about FARC, do you see them getting better or worse, or what at the moment?

• (1205)

Ms. Colleen Duggan: Following the news of the last week, my own perspective is that unfortunately the FARC are getting stronger militarily, despite President Uribe's democratic security policy. There are more armed confrontations, which are actually involving more members of the army. Coinciding with the Cartagena meeting, I think that week was the highest week in record of members of the Colombian army being killed in confrontations with the FARC.

I don't think that the FARC will come back to the table until they're forced to, until militarily they are on an equal footing with the government. I think that was one of the problems with the former negotiation with the Pastrana government, who had all of the best political will in the world but militarily the FARC just continued to get stronger.

The Chair: How about the ELN?

Ms. Colleen Duggan: I think one of two things will happen: the ELN will either be swallowed up by the FARC.... Historically, they've been friends and they've been enemies. There's a very high number of defectors from the ELN who are now, ironically, in the paramilitary ranks, so I think you might eventually see them disappear. Or I think that as the FARC gets stronger and the ELN realizes that they might eventually be exterminated by the FARC, they might come back to the table and there might be a chance actually to bring to fruition the ELN political process, which is actually under way. That's one of the difficulties in Colombia: each successive administration prioritizes a negotiation with one armed actor over the other, and then lets the momentum that's been building up behind, for example, a negotiation process with the ELN or another actor fade off. So you lose that momentum and you lose possibilities to actually get those people out of arms and actually take them out of the equation.

It seems like they almost need a parallel strategy and parallel efforts to be negotiating simultaneously with all of the armed organizations. I'm certainly not criticizing them. It's a very tall order.

The Chair: The AUC, the paramilitaries, what observations can you give us on that beyond what you perhaps already said?

Ms. Colleen Duggan: I think it's a very difficult process. If the AUC is taken out of the equation, then that's one less argument for the FARC for why they don't come back to the negotiating table. And that's not necessarily me saying this, but it has been well documented. Some of the links that unfortunately exist at some levels of the military and the Colombian state and the AUC is a very complex and thorny problem. If the AUC disappear militarily, personally, I don't think we'll see the end of them as agents of violence.

People like Carlos Castaño, who was killed last year, are well known. He was the henchman of and the head of security for Escobar, in the years of the cartel. These are people who are also thugs for hire. I think the only way you can avoid revisiting these kinds of nightmares is doing what the international community is doing right now: insisting upon some transparency in the process and a legal framework, which will actually allow the international community and Colombians to keep track of who these people are, what they've done, and to what extent they should have to face justice through the courts. Otherwise, they'll disappear into the woodwork, and I think that's not a good thing for Colombia.

The Chair: We were told last week by the NGOs that the Uribe government is trying to get rid of the UN human rights people in Colombia. Do you have any comment on that? You don't have to comment, if you don't want.

Ms. Colleen Duggan: I had the privilege of working with the UN human rights office for two years. That's always been felt. It's a little bit of a thorn in the side of any government that doesn't necessarily want to be hauled in front of the human rights commission every year.

I think that comment came from the fact that the UN made the decision—actually, I think it was a mutual decision between the UN and the Government of Colombia—to discontinue the Secretary-General's special representative, James LeMoyné. But that was a decision that was a long time coming after the FARC process broke down. Frankly, I can't see the Government of Colombia kicking out the office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. It wouldn't be a very smart thing to do. They would lose a lot of credibility. I think they also find the office useful, to some extent.

What I could see happening, and what I've seen happen in other countries I've worked in, is a concerted effort to water down their mandate, to make it a mandate only to extend technical assistance and not a mandate of international verification—actually taking away that reporting role to the human rights commission. I think that is something that could potentially happen.

• (1210)

The Chair: We heard the Cartagena agreement was weakened for a lot of reasons. Do you have any comments on whether you think it's been weakened, or why it was weakened?

Ms. Colleen Duggan: I'm not sure it did weaken things. The Cartagena declaration is sort of "soft law", like everything else. I think what's positive about the Cartagena declaration is that it reiterates the international community's good will to remain engaged on the Colombian situation, which in itself is a great feat in this world of burgeoning humanitarian emergencies, where we're all being pulled. I think the G-24 has even come together to reiterate that it's following the situation and is going to remain engaged. I think that is an important advance.

Everyone knows the Uribe administration shies away from certain language. I think that's unfortunate, but what I think is more important is that there are efforts on the ground in Colombia, through instruments such as the Cartagena declaration, for the international community to speak with one voice. When the international community is not speaking with one voice on issues like truth, justice, and reconciliation, that's when I think things become quite murky and complicated.

The Chair: There's just one other thing. Then Mr. Broadbent may have some questions.

There are 13,000 children working for FARC and ELN and the paramilitaries. Does that sound correct to you?

Ms. Colleen Duggan: That could definitely be possible, yes.

The Chair: Are there any insights on what Canada can do about that?

Ms. Colleen Duggan: It's an incredibly difficult topic. I think what Canada can do is continue to support programs, for example through CIDA, for employment generation, for education. I think a big part of the solution is prevention, trying to find a way to prevent these kids from joining up or from being forcibly recruited; then on the other side being available to provide programs of assistance and safety nets for these kids when they leave, because some of these kids have gone through incredibly traumatic experiences. All they know is violence; they know how to operate a gun. They need to be given solutions and opportunities to actually be able to reintegrate into civil society.

That's the kind of thing Canada can do, but prevention is very difficult because, as I mentioned, there aren't underage combatants in the Colombian military. The problem with underage combatants is with the illegal armed groups.

The Chair: Thank you.

Mr. Broadbent, do you have any questions? I appreciate you couldn't be here earlier.

Hon. Ed Broadbent (Ottawa Centre, NDP): I'll begin by apologizing that because of other obligations today on another committee and in the chamber, I couldn't be here; by definition, then, I didn't hear what you had to say in your introductory comments.

I'll restrict my questions to one area, which is the freedom of association or trade union rights. As you know, according to the annual report of the ICFTU, virtually every year in recent years Colombia has had the worst record in the world when it comes to assassination of men and women who are trying to exercise trade union rights—or they're tortured. They're either murdered or tortured. I was interested in that context to hear you make reference to the fact that the government actually has, at least on paper or in form, a program designed to protect men and women who want to organize a trade union.

Can you elaborate a bit on that program, how long it's been in existence, and what it's actually doing?

•(1215)

Ms. Colleen Duggan: It's a program of protection under the Ministry of the Interior. It basically provides what they call human rights offenders—who are essentially people working in NGOs, and

trade unionists—with what they call soft and hard protection. Hard protection includes bodyguards and armoured vehicles. Soft protection is actually a system of radios that are operated between the public prosecutor's office and the chief of police. These are radios that a trade unionist can use immediately if they're under threat, being followed, or someone is making an attempt on their life. That is supposed to immediately activate a system in which the police will respond, the perpetrators will be chased down, etc. It's had varying levels of success.

In my former life, when I was with the High Commissioner for Human Rights in Colombia, I actually sat as an observer on the Ministry of the Interior committee, which brought together the police, the state institutions involved in that protection program, the trade unionists, and NGOs. There were cases of people who had called through on the radio and were able to get hold of the police, who were hopefully able to prevent what could have been really unfortunate incidents.

It's a program that has a lot of problems, though. It's very underfunded. There were some problems with corruption and how the money was being managed, especially for hard protection, when I was there. I know that some reviews have been undertaken, but I'm not sure to what extent it's actually improved since then. But it's a very important program.

Hon. Ed Broadbent: I can see it being important in principle. As I said, I was surprised to hear of its existence. But if it's seriously underfunded... We all know that there are governments around the world that adopt all kinds of resolutions or informal structures, for example. They have institutions intended to protect human rights, but they can have a deplorable record in terms of implementation.

If we had before us some men and women who were attempting to organize a trade union in Colombia, and I asked them the question about this institution, would you speculate what they might say about it?

Ms. Colleen Duggan: I think you'd get mixed remarks. Some are very cynical. The response most trade unionists would give you is: "Once you have to give us protection, it's too late". I think they would place the emphasis upon government policies that were positive toward trade unionism and reminded the citizenry of the people's right to organize.

Hon. Ed Broadbent: Do such programs exist in Colombia?

Ms. Colleen Duggan: Not to my knowledge.

But I think prevention is a big part of it. You can expand a protection program and keep putting money into it, but as the violence gets worse, you'll just have more beneficiaries of that program, unfortunately. Part of it needs to be very serious investigations into the deaths or attempts against the lives of trade unionists. There are a lot of trade unionists outside of Colombia, and a lot of them are here in Canada as refugees. I think you need to get to the bottom of who's perpetrating these acts, why they're happening, and how the state is responding to them.

Hon. Ed Broadbent: On both scores—the underfunding you refer to—do you have any idea approximately how much funding does go into that program?

Secondly, on the other point you just made about the importance of the state or the government getting to the bottom of who's doing the killings and taking the obligation to investigate such killings seriously, in your view, do they really try go after the source of assassinations of trade unionists?

• (1220)

Ms. Colleen Duggan: I'm not actually sure how much money is going into the program. When I was there in 2000 it was.... No, I really wouldn't want to say. I could provide you with that information if you were interested.

There have been some investigations into attempts against trade unionists. Unfortunately, one thing that has happened in Colombia over the last four years is that the human rights division of the public prosecutor's office has been severely weakened. They had a number of excellent criminal investigators there, but many of them had to leave because the cases they were handling were very hot, and some of those cases had to do with trade unionists.

I would say the vast majority of attempts against trade unionists' lives or of actual assassinations of trade unionists, unfortunately, have been attributed to the paramilitaries. It's very difficult when you have offices like the public prosecutor's office being weakened. Also, one of the problems within the public prosecutor's office is that it was compromised, actually infiltrated by people who were affiliated with both the paramilitary and FARC, so that's undermined its credibility significantly.

Hon. Ed Broadbent: Thank you.

The Chair: Mr. Goldring.

Mr. Peter Goldring: Thank you.

I'd first of all like to make a comment and I'll just read this sentence, which is from a speech the chair made at one time.

The Chair: Don't hold me to it.

Mr. Peter Goldring: Clearly, we have come to realize that our future is tied to the Americas, and our trading patterns reflect this. With respect to Colombia, our third largest export market in South America, we already have a solid base. In 1998, bilateral trade surpassed \$700 million. Investment, another excellent measure of our commercial partnership, has also experienced enormous growth in recent years.

And we are taking steps to build on this foundation.

Clearly, our building has ceased because trade has substantially dropped off, not only trade from Colombia to Canada but also trade from Canada to Colombia. That's my comment.

My question is more on one of the projects IDRC is funding in Colombia, which is "community justice and conflict management". I know from my notes that CIDA also funds a project in Colombia that is "community justice and conflict resolution". Aside from the words "management" and "resolution", it would appear both of them are substantially similar. Are they similar, or do they have different functions? Why do we need to have two organizations funding substantially the same issue in Colombia? Would it not make sense to combine the two?

Ms. Colleen Duggan: Actually, I'm glad you raised that example, because that project is a nice example of how we and CIDA were able to come together and work in concert. I am aware of CIDA's

National Community Justice School, because the two programs were developed at the same time.

Mr. Peter Goldring: But does this not distort accountability, in that when we're looking at the books here, we see your organization is spending a substantial amount of money on community justice and conflict management but another organization is doing virtually the same thing? That distorts it to the Canadian public when you do your reporting, because whereas we might be able to acknowledge and accept funding for it in one sense, we have difficulty in connecting all the different organizations. How many other organizations are funding the same thing from Canada too?

Ms. Colleen Duggan: Again, both projects were developed at the same time by CIDA and IDRC with full knowledge. I think the critical difference is that the project we're funding is for research. The research on these mechanisms, on how they're functioning, if they're functioning, why they're not functioning, and how successfully they are, is actually feeding CIDA with critical information on the kind of plan they need to be laying down for the curriculum in a national school for community justice. The two are actually complementing each other, because our project is functioning to provide CIDA with the information it needs to structure the national school.

Mr. Peter Goldring: To give clarity in your reporting and so we can connect these amounts too, would it not be possible for you to indicate this is the research aspect of that particular funding and that CIDA accomplishes it further by providing on-the-ground funding? It's very hard to connect the two according to the various organizations.

• (1225)

Ms. Colleen Duggan: It's a good suggestion, and we'll take it into consideration.

The Chair: I think we're finally finished.

[*Translation*]

Thank you very much for being with us. You have given us a very worthwhile testimony. IDRC's reputation is always very well preserved.

[*English*]

Thank you very much.

Can we deal now with Mr. Broadbent's motion?

If the witnesses wish to stay they are welcome to stay, or they can leave, as they prefer.

Hon. Ed Broadbent: I just want to remind all members of the committee that they have the resolution.

I'm in your hands, Mr. Chairman. Should I read the whole resolution out?

The Chair: Please don't. Could you just read the heart of it, Mr. Broadbent?

Hon. Ed Broadbent: All right.

Be it resolved that the Subcommittee on Human Rights and International Development urge the Minister of Foreign Affairs to instruct the Canadian delegation to the Commission on Human Rights in Geneva to:

1. Propose a resolution on Colombia at the Commission on Human Rights that includes a strong statement of support for the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights in Colombia and its important role in the country;

2. Include in Canada's statement to the commission:

—a clear reference to the existence of an internal armed conflict and humanitarian crisis in Colombia;

—a clear statement condemning the high level of impunity in Colombia;

—a call for an interim report from the High Commissioner at the General Assembly in September;

—a statement encouraging the High Commissioner, Louise Arbour, to visit Colombia.

The Chair: I don't know whether Ms. Duggan wants to make a comment. She probably doesn't.

I think everyone has had notice.

Mr. Bains.

Mr. Navdeep Bains: I just want a point of clarification on that, if you don't mind, please. It's on the call for "an interim report from the High Commissioner". What would be entailed in that report, or what do you expect?

Hon. Ed Broadbent: I don't know how to put it in other words. There would be a final report and this would be an interim report.

Mr. Navdeep Bains: I was wondering, is there any specific area you wanted addressed, or was it just for a general interim report?

[*Translation*]

Ms. Diane Bourgeois: It would be on Colombia?

[*English*]

Hon. Ed Broadbent: Yes, certainly.

[*Translation*]

Indeed, it would be on Columbia, but specifically on human rights.

The Chair: We can now vote on that motion.

(Motion agreed to)

[*English*]

The Chair: We'll adopt the motion as the fourth report of the committee.

Are you also instructing me to present this report to the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Chair: I wonder if we could break for 90 seconds and go in camera now to discuss the future business of the committee.

[*Proceedings continue in camera*]

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

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

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