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Chair

Mr. Kevin Sorenson

Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development

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● (1545)

[*English*]

The Chair (Mr. Kevin Sorenson (Crowfoot, CPC)): We'll call this meeting to order.

This is the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development, Wednesday, December 6. Pursuant to Standing Order 108(2), we are continuing our study on democratic development this afternoon. The committee's major study has been Canada's role in international support for democratic development around the world.

Today we are pleased to have appear before us, as an individual, John W. Foster, the principal researcher from the North-South Institute; and from the Royal Military College of Canada, Jane Boulden, Canada Research Chair in International Relations and Security Studies, Department of Politics and Economics.

We welcome you both today. We apologize for starting late. We had votes today. Normally we're out by 3 o'clock, but it was 3:30 today because of the votes. We appreciate your being here and we look forward to what you have to say. We'll give you an opening statement, after which time we will go into the first round of questioning, beginning with the official opposition.

Welcome. The time is yours.

We'll start with Mr. Foster.

Mr. John W. Foster (Principal Researcher (Civil Society), The North-South Institute, As an Individual): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Thanks to the committee for inviting the North-South Institute to engage in this discussion regarding democracy. The institute, as you probably know, is the only independent research institute in Canada devoted to international development.

I'd like to focus on three of the questions that you put forward: the role of non-governmental organizations, the question of where is the need for support, and some approaches that Canada might consider.

You've cited an interest in a comparative approach. A couple of the examples I'm going to refer to that come out of my experience over the last seven or eight years are basically civil society initiatives. One of them is a government initiative.

The first element I'd like to speak to is the experience of the international Social Watch, which was created in 1995, an international NGO, first of all, dedicated to following up to the Beijing and Copenhagen world summits, and then more recently looking at governance and items like the UN Millennium Declaration and the millennium development goals. This is an association of 60 autonomous national coalitions, most of them in developing countries. It has a small secretariat in Montevideo, Uruguay, and the central office is supported by a government arm's-length agency, which is Oxfam Novib in the Netherlands.

I want to highlight the work of one of the national coalitions in order to provide a window on how these groups work on democratization. That in particular is the Social Watch coalition in India. This is an alliance of civil society organizations, not a separate organization. It works both at the national and state level and addresses national, regional, and local governance issues. In its objectives it states that it ensures that civil society organizations and citizens are critically engaged in the process of governance to make democracy more meaningful and participatory. Monitoring the institutions of governance will make them accountable and transparent. They've picked up on four key instances of governance: Parliament, the executive and its execution of public policy, the Supreme Court, and instances of local self-government. They do this through a perspective of social development and citizens' accountability. Their 2006 report was introduced by former Prime Minister I. K. Gujral.

On Parliament, they've been particularly critical of the functioning of the Indian Parliament. They state that it has shown a marked decline in the number of sittings per year, while it is progressively devoting lesser time to issues of real concern. The dismal picture is further accentuated by MPs who exhibit a disinterest toward critical issues like drought, insufficient food and water, and the plight of farmers. They also challenge the Parliament with regard not only to shortened time for debate of key issues, but absenteeism and the significant number of members of Parliament who have criminal records, which in India is 16%.

With regard to the Supreme Court and the judiciary, they are concerned both with the functioning of the system and issues like judicial vacancies and long pending case lists, but also with the role of the courts in ensuring that equity-ensuring laws, for instance, about the provision of cooked noon meals in all government and government supported schools are in fact implemented by lower-level governments. This is a purely activist approach to the courts.

With regard to local government, Social Watch India is a particularly salient example of how civil society is essential to the construction of democracy from the ground up. The key element there is the panchayats, the local village councils, and the regional village councils. They audited those in 2006 from the lens of right to food, right to work, right to health, and right to education. They also looked specifically at the extent to which nationally mandated extension of governance to tribal interests and marginalized groups have been addressed.

● (1550)

Among the specific issues they lifted up were gender and gender participation; ineffective fiscal decentralization; management of education—generally good; engagement with public health—generally ineffective; and ambiguities in the mandates for management of local water resources. In conclusion, their assessment of the operation of these groups, of which there are a couple of hundred thousand councils in India, was that on the one hand, they were the most definitive step toward re-energizing democracy in the history of independent India, but that this laudable initiative for the decentralization of governance has been circumvented by the alliance of elite political interests, change-resistant bureaucracy, and the rent-seeking class, which had well-entrenched interests in the continuation of a colonially centralized state structure.

However, in spite of the odds, they generate some hope in a deeply troubled system of democracy. They also present many micro-examples of effective governance.

Indian Social Watch is one of the most advanced of the 60 national-level coalitions. However, work on local democracy and accountability as well as national-level accountability is going on in such diverse locales as the Philippines, Benin, and Brazil. Of particular interest in the current international context is the work of the Social Watch member organization, the Arab NGO Network for Development, based in Beirut, but with member organizations in countries stretching from Yemen through Sudan to Morocco.

This experience demonstrates what other witnesses to this committee have argued: that democracy is best expressed in a human rights framework, and that those rights include social, economic, and cultural rights as well as civil and political rights. It also illustrates the importance of donor support to effective southern, non-governmental organizations.

The second experiment that I'd like to lift up for you is the Helsinki process. This was an initiative of the Government of Finland, together with the Government of Tanzania. I took part as a rapporteur for the panel on new approaches to global problem-solving, chaired by Nitin Desai, former Under-Secretary-General of the UN. We published a report entitled *Governing Globalization-Globalizing Governance*, which is available on the website of the Finnish foreign ministry.

I want to mention three things here. They all address the issue of democracy at a global level. The first is democratizing oversight of the global economy. The second is a strengthened role for parliamentarians, and the third deals with one specific sectoral model of governance reform.

The Helsinki process stated that members of democratically elected national and regional parliaments have a constitutional responsibility to represent people, but at present the direct involvement of parliamentarians in international negotiating forums and multilateral organizations of cooperation is marginal, so that processes, policies, and decisions that affect people's lives are perceived as increasingly taking place behind closed doors. Basically, we were addressing the challenge of how to connect nationally developed democratic institutions with global decision-making and to reduce the distance between the two, and also to increase elements of accountability that connect back down to citizens and the electoral base.

We were particularly concerned with the oversight of the global economy, and in the brief we describe a bit of the approach there. In summary, it consisted of two key elements. One was that global multilateral organizations—the World Bank, the IMF, the WTO, and related bodies—should produce, in a sense, a global accountability report annually, which would be subject to public scrutiny, submitted to the members of the Economic and Social Council of the UN, to G-8 leaders, and reviewed in participatory public hearings in different regions of the globe. That report should address key issues, like sustainable development and poverty reduction.

● (1555)

Then we suggested that a parliamentary accountability mechanism should be created, and we supported the recommendation of the World Commission on the Social Dimension of Globalization, sponsored by the ILO, which calls for integrated parliamentary oversight of the multilateral system at a global level and the creation of a global parliamentary group concerned with coherence and consistency.

We also picked up on another suggestion that was made by the Panel of Eminent Persons on United Nations-Civil Society Relations, chaired by former Brazilian president Fernando Henrique Cardoso at the UN. This was the idea of the formation of global public policy committees recommending that they convene one or more experimental global public policy committees to discuss emerging priorities on a global agenda. These committees would be comprised of parliamentarians from the most relevant functional committee in a globally representative range of countries, whether that was environment, health, education, or whatever.

I want to mention one other element in the work of the Helsinki process, which did address issues like the strengthening of international labour standards and compliance with ILO conventions, but in particular that of environmental governance, which was quite an urgent issue before us. There, we picked up the example of the Aarhus convention on access to information, public participation in decision-making, and access to justice in environmental matters, which was concluded on a European base in October 2001 and which has been described by Secretary-General Kofi Annan as “the most ambitious venture in the area of environmental democracy so far undertaken under the auspices of the United Nations.” This was negotiated under the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe but now has 39 countries adhering to it, as well as the European community.

Why is this important? Because it connects ordinary citizens and their rights to issues of access to information, access to regular reporting on the state of the environment, and access to justice for citizens in environmental matters, including an independent and impartial review body. Our body suggested that this model already in existence in Europe be reproduced in appropriate ways in other regions of the world, including the Americas, Africa, and Asia.

Let me come to a conclusion by addressing the questions of political will and the Canadian contribution to democratization. As the Helsinki initiative points out, issues of global governance and democratization are urgent and they're not adequately addressed. We at the institute have worked quite closely with some of the international civil society networks that have specialized capacity in democratic reform globally. We have, for instance, a five-year partnership with the World Federation of United Nations Associations in informing and reporting on civil society engagement around the world with the millennium declaration and the millennium development goals. This effort involved extensive research, publication in eight languages, and presentation at the UN General Assembly's millennium plus five hearings. This is essentially an effort to inform and strengthen accountability mechanisms at a local and regional level, as well as reporting on activities internationally.

An offshore example of international non-governmental networks working in this field is based in Barcelona. It's called Ubuntu, which is not Spanish but Swahili, and is the World Forum of Civil Society Networks, which sponsors a campaign for an in-depth reform of the system of international institutions, and most recently celebrated a large international conference in Geneva. It is focused on developing specific proposals for reform and in campaigning to see them implemented. It is an example of a non-governmental body with an international advisory group, but which has support from the Catalan state government, as well as the Spanish national government, as well as other sources.

● (1600)

An example much closer to home is the Canadian-based organization the Montreal International Forum, FIM. This organization has sponsored significant international conferences on democracy and reform in 2001 and 2005 and a number of research papers and seminars. It has an international board, and a small secretariat in Montreal. Somewhat shockingly, in my view, most of its funding now comes from non-Canadian sources, including official sources as well as non-governmental funders and foundations. Now, this says something positive about the international reputation of a Canadian creation, but it's a serious commentary, I think, on Canadian official support for a homegrown international initiative.

Such organizations focused on issues of global governance and democratization are a vital part of the picture. So also is the continuing work of Canadian-based non-governmental organizations with their development partners in developing countries. We're aware of the renewed interest at CIDA, expressed by the responsible minister during the recent international development days, in enhancing the place of civil society in Canadian aid strategies and in OECD approaches to official development assistance. This could be an important beginning.

Drawing these engagements to a few initial conclusions, the development of alternative approaches to global democratization and governance requires serious investigative research, and this is by and large under-resourced. Canadian research work in this field, essential to develop policy for the future, is also resource-challenged. This is additionally the case since the termination of the Law Commission of Canada, with its investigative work on globalization.

Civil society has strategic importance in democratization. North-south and south-south partnerships are a crucial element therein. Canadian aid policy needs to be enhanced with greater attention to and support for these partnerships. Civil society networks can play and have played a crucial role in campaigning activities that have led to significant changes in policy in such fields as landmines, access to medicines, and relief of the debt burden. There is an increasing interest in civil society networks in issues of democratization at all levels. Civil society networks focusing on global democratization and human rights are doing creative work, and several Canadian organizations have done pioneering work.

We have several remarkable institutions, including Rights and Democracy, the Parliamentary Centre, le Forum International de Montréal, as well as a number for first-rate development NGOs. But in a number of these cases they remain under-recognized and are often scrambling for resources.

So what do we recommend? Very simply, we recommend that as a priority dimension in promoting democracy and improving aid effectiveness, renewed priority and expanded resources be given by CIDA and other government agencies to the support of Canadian NGOs and their civil society development partners overseas, and within that general objective, that specific priority be given to enhance material support for Canadian and international NGOs working on democratic reform of global, regional, national, and subnational instances, particularly those using a comprehensive human rights framework.

We also recommend that with regard to issues of parliamentary engagement, consideration be given to the recommendations developed by the Helsinki process—and outlined above in our brief—and in particular, with regard to strengthening participation and accountability on a sectoral basis, that support be given to the creation of an Aarhus convention model agreement, for example, on a North American basis.

Finally, with regard to Canadian-based institutions devoted to the promotion of democracy and human rights, we recommend priority be given to enhancing the work of existing bodies, such as the proposal by Rights and Democracy to address political party engagement and the proposal for periodic forums among those Canadian-based bodies engaged in promotion of human rights and democracy.

● (1605)

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Foster.

Ms. Boulden.

Dr. Jane Boulden (Canada Research Chair in International Relations and Security Studies, Department of Politics and Economics, Royal Military College of Canada): Thank you. And thank you to the committee for having me.

I should just begin with a few words of background. I come to the question of democracy and democratization primarily from an international relations background. My main area of work over the last number of years has been in relation to international military operations, particularly concerning the United Nations and its involvement in conflict. So I come at the democracy question and the question of democratization in the same way the United Nations has, through the back door, in effect, as it has increasingly sought to deal with conflict within states, which is primarily but not exclusively a post-Cold War phenomenon.

The United Nations has increasingly had to come to grips with questions about what role democratization plays in these situations. Commensurate with an increased awareness, for example, that peace is more than the absence of war in these situations, there has been increased attention to how democracy affects the likelihood of long-term peace and stability in conflict situations and what relationship there is between democracy and other aspects of the post-conflict scenario. That's how I'm coming at the question, so my remarks reflect that.

I really just want to go over three points in that context. I'm focusing primarily on the role of democracy and democratization in post-conflict situations. The three points are essentially as follows. The first one is that the process of democracy in these situations is different from that in non-conflict scenarios. The second one relates to that, which is to say that there are situations in which democratization can be a conflict-producing syndrome. The third relates to that, which is to say that how and when we do things with respect to the democratization process matters. So I'll walk through those three points and talk about some of the issues that relate to each of them.

The first point is that democratization in post-conflict situations is different. The first reason for that difference is that in almost all cases, given the nature of the institutions, the idea that democratization should be part of the post-conflict scenario is built into the peace agreement that brings an end to these conflicts. That means a couple of things. It may mean that the nature of the process established and the nature of the institutions envisaged are not necessarily conducive to long-term stability or peace. It also means that the international community, both through organizations like the UN and also through individual states that might come to support the process, tends not to make a judgment about those assumptions. The peace agreement is treated as a product of negotiations that brought the warring groups together, and as such is left intact. So the fact that it may sow within it seeds for future problems is not something the international community engages with.

That relates to another point, which is that elections are important. In the peace agreements of post-conflict situations, the international community and other states as a group tend to attribute multiple goals to elections in post-conflict environments. They're seen as an exit strategy. There's a tendency to hold them earlier rather than later in the process, and in general there's an overemphasis on them. One outcome that early elections can generate is further instability. To the extent that they are seen as an exit strategy, they can also become symbolic of an end to a conflict that may not be there. They become a link to the exit for the international community as well.

One of the things that have been learned since the end of the Cold War in particular is that elections do not mean that democracy is in place or even that a democratization process is ongoing. We have a tendency to judge elections, when they happen, on the basis of whether they're free and fair, rather than a tendency to judge whether or not they are playing a positive role in the post-conflict environment.

● (1610)

One of the related issues on the election question is this question of inclusion. Who gets included in the political process in a post-conflict environment, and how? A key question here is what we do with groups that in international relations terms are often called “spoilers”—spoilers meaning a group that will seek to undermine the peace process or the post-conflict process.

Extremists groups can be spoilers or separate actors. How do we incorporate them into the process, and is it a correct assumption that doing so is a positive attribute to the process? Is the inclusion of extremist groups, potential spoilers, based on the assumption that doing so will ultimately lead to moderate their goals, their aims, their methods? It's not clear yet whether or not that is a fair assumption.

The other way in which inclusion matters is that it relates to the idea that democratization is not just about process and institutions, but about the development of a political culture that supports the idea of democracy and democratization. And in post-conflict situations that is a particularly difficult thing to achieve and it takes a long time. It's another factor that we tend not to build into the equation because we tend to take more of a functional approach to these things.

Still under this heading of democratization being different in post-conflict situations is the question of timing. My last point related to the fact that democratization is a long-term process. In post-conflict situations it has a lot of key requirements in the very short term. One of the things we've learned about post-conflict internal conflict situations since the end of the Cold War is that what we do or don't do in the immediate aftermath of a peace agreement matters a great deal. If there's a delay in terms of international community support or outside support coming to the peace agreement, it paves the way for a number of things to happen.

It opens the way for groups to rearm, for groups to read the situation as one that is continuing to be unstable and therefore start to shift their own priorities and their own basis of support in anticipation of things going downhill. All of those factors together contribute to ongoing instability that sends messages to all of the parties to the conflict. In addition, it also sends the message of a less than full political commitment on the part of the international community and outside states, which is also built into the assumptions and perceptions of the warring groups.

More broadly, the question of timing goes to the question of what in the literature is often called “sequencing”. This is the broader question of when we emphasize which institutions as part of the process. At what point is it correct or is it useful to have elections? When should those elections occur with respect to what we do with respect to rights? And this goes to some of the issues that John was raising. Is it possible to engage in democratization in a situation that is less than fully secure, or does democratization contribute to making the situation more secure over time? Again, these are questions that we now understand are important, but we still don't have a lot of answers about what matters and when.

The second broad point is democratization can be conflict-inducing. One way in which this happens relates to the question of how minorities or other groups in society are treated. We need to build in greater recognition that democratization can both empower and disempower. It can disempower our groups that are used to having exclusive access to power before the conflict or the post-conflict situation, and it can empower groups that have longstanding grievances with other groups in society and that will then use the process as a way to deal with those grievances.

● (1615)

A related point is the question of how citizenship is defined. This goes to the question of who gets included, on what basis they get included in the process, how power-sharing arrangements might work. So the question of citizenship, especially in post-conflict situations that are ethnic or at least divisive in terms of minority groups, matters a great deal. We can see that in some of the conflicts that are ongoing today.

The second way it can be conducive to creating conflict, either in the immediate or longer-term, is the extent to which democracy is seen as a foreign policy product. What I mean by this is that democracy and the idea of democratization is often seen as a product of western societies, western interests, as opposed to a value in and of itself. A related question here is also the extent to which the democratization process, the delivery of democracy, if you like, is now increasingly associated with militarization, or military operations.

We can now talk about the militarization of delivery of democracy. Iraq is the obvious example here, but there are a number of others, such as Afghanistan and any number of other post-conflict situations in which there has been a UN operation where force has been part of the picture. For those on the ground, the perception is a correlation between the use of force and the arrival of democracy. We need to understand that connection better.

The question of whether democracy is a western construct or western value or a universal one is key for the UN. As the UN has increasingly become involved in post-conflict situations within states, it has had, as I said in the beginning, to face these questions about where democracy plays a role and how it plays a role. As a result, the UN has often been in a situation where it has been an advocate of democracy.

Since the end of the Cold War, the two secretary-generals themselves, first Boutros-Ghali and then Kofi Annan, have increasingly been acting, in their own positions, as advocates of democracy. This has particularly been the case under Kofi Annan. This is, as I'm sure you can imagine, quite controversial. There are a number of member states that are not happy about the fact that the UN should play a role in advocating democracy, even when it comes to post-conflict situations where parties have agreed to democracy as part of the peace agreement.

This relates partly to the ongoing questions about sovereignty. With the responsibility to protect, for example, there's been an increasing acceptance that sovereignty is not sacrosanct, and for those who are resistant to these ideas, the idea that democratization or democracy is an important universal value is seen as yet another hook that western states can use as a criterion for intervention in states.

If democracy is to be put forward as a universal value, we need to be able to make that case more effectively than we are now. That's a factor the United Nations is grappling with, but I think it goes across the board for states as well. On this point, the questions of perceptions relate as well to the image or the perception in a number of states that the UN engages in a number of double standards. Why do we, through the United Nations, react to some conflicts and by extension then deal with some post-conflict scenarios with resources and commitment, and not others? When we feed that into the broader question about whether democracy is a western value or not, you can see how the whole package becomes an issue.

Finally, that sort of sequence that I've touched on in a very broad-brush way leads to the third point, which is that how and when we do things matters. We have a much greater requirement, I think, to understand the importance of context specificity. One of the things that's happened in the post-Cold War environment is there's been a wave, if you like, or an explosion of the number of states in the world that call themselves democratic, or who we consider to be democratic. That means, 15, 17, or 18 years on, that our data base, if you like, has grown significantly. But we have not yet engaged in either the academic literature or at the policy level in an indepth lessons-learned process that looks at all of this experience in an effort to determine how the nature of certain contexts affects the democratization and post-conflict peace process.

● (1620)

With respect to Canada, for example, one of the arguments you can make on this basis is that it's not just enough to have democracy or democratization as one of the three Ds, or part of the joined-up approach, whatever title we're going to give it. As a leader on these issues Canada could work towards developing greater awareness of the nuances and complexities involved in this process, and lead or commission a study that would undertake that long, in-depth examination of the importance of context specificity, and what works when. A certain model of democracy and democratization might work in one instance, but in a second instance, which is not necessarily dramatically different, only somewhat different, have a completely different impact, including, as I mentioned, in fact sowing the seeds for long-term instability and even a return to conflict.

All of these questions do relate in fact to our understanding of political violence, not just conflict in the sense of within states or external to states, but civil war, ethnic conflict, terrorism—the idea of political violence being on a spectrum, if you like. And in the academic world that's increasingly becoming an issue of study—what situation leads to what kind of political violence? So what I'm suggesting is that it's useful to think of democracy in the same way and link that back to our understanding.

The Chair: Can I just ask how much you have left?

Dr. Jane Boulden: That's the end.

The Chair: Okay, perfect timing.

Thank you both for your presentations. We are trying to get through one round of questioning.

Mr. Patry.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Bernard Patry (Pierrefonds—Dollard, Lib.): Thank you very much.

[*English*]

Thank you very much, Ms. Boulden and Mr. Foster, for your remarks.

Ms. Boulden, if I understand you properly, it seems that there is a danger in holding early elections in countries that are emerging from conflicts because of a possibility that these elections contribute to volatility and some instability, in a sense. What are the key developments and security indicators that must be reached before elections should be held? What steps can be taken by national societies and international communities to ensure that the results of these elections will be accepted by all parties so a true process of national reconciliation and democratization can begin?

Mr. Foster, the results of democratization and the success of the results in the last 15 to 20 years is very low, in a sense. What forms of democracy assistance have proven to be the most effective, and where?

Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Patry, for those concise questions.

Ms. Boulden, on the first one, and then Mr. Foster.

Dr. Jane Boulden: On the first one, the question of elections, I don't have a direct answer to that. Part of what I'm arguing is that it depends, and we need a greater understanding of situations. There are situations in which actually early elections are probably a very good thing. There are others in which, for example, if we look at what happened in Angola, it can be counterproductive. I'm not somebody who has looked at that in great detail. There are people who are at this moment engaging in that kind of study, one of whom is here in Ottawa at Carleton, Fen Osler Hampson. Timothy Sisk, who is in the United States, is doing work on that as well. I think that's an issue we have to get at.

● (1625)

The Chair: Thank you.

Mr. Foster.

Mr. John W. Foster: I wouldn't claim a great deal of expertise on this. I think it is important that both the failures—and I'd cite, for instance, the extremely tense situation in East Timor, which was in a sense a demonstration case in some ways for a UN-administered transition—and relative successes, of which I would actually cite Mozambique, in which Canadian aid has played a role and Canadian NGOs have been very engaged....

We ourselves are involved with a consortium of Mozambican NGOs looking at the implementation of the millennium development goals that currently involve a survey of 7,200 families. It's aimed at developing at a district level the ability of local groups to challenge their government on the distribution or allocation of resources and so on. I think that kind of contribution is extremely important in terms of meeting some of the inclusion issues that Professor Boulden has raised.

Thank you.

The Chair: Mr. Patry, you have a few more minutes.

Mr. Bernard Patry: To both of you, how do you see parliamentarians working with other parliamentarians? We're looking at what's going on in Haiti now. For sure, we want to help Haiti, because it's in our backyard, in a certain sense, but do you see it being productive? Maybe you're not a 100% expert on Haiti, but you know so much about what's going on in the world. How do you see the work of parliamentarians, such as Canadian parliamentarians or Francophonie parliamentarians, helping in a country like Haiti? How should we work with them?

The Chair: Either, or both.

Dr. Jane Boulden: Haiti is a tough example, but an important one.

Mr. Bernard Patry: You're an expert.

Dr. Jane Boulden: I hope that nothing I said suggested we should give up, either at the beginning, or to wait for things.... I've given talks sometimes and people have said that what you're arguing is to give war a chance. That's not at all what I'm saying.

I think the role of parliamentarians, and ongoing contact in general, between states such as Canada and Haiti is important, particularly because it goes to this question of developing the culture of democracy, the idea that democracy is important. I would hope that is going on all the time, even when it's unclear that the shift to democracy is going to happen in any coherent way, because it will contribute to long-term commitment on the part of people on the ground.

Mr. John W. Foster: I'm thinking of a couple of examples. I cannot speak to Haiti, but I'm thinking of the current situation in Bosnia. It's extremely complex there, because you have two sub-national parliaments and a national one. It was ground-up. It was: Have a parliamentary committee. What does the parliamentary committee do? What is the budget preparation process? How can you have public participation in such processes?

I think an outside parliamentarian might be involved, in a bilateral way, to talk about how things are done in another country. But the actual work in that case I think was essentially done by by the National Democratic Institute from the United States and the OSCE. In fact, a Canadian, the former director of the Canadian Centre for Foreign Policy Development, Steve Lee, was involved in developing basic practices with parliamentarians. I was actually quite amazed at how basic the practices had to be.

The other example, it seems to me, is the work of the Parliamentary Centre in developing these African networks of parliamentarians on gender, poverty, and so on. These are peer support groups among parliamentarians in Africa. We were involved in encounters in the U.K., where people came from these networks.

Now, there is no reason why parliamentarians from the north or from Canada couldn't be involved bilaterally in those kinds of encounters. It seems to me that this work is quite interesting in terms of the development of leadership among parliamentarians in countries like Zambia or Nigeria.

● (1630)

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Foster.

Madame Barbot.

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Vivian Barbot (Papineau, BQ): Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you for coming here today, Mr. Foster and Ms. Boulden.

Ms. Boulden, you stated that all models do not work everywhere and that a different procedure is followed in every case.

Yesterday we heard from Ms. Éthier, a researcher at the University of Montreal. She was extremely pessimistic about international aid and felt that it wasn't working. I think it's obvious that it isn't really working. Ms. Éthier nonetheless emphasized ways of improving the situation, the first being that before we intervene somewhere, we should take a good look at prevailing conditions and with whom we would be doing business.

You talked about countries emerging from a conflict situation. Immediately after the cessation of hostilities, an effort is made to bring in democracy. The same parties involved in the conflict then work together in an effort to bring democracy to their country.

How important is it, in your opinion, at this stage to learn about the environment and about the context in which assistance would be provided?

Dr. Jane Boulden: I'll have to answer that question in English.

[*English*]

I place tremendous importance on that. I think it's absolutely critical that we have as much understanding as we can about what's happening on the ground.

For the United Nations, that's always a handicap. It's always responding in an ad hoc, reactive way. The United Nations for a lot of reasons doesn't have a strong in-house intelligence-gathering organization. The idea of the UN gathering intelligence is abhorrent to a lot of people, which means it's always reacting in an ad hoc way, and reliant for information from a variety of sources. I think we see the result of that as a handicap.

For states like Canada, I agree entirely, and for me it's an argument for focusing—on Haiti, for instance. Pick cases for which we can know as much as we possibly can about the actors, about the background, about what's happening at any given moment on the ground, about what the warning signs are, and where we can have an ongoing relationship with both the actors and the process.

So it's not just about the fact that these things—democracy, justice, human rights, development, and so on—are linked. When we choose to react, we should react in places where we also have a strong understanding of what's going on.

The Chair: Any other questions?

We'll go to Mr. Goldring....

Oh, Madame Bourgeois, go ahead, please.

[*Translation*]

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

Mr. Foster, I have a very quick question for you. You spoke about the urgent need for democratization. Could you elaborate on that statement?

Ms. Boulden, I get the feeling that you are cautioning us today when you say that democracy is a western concept. Are you saying that what may seem like democracy to us could appear to be quite the opposite to another country? Yesterday, we saw that totalitarian or hybrid regimes work very well in some countries — Singapore is one example that comes to mind.

Are you issuing a word of caution to us today?

[*English*]

Mr. John W. Foster: I guess that was directed at both of us. I can clarify a couple of things.

First, I would tend to share the opinion of those who are conservative about democracy export, if you like, as a foreign policy priority, because that's not what I'm arguing. My basic assumption is that if one wants to encourage democratic development, then one basically seeks to sow seeds at the ground level. That's why I'm emphasizing the importance of linkages, civil society to civil society, and the strengthening of citizens groups at the community level.

That's what we're about in the Social Watch, but it's not just that. There are thousands of networks engaged in this activity. What is particularly urgent about that is strengthening the capacity of groups then to question, to inquire, to hold accountable what their authorities are doing.

For example, if you look at the last ten years with regard to African non-governmental organizations, the ability of those organizations to support and to question their governments on such issues as trade negotiations at the WTO has grown incredibly. This is largely through interaction with groups in Asia, North America, and Europe and the support of non-governmental funding agencies, Oxfam or others, that are engaged in it.

So that's basically my orientation. When I used the word "urgent", it was more with regard to the reform of global governance, where we've seen the expansion of the mandate and the writ, if you like, of organizations like the WTO with no equivalent expansion of democratic accountability, only quite indirectly in the sense that agreements are made that touch people's lives but people don't have any access to.

The question we were wrestling with in the Helsinki process was how do we change that? One way was to try to shorten the link between people like you and those at the international level, not just through informal associations but maybe some formal ones.

● (1635)

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Foster.

Dr. Jane Boulden: Do you want—

The Chair: We're out of time. We'd better just keep going. I see our other witnesses are here.

Mr. Goldring.

Mr. Peter Goldring (Edmonton East, CPC): Ms. Boulden, you instruct at Royal Military College, and you must certainly be on the curriculum for the military officers, as so many are involved in conflicts in different countries of the world.

You seem to be a little uncertain as to how you would describe the proper approach to democracy in countries, and even in the staging of it, and whether you solve the strife problem before you develop a democracy.

What do you teach the military officers in this, as they're the ones who will be implementing it? Or is there a fixed program that you teach them?

Dr. Jane Boulden: At the undergraduate level, I teach an introductory course on international relations, and we have a week in which we talk about democracy and democratization.

Mr. Peter Goldring: How can you help your students to have clarity in how they're going to be approaching it if we have confusion here in the classroom?

Dr. Jane Boulden: First of all, I would say that part of what I was arguing is not that we can't have clarity, but that we need to understand the lessons we've learned from the past 15 years or so better, because it's not always the case that what we're doing is actually leading to the desirable results.

In terms of what I teach them, I can talk about the specifics of what we go through. I teach them first of all just to ask questions all the time so that they themselves understand that these are complex situations and complex environments.

Mr. Peter Goldring: But if they're in Iraq, they have nobody to ask the questions of. They're doing it. I mean in Afghanistan. Sorry.

Dr. Jane Boulden: They're in Afghanistan.

Mr. Peter Goldring: But they're doing it, so I would hope that they would have some instructions on how to deal with it.

Dr. Jane Boulden: They get their instructions from their military commanders, who get their instructions from their political leaders.

Mr. Peter Goldring: Mr. Foster, looking at two recently funded projects here—one for $60,000 and another for $100,000—and looking at the history of the organization, with $26.9 million since 1976, if that was divided into equal projects that were approximately the same, there would be some 400 projects.

How many of those projects have been done to try to bring some clarity to these issues over the years? Surely it's been approached. And if the projects have been bringing clarity to these in the form of proposals—these are proposals—I would think they would have recommendations. Is there any follow-up on those projects to see if recommendations are actually being listened to and incorporated at all? In other words, are there not solutions somewhere in those 400 projects?

● (1640)

Mr. John W. Foster: I'm sorry, you're speaking in terms of the history of the North-South Institute? Is that what you're addressing?

Mr. Peter Goldring: Yes, I'm speaking about that and its many projects here, its research and development. This one here is to reform the agenda for the international development architecture. This other one is to develop trade and health. I would certainly think that there is some policy development and many of the other—

Mr. John W. Foster: Yes, and they're extremely diverse because the sources of our funding are extremely diverse.

The current project on the international economic architecture is addressing issues of southern voices for reform. So what we're trying to do and what we were funded to do is to increase the presence of voices from developing countries themselves towards the reform of international financial institutions. That may be changing the quotas at the IMF, or other specifics. So it depends very much on the projects.

I would say one of the downsides of current project funding practices is that once a project is over, you're not funded to do follow-up unless you specifically, perhaps, create another project to do so. I think there is considerable need for more, shall we say, core funding that permits that to happen.

Thank you.

Mr. Peter Goldring: Would there not be a need to do a cursory follow-up to see whether any of these initiatives have been implemented?

Mr. John W. Foster: We do that, but as you indicate with your use of the word "cursory", it's often quite limited because of the stringencies of support.

The Chair: Very quickly, please.

Mr. Peter Goldring: Ms. Boulden, how would you describe Haiti? Is that a post-conflict? I'm taking here, from post-conflict, that we're looking at Afghanistan or whatever. You're starting from a blank page politically, so to speak. But Haiti was a structured area, so would you consider that post-conflict or conventional?

Dr. Jane Boulden: It's a good question, because Haiti is not in some ways a post-conflict situation, although it tends to be treated as such from the perspective of the literature and to some extent through how the UN goes at the equation. But you're right, it's not necessarily a classic post-conflict scenario.

We are dealing with blank slates in a general sense when we're talking about post-conflict, but part of the point I would make is that in fact it's not really a blank slate. We have to take into consideration what has come to that point before we plant a model on top and say "Okay, here is the best way to proceed from here".

Mr. Peter Goldring: Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you very much.

We'll go for the final question to Ms. McDonough, please.

Ms. Alexa McDonough (Halifax, NDP): Thanks, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you very much for being here this afternoon. I think we're probably all going to die of frustration, because we have so many questions we would like to ask and there is not enough time.

I think you correctly reminded us that members of the military who you find yourself teaching actually follow orders, and the orders come from the government in power. I guess it puts you on the spot, but that's also what we're here to hear, so I'd like to ask you this. You have emphasized the importance of lessons learned, you've emphasized the importance of really evaluating experiences, so given your extensive backgrounds in areas that are very relevant to the subject this committee is dealing with, do either or both of you have advice for the political decision-makers who are represented around this table from four different parties? From those lessons learned, from the analysis, from the questioning that's appropriate all the time with respect to the current situation in Afghanistan, which is described in part as democracy-building, what can you tell us?

I want to ask specifically about Kandahar, because Mr. Foster stressed the importance of civil society to civil society engagement. Really, it comes down to the question of what are the pre-conditions that would allow you to actually build democracy in any meaningful and lasting way. Do you have any good advice for us that we'll then still have to analyze and further question? For us, it's a very welcome opportunity. For you, I guess it is in some ways putting you on the spot, but you must not be surprised that this is very much on our minds.

● (1645)

The Chair: Thank you, Madam McDonough, for a simple question.

Some voices: Oh, Oh!

The Chair: Either one of you, can you solve the Afghanistan problem?

Ms. Boulden, you're first up.

Dr. Jane Boulden: Yes, a simple question, but it goes to some of the points I was making.

One of them is sequencing. I think Kandahar, in particular, makes two points. One is that it matters what you do in the very early days after a peace agreement or at the end of a conflict. Part of the argument, I think, about why Kandahar and that region is where it is today relates to the fact that although there was early strong response, it then faded out quickly, or relatively quickly, while resources got diverted elsewhere. But it also raises the question about whether you can do any of these other tasks—democracy development, engaging with civil society, and so on—when you're in a fundamentally insecure situation.

I think you can do some things, but this is an example where security matters a great deal and the economics of the equation matter a great deal, because the security is fundamentally tied, at least to the extent I understand it, to things like the poppy growing as well as to border issues with Pakistan. Until we—we meaning not only Canada, but more broadly the international community—get a better grip on that, I think there is a limit to what we can achieve on the other fronts. But it's not an argument for not staying the course on those other fronts, so that we're there when the next stage is ready.

I don't think that answered you, but....

The Chair: Thank you. Is it Professor Boulden?

Dr. Jane Boulden: Yes, sure.

The Chair: Okay, Professor, thank you.

Mr. Foster.

Mr. John W. Foster: You asked a simple question; there's no simple answer.

I have to say that fundamentally it's an Afghan question. I'm heavily influenced by Robert Fisk, whose point of view is somewhat akin to that of the former Russian military man who wrote in the *Globe and Mail* last week that if you replace "U.S.S.R." with "Canada" or "U.S." or "U.K.", history repeats itself.

That doesn't satisfy me from the point of view of democratization and human rights, but the history and complexity of Afghanistan and its own way of governing has—what can we say—defeated external intervenors over the last hundred years or maybe much longer, and I think that to respond to the situation with Leopard tanks is reprehensible. One has to therefore ask oneself how the variety of Afghans in the country come into a situation of interaction that is non-violent. Nobody has an easy answer, but that's the direction we have to move in .

I don't believe that military success is possible. I know much less about it than Professor Boulden, but I'm influenced by reading Fisk and others who have some considerable knowledge. Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Foster, and thank you to the committee.

Thank you, both of you, for coming. We stretched the testimony out a little longer than the ten minutes each, and I think some excellent information is on the record, and we'll be able to access it. But also thank you for your very frank and honest answers. We appreciate it.

We will suspend very briefly. Our other guests are here, and we want to hear from them as quickly as possible.

Thank you.

● (1645)

(Pause)

● (1650)

The Chair: We'll call this meeting back to order. We have in our second hour the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, no strangers to our committee, certainly. Superintendent David Beer, who has been here, has had a fairly extensive amount of time in Haiti and has been part of our study on Haiti. Now we welcome him back, together with.... I'm trying to be certain here of the title; anytime I see "Commr" I know it's not "commissioner".

It's assistant commissioner. All right.

It's still assistant?

A/Commr Raf Souccar (Assistant Commissioner, Federal and International Operations, Royal Canadian Mounted Police): Yes, it is.

The Chair: All right; thank you.

It's Raf Souccar, assistant commissioner for federal and international operations. Certainly on a day when the RCMP is in the news, they are here to talk about democratic development around the world and some of the experiences they have had.

We apologize for the timing. We had a vote after question period, and it set us back 20 minutes, I suppose, so we have gone overtime.

Can you stay beyond 5:30?

A/Commr Raf Souccar: Absolutely.

The Chair: All right; thank you.

I should have asked the rest of the committee whether or not they could stay beyond 5:30.

Mr. Bernard Patry: You should ask the members.

The Chair: Yes, but in a way, as long as I have the RCMP on my side, I feel all right.

We will hear from you. If you could keep your presentations to ten minutes or even less, that would be great. Welcome here.

A/Commr Raf Souccar: Thank you very much, Mr. Chair, honoured members.

Monsieur le président, membres du comité, good afternoon, and thank you for inviting me and my colleague here today to discuss Canadian civilian police peacekeepers and the role they play in democratic development around the globe.

I am joined today by Chief Superintendent Dave Beer, who obviously is not a stranger to this committee. Dave is the director general of international policing within Federal and International Operations and, as I'm sure you know, has a great deal of experience in international peace operations. With his help I'm sure and I'm hopeful that we'll be able to answer most of your questions.

As you know, stability and the rule of law are essential if democracy is to thrive.

[*Translation*]

For the past 17 years, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police has been assisting the forces of law and order in countries throughout the world. It has done this in partnership with other Canadian police services since 1996.

[*English*]

Through much of that time, Canadian police operations abroad have received little attention. Public knowledge of these contributions continues to be low. With new permanent funding for the program and increasing requests from international organizations for more Canadian police, that may soon change. While studies indicate that the number of conflicts in the world has decreased over the last decade, the security gap resulting from conflicts in failing and failed states has created an environment in which organized crime and terrorist organizations have become deeply entrenched. This has a direct impact on the democratization process.

● (1655)

[*Translation*]

We now know the creation and maintenance of a secure and stable environment requires more than just the end of armed conflict. It requires the development of competent security sector institutions, such as police, the judiciary and corrections.

[*English*]

Through the new Canadian police arrangement, which is the policy framework for the Government of Canada to deploy police officers in support of Canadian foreign policy objectives, Canada will have the capacity to deploy up to 200 police officers to international peace operations by the end of fiscal year 2007-08. While this is an important contribution to international peace and security, it does not meet the growing demand for police on international peace operations.

[*Translation*]

Globalization, trans-national crime and environmental challenges have placed significant pressure on the RCMP to develop and improved capacity to work beyond the country's boundaries. This has required to RCMP to develop and maintain the capacity to select, prepare, deploy, support and re-integrate specialized personnel around the world in response to emergencies and international criminal investigations.

[*English*]

Working abroad on Canadian investigations requires foreign police partner organizations that can conduct investigations in a manner consistent with international standards. This will necessitate substantial investment in the development of international police partner capacity. Until the signing of the new CPA this past spring, funding for Canadian police participation in peace operations was provided on a cost-recovery basis, with no added human resource capacity. Things have now changed.

Canada now has the ability to become proactive in its approach to international police operations, working with other government agencies in a whole-of-government approach through the identification of areas of strategic interests and the development of personnel with the competencies necessary to respond to the challenges of working in these environments. What this means for the RCMP and our police partners is that we are now in a position to develop a cadre of police experts ready for international deployments. Our roster of skill sets can match specialists with particular missions that call for their talents. The result will be that these men and women will be available for more rapid deployments than in the past, and perhaps best of all, deployments will reduce the burden on the domestic policing capability of our agency and its partners.

[*Translation*]

Of course, Canada cannot be all things to all people. It is important that resources be aligned with foreign policy objectives and, through a whole-of-government approach, strategies must be developed that adequately respond to the long-term nature of democratization and post-conflict development.

[*English*]

Over the years, Canada has helped many countries become safer and more secure, laying the groundwork for democratic development. Some examples include the following.

In Kosovo, Canadian police made an important contribution to the development of the new Kosovo police service.

In Jordan, Canadian police have helped to train more than 34,700 Iraqi police cadets, far more than the original target of 32,000.

In Kabul, Afghanistan, they have helped increase parliamentary security. In the south of that country, in Kandahar, they have distributed equipment, provided weapons training, as well as motor vehicle and checkpoint training. They've helped repair broken-down police vehicles and helped construct a new substation.

In Bosnia and Herzegovina , they've helped prepare and prosecute cases that have resulted in indictments, arrests, and convictions in high-profile cases involving politicians and criminal organizations.

[*Translation*]

In the Ivory Coast, they have contributed to a reduction in racketeering activities in market areas where police have increased patrols.

In Haiti, they have worked to improve professional standards for police and have increased the effectiveness of the Haitian National Police's Anti-Kidnapping Unit.

[*English*]

And in Sierra Leone, their work with a special court for that country has helped with the prosecution of numerous individuals from the three main combatant groups in the civil war. They have also developed a witness protection program and increased the capacity of the financial investigations unit to prepare complex cases such as that against former president Charles Taylor.

These are just a few of the results that have been achieved.

Experience has demonstrated that police play an important role in the maintenance of a secure and stable environment, which, as I suggested before, is a precursor to economic, political, and social development. Through their efforts abroad, Canadian police export Canadian culture, values, and an established model of democratic policing.

Lessons from past experiences demonstrate that sustained development requires a long-term commitment. Failure to plan for this and to ensure the resources necessary to maintain a long-term engagement risks causing more harm than good to the recipients of the services provided.

Experience has also shown that successful security sector reform requires strategies that target the equal development of judicial, police, and corrections capacity. To put it another way, police aren't much good in the absence of courts that can fairly weigh the evidence against the accused and modern correctional institutions that can receive those found guilty.

It's important to ensure that each of these elements has the tools necessary to do their jobs and that people are paid an appropriate salary on a regular basis. I should note that while other countries are beginning to recognize the value of police capacity-building in Africa, Canada is clearly in the lead, positioning itself to have continental reach.

● (1700)

[*Translation*]

Consistent with Canada's G8 commitments to develop African capacity, the RCMP has been working in partnership with the Pearson Peacekeeping Centre, a private, non-government organization, to develop the capacity of African organizations to provide leadership on peace operations.

Significant progress has been made in the development of African capacity to deploy police personnel with the competencies necessary to function effectively on peace operations.

[*English*]

The continued support of this type of capacity-building initiative in Africa and expanded to other areas of the Canadian strategic interest is essential if we are to ensure safe Canadian homes and communities.

In terms of overseas public order capacity, while most Canadian police organizations have developed a public order capacity, it is generally insufficient to deploy entire units abroad. Any contribution to the required public order capacity in international peace operations should be of a capacity-building or instructional nature.

Another important lesson is that Canadian police require adequate training prior to being deployed abroad. An increased investment in pre-deployment and other specialized training, especially within an integrated environment—and when I say integrated, I'm talking about the military and civilian police—would significantly enhance the ability of Canadians to contribute to the accomplishment of established goals and objectives.

With this, I thank you for the opportunity to be here and to address you. Along with Chief Superintendent Beer, I would be pleased to take your questions.

The Chair: Thank you very much.

We'll go into the first round very quickly, and we will do a split between Mr. Martin and Mr. Wilfert. Is that correct?

Hon. Keith Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca, Lib.): That is correct.

Thank you very much, Assistant Commissioner Souccar—I hope I'm pronouncing it correctly—and Chief Superintendent Beer.

First I want to say that I've had the privilege of seeing the work that your officers have done in both Jordan and Sierra Leone, and it is truly outstanding. As a reflection, the other countries that were there, without prompting, also said that the Canadian officers working there were doing an absolutely phenomenal job. So congratulations, and thank you.

As a plug, while I have you here, in terms of an RCMP human resources issue, if I can just say, some of your RCMP officers in Canada who have been at a particular site for more than ten years are being moved around. I ask if you would consider, within human resources, dealing with each individual. Maybe they would like to move, but sometimes, if they've laid down roots, you're losing officers to municipal police forces. At least if a human resources person could speak to them and say they could maybe work something out.... Could that please be done? Because you're really losing some of your best officers to municipal forces, and the communities are losing some of our best people. That's an aside. While I had you here, I thought I'd do that.

What is needed in terms of legislative policies and resources that would enable you to deal with the very complex environment you're dealing with in terms of organized crime?

My second question is whether you think that, within Afghanistan, one of the major deficits is the training of Afghan police, who are being paid only $70 a month and receiving only eight days of training. That is something other countries could really work with us on, because doing that would assist in the security on the ground in Afghanistan.

Thank you.

● (1705)

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Martin.

Maybe before we get the answer, we'll take Mr. Wilfert's question, as well, very quickly.

Go ahead, Mr. Wilfert.

Hon. Bryon Wilfert (Richmond Hill, Lib.): Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you, gentlemen.

Following up on the last question, when I visited Afghanistan in May, the RCMP officers, in conjunction with a representative from the City of Charlottetown, indicated that obviously more resources were required in order to get out into the field to do the kind of work they need to do, particularly in the areas of training, etc.

What kinds of evaluations are done by them to you, and what do you do with those evaluations once you receive them in order to respond to trying to create a truly national—in this case a truly national Afghan—police force, which is often very much localized in terms of from where they select people, that is, from their home districts?

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Wilfert.

Assistant Commissioner, or Chief Superintendent Beer.

A/Commr Raf Souccar: Maybe I'll answer, and then I know Dave will have more to add, with his wealth of knowledge.

In terms of resources, which was the first question that was asked, resources with respect to peace operations have always been an issue for us to the extent that we never had resources specifically for that purpose. The resources that we deployed abroad for any of these peace operations came out of our current A-base resources that either worked highway patrol, traffic, general duty, drugs, customs, immigration—all the sundry duties we have in the RCMP.

So we had to take police officers out of duties, leaving a hole in that spot where we were already feeling the pinch, and then deploy them abroad. It was on a cost-recovery basis, but it wasn't the money we needed; it was the bodies that we needed in Canada to do the work they were assigned to do.

Under the Canadian police arrangement, we did get financing for 152 positions for this year, 2006-07, and by April 1 there will be 200 deployable positions that will be able to go abroad. It's going to take a little time to be able to hire people, with the attrition that we have in the RCMP right now, put them through training in Regina, and get them out. The ramp-up will be a little slow, but we're doing our best to give this a priority because we understand the priority the government is placing on these types of initiatives.

In terms of the second part of your question.... I think I addressed your first part with respect to resources.

Hon. Keith Martin: It was resources, sir, and also legislative policies. What laws could we or should we pass that would enable you to be able to do your job to prosecute people in the environment you're dealing with today, particularly in view of organized crime? I know there are obstacles that are very frustrating for the force. What legal changes do we need to pass in Parliament that would give you the ability and powers to be able to go after these people effectively?

A/Commr Raf Souccar: You're talking about Canadian operations—

Hon. Keith Martin: Correct.

A/Commr Raf Souccar: —that target organizations that are abroad or within Canada.

Hon. Keith Martin: In the world or organized crime—

A/Commr Raf Souccar: In Canada.

Hon. Keith Martin: In Canada or internationally. You need to have legislated tools here that will enable you to be able to go after these people. I know there are some frustrations in not having some of those powers.

A/Commr Raf Souccar: I'm very pleased with a lot of the changes that have been made over the last couple of years. For example, we have organized crime legislation now that, although it is not used to the extent that it should be, is in place, and for example—

Hon. Keith Martin: Is that RICO?

A/Commr Raf Souccar: No. In Canada, we have the organized crime legislation that defines what a criminal organization is, and then it sets offences for belonging to a criminal organization, directing a criminal organization, and so on. For example, we've had the Hells Angels in Ontario identified as a criminal organization as a result of the Lindsay–Bonner case in Ontario. There are also several other cases that I'm aware of right now that are being prosecuted under the organized crime legislation.

We have what was Bill C-24 at one time and is now section 25.1 of the Criminal Code. It is the law enforcement justification that allows designated police officers—they have to be designated by the minister responsible for policing, and in the case of the RCMP it's the Minister of Public Safety designating individuals under section 25.1 of the Criminal Code—to commit any "acts or omissions that would otherwise constitute offences" in the pursuit of an investigation.

For example, if you are infiltrating a criminal organization in an undercover capacity—and that's mostly what it's used for—and you have to commit an offence, then that legislation provides you with the justification to commit the offence. Some can be committed by the police officer himself, and some have to be approved by a senior official, of which I am one. They include either the direction to an agent to commit an act or an omission or to cause damage to property.

There are also certain things within that legislation that no one can commit, regardless of what authorization they have, such as murder or perjury. There are some things that cannot violate the sexual integrity of an individual. Those are things that are a "no go" zone.

And then, of course, we have the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act. It allows us to traffic, import, or export drugs, again in the purpose of undercover operations.

To that extent, we're satisfied. Conditional sentencing and things of this nature cause us concern, but I understand they are being looked at right now.

● (1710)

The Chair: Thank you.

I'm not certain about Mr. Wilfert's question. That was probably tied in to both questions.

Madame Barbot.

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Vivian Barbot: Thank you.

[*English*]

Chief Superintendent David Beer (Director General, International Policing, Royal Canadian Mounted Police): Madame Barbot, just before you start, perhaps I could very quickly address two issues.

On the first one about the Afghan pay, it's absolutely important for the international community, and indeed the Government of Afghanistan, to understand that the police must have a livable wage. Beyond that, they need to look at benefits for policing and in the justice sector broadly. Whether it's housing for individuals, schooling for children, loans to wives, or education for children, all of these sorts of benefits need to be looked at as a package if we're going to have a sustainable police organization. Right now, drug organizations that participate in the cultivation and the processing of opium pay much more on a daily basis than the police organization, so that's absolutely fundamental.

In terms of the ongoing assessment, we've had a commitment identified of ten people for the provincial reconstruction team. We're looking at other ways in which we can contribute, but I should explain that our slow rollout into reaching that figure of ten has been because of the security situation. First and foremost, we're totally reliant on the Canadian military to provide us with logistics and security. In the environment we're working in, and considering the frankly slow rollout of money that was being made available for development projects—that has now been corrected—it was ineffective and inefficient for us to have more than a couple of people there in the early months of the mission. We added up to four more when we could be productive without being a burden on the military, on which we were so reliant.

By the spring, it's our plan to increase to a capacity of ten in the mission. We are also looking at how we might explore participating with the Americans, with their contribution to the program, and with the likely EU mission that we anticipate in 2007, to which we hope to make a contribution on that side as well.

The Chair: Thank you very much.

Madame Barbot.

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Vivian Barbot: Thank you, gentlemen, for joining us this afternoon.

I appreciate your mentioning in your statement that your actions as well as a police presence, are precursors to economic, political and social development. You say that at some point, your presence guarantees security and subsequent actions.

In the various countries in which you have operated, how do you determine how successful your actions have been, given that you are only there for a short period of time?

I note that you have worked with the police in Haiti. I also know that some law enforcement officials have trained here in Canada and later returned to Haiti. Recently, we read in the newspapers that these police officers had not served in Haiti. You stated that your efforts have led to a reduction in the number of kidnappings, but that this continues to be a problem.

Have your efforts been successful? What actions should you have take to restore order?

● (1715)

[*English*]

The Chair: Thank you, Madame Barbot.

Assistant Commissioner.

[*Translation*]

A/Commr Raf Souccar: Thank you for your question.

[*English*]

The evaluation of our success comes very slowly sometimes. We go into environments in which there is instability. We go into environments in which sometimes there is chaos. Law enforcement is sometimes corrupt, and the corruption is not always for greed. Corruption could come simply because they want to put a roof over their head, because their salaries are so low. It takes awhile to be able to change the philosophy that they have. It takes a while to be able to instill a way of doing business. It takes a while to be able to train them to a level where they can become self-sustainable. It doesn't come easy.

How do we know when we've succeeded? The RCMP alone, or the Canadian contingent, be it military or otherwise, cannot do it on its own. Many countries are there, usually each trying to contribute something with the expertise that they have. Once stability can be achieved, once methods of operations can be improved, a lot of these countries are countries with which we will have operations, sometimes on a regular basis.

For example, Haiti is one place. We have operations where we have targets in Canada that are dealing with Haitian targets, criminal organizations. The better response that we get from the Haitian police over the year is an indication that we're making some headway. The ability for them to assist us in a way that is more in line with the way we do business here is a measure of success.

In Afghanistan, for example, there's the way they view women. We need to ensure that they see the value that everybody can bring—men, women, boys, and girls. We start using women police officers in leadership positions in order to show them that women can hold leadership positions.

What we're met with much of the time is resistance from within. For example, in Afghanistan, the Afghan women are the ones who are probably resisting that change the most. When we try to make sure young girls go to school to get their schooling, the resistance comes from the older Afghan women who don't think their girls should go to school, because that's not the way they were raised. So the resistance comes from within sometimes, and it's a long process to be able to change that mindset.

The Chair: Thank you.

[*Translation*]

C/Supt David Beer: Perhaps I could comment quickly about the candidates who were not allowed to serve in the Haitian police force.

[*English*]

This situation arose in 1993. I stand to be corrected, but this was at the start of Canada's contribution to police development in Haiti. The notion was that expatriate Haitians living in Canada might be able to contribute. Unfortunately, history tells us that from time to time the Haitian government pulls out its constitution and uses it in unusual ways. The Haitian constitution stipulates that no Haitian who holds another passport can hold public office in that country. They actually used that to disallow, if you will, the Canadian candidates who returned to that country after they had been trained, so very few of those people actually ever served in the Haitian National Police.

With respect to the notion of success, I like to try to keep the notion of success as absolutely simple as possible. If we leave something that's transparent, is it accountable? Does it pay close attention to the issues of human rights? If it does, then we've probably started to succeed. We've talked at length about Haiti and we know the problems of that particular situation.

Just to add another particular example to Assistant Commissioner Souccar's example, having done criminal investigations hand in hand with the Haitian police—albeit a very disturbed organization right at the present time—when I served as police commissioner in Haiti, I had people from both Kosovo and from Namibia serving under my command. These were both countries where there had been extensive police missions in years gone by. For me, that was representative of the success of the international community, and Canada did in fact participate in both of those particular missions.

● (1720)

The Chair: Thank you, Chief Superintendent.

Mr. Goldring and Mr. Obhrai will split their time.

Mr. Deepak Obhrai (Calgary East, CPC): I'll go first. Thank you very much.

I of course join my colleagues in commending you for excellent work in the international arena. You have brought considerable distinction to Canada with your work.

Following that line, I would like to know whether there is a coordinated effort between yourselves and other police forces in Canada. As I see in the appendix you have provided, you have "Other" as well, which I presume would be other police forces in Canada.

Is there a united effort between your organization and other police forces so that we have one objective as to what we are doing out there?

A/Commr Raf Souccar: Thank you for your question.

Absolutely. We can't do it alone, for a number of reasons. As I explained earlier, the recent CPA, providing us with resources so as to be able to deploy, means having to recruit people, get them through training, and get them out of training into various spots across the country so that we can then take others and deploy them in peace operations.

Mr. Deepak Obhrai: Under your command?

A/Commr Raf Souccar: Yes.

Mr. Deepak Obhrai: Under the RCMP?

A/Commr Raf Souccar: Yes. I'm responsible for federal international operations, which includes drugs, organized crime, border integrity—which is customs, immigration, and so on—and financial crime. The other area is international policing, which David is responsible for; it's also under me. One branch of it is the international peace operations.

The Chair: Go ahead; continue.

A/Commr Raf Souccar: Including the partner agencies allows us, first of all, to get the numbers to send abroad, as well as the language skills, of which we sometimes are short. For example, in Haiti we definitely need police officers who can speak French. From the numbers who would apply for these types of operations within the RCMP we might not have sufficient numbers, so we include the Sûreté du Québec, include the Police de Montréal, include Laval, and so on. We spread it as much as we can to work in partnerships with them to ensure that the proper skill sets are brought to the country as required.

As well as the Canadian police arrangement, which will provide us with the resources, we're looking at having about 40% of these resources come from non-RCMP agencies.

The Chair: Thank you, Chief Superintendent.

C/Supt David Beer: There's a certain demographic consideration as well, sir. There clearly are police partners in Quebec who benefit from the fact that they are able to deploy people in Haiti, at the same time as we, of course, benefit from having them in the partnerships. The fact that there's a large Haitian diaspora community in Montreal, as an example, makes it perfect sense for the Montréal urban community police to participate in such missions, simply from the perspective of being more culturally aware of the particular needs of that community.

The Chair: Thank you, Chief Superintendent.

Mr. Goldring.

Mr. Peter Goldring: Gentlemen, thank you for appearing here today.

In earlier statements we have been hearing that there was some confusion on post-conflict staging, as it was explained, and about whether security is the primary concern, or development, or elections, or democracy, or whatever. It's my feeling that virtually all of those can be started and be worked on in varying degrees, but that security certainly would be one of the most important ones.

What is your assessment of Haiti in particular? Is it post-conflict?

Secondly, you have indicated here, in the number of police officers, that in Jordan there were 37,000 who were trained. We know from previous reports that some 12,000 or 14,000 were projected to be trained, and very few of them, in my understanding, have been trained. Or has all of the training been conducted?

My overall question is, if they have not had the same amount of training in a country like Haiti, what could we do to help you ensure that some of these things that are very necessary to do can be accomplished?

● (1725)

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Goldring.

I'll give that to the Chief Superintendent.

C/Supt David Beer: Haiti is an extremely complex question. Actually I could take you through your dinner hour discussing my experience and opinions on Haiti. It's an extremely complex environment.

Unfortunately, the success, albeit limited, that was gained in the 1990s by the international community's participation in police and justice issues was lost with the re-election and return of the Aristide government. From our perspective, all of the senior leadership of the organization whom we had dealt with, some for many years and who had participated, particularly, in Canadian management programs, as a matter of fact, were simply set aside by the government. The entire executive of the organization was gone. People who had no training, no skills—I won't go too far down that road—were replaced by people who were untrained and inexperienced and they went very quickly down the slippery slope to corruption.

Frankly, we're in the situation now of having a more difficult task in training the organization that exists today than the one that we started in 1994.

Mr. Peter Goldring: Would you say that security is one of most primary basics to accomplish, but at the same time, in order to even move democracy forward—

C/Supt David Beer: In my estimation, you must create an environment where development can occur, where aid can occur, where humanitarian efforts can occur. In the absence of that environment, success will be extremely slow and extremely difficult.

Mr. Peter Goldring: And before poverty reduction can begin, before all of these others, the security first, work on the democratic institutions....

C/Supt David Beer: Absolutely.

A/Commr Raf Souccar: Simply to be in a position to get out there and work, you need to have a secure environment. I know in Afghanistan, one of the challenges we have is the back-and-forth movement, for example, from the provincial reconstruction zone area, which is a compound, out to work with the Afghan national police. So security—just to have a secure passage—becomes necessary.

The Chair: Thank you, Assistant Commissioner.

Madam McDonough.

Ms. Alexa McDonough: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you very much to Assistant Commissioner Souccar and Superintendent Beer for appearing before this committee today.

I have dozen of questions and moments to ask them.

I wonder if I could just go quickly to the information you shared with us in the appendix about training of police in which you've been involved. Specifically, you've reported here that Canadian police have trained more than 34,700 Iraqi police. I wonder if you could tell us over what period of time, precisely.

C/Supt David Beer: The Jordan academy first took its candidates in fall 2003.

Ms. Alexa McDonough: And that's ongoing?

C/Supt David Beer: Yes, it's ongoing. The mission has actually been extended until March 2007, and it's likely that the academy will close at that particular time.

Ms. Alexa McDonough: Could I just ask—

C/Supt David Beer: I should add that approximately 10% of those people have been killed in service.

Ms. Alexa McDonough: That's very sobering.

How many Afghan police have Canadian police been involved in training over the last couple of years—whatever time you can specify—and specifically breaking it down between Kandahar and Kabul? You referenced Kandahar and Kabul. Are those the two main areas or the only areas in which the RCMP are involved in—

C/Supt David Beer: Right now, all of our people are in Kandahar. We actually only have five people on the ground at the present time. There was some specific training provided for the presidential security group in Kabul, but that was limited in-and-out training. Right at the present time, our commitment is at the PRT in Kandahar.

To put this in context, the German delegation essentially has official responsibility for police development and police planning. That runs counter to the notion that the Americans are making a huge contribution, but at the bottom end. The German contribution is essentially in Kabul. It's higher-end training. It's very long term, very strategically focused.

The American contribution, with huge development dollars, unfortunately is very much focused on getting boots on the ground and in many respects on fulfilling the needs of the military.

I'm sure you've heard of the issues about providing local security after the international military has done its work, basically has gone through an operation, and about needing local security forces to come in behind to fill that gap. So there are some training issues on the ground about getting people out as quickly as they possibly can with a local face on the security. Frankly, the long-term strategic needs of the training of the police are not being met.

Our role in Kandahar is to try to provide a second level, if you will, of professionalization: take the people who have already been through the basic training off the street and give them more and more training on an ongoing basis.

● (1730)

Ms. Alexa McDonough: I understand there are five RCMP now in Kandahar.

C/Supt David Beer: Yes. It will increase to ten in the spring.

Ms. Alexa McDonough: Could you indicate how many Afghan police have been trained?

C/Supt David Beer: I don't have that in front of me. It's about 250.

Ms. Alexa McDonough: Can you also give us a sense of who else is involved besides Canada in police training in Kandahar?

C/Supt David Beer: In Kandahar the Americans have private contractors, basically former police officers, security agents of different descriptions. All of their people are contractors. I believe DynCorp is the contracting agency that works for the State Department. The military, the International Security Assistance Force, oversees that American contribution. Our own military police participate with us at the PRT in Kandahar.

As far as Kandahar is concerned, it's our group and the Americans.

Ms. Alexa McDonough: Roughly how many Afghan police would have been trained since your involvement there? How long have you been there?

C/Supt David Beer: For Kandahar? About 1,500, I believe.

A/Commr Raf Souccar: I believe this is going to pick up quite a bit, for a number of reasons. For one thing, our numbers there will increase. The RCMP contribution should go up to ten by March of this year. As well, there were some logistical problems in being able to receive funds to utilize for the training, and that's now been looked after, so things should pick up in the next few months.

Ms. Alexa McDonough: The reason I'm pursuing this.... I have to say I'm utterly stunned at the idea that we've been involved—and I'm not saying this is not very important to do—in the training of 34,700 Iraqi police, yet we talk about our robust commitment in Afghanistan. From everything we hear about the horrors of what's going on in Kandahar—I certainly got this impression when I was there myself, although I had very limited exposure—it seems a huge part of the instability there is really the result of criminality associated with the drug trade, or of incredible corruption, bribery, extortion, partly rising out of people's desperate economic circumstances. They're up for hire. They're up for fighting for the Taliban if they'll get paid more.

It seems policing should be such a huge part of what we're doing there, offering that training. I'm trying to get a sense of why the minimal effort.... Maybe you're going to direct us back to the political decisions that get made about this, but I'm trying to get an understanding.

C/Supt David Beer: Part of it is the ongoing conflict in the area and the number of people we have available. The Jordan facility was essentially U.S.-funded. It's a huge facility training thousands of people at a time. We don't have that sort of facility for the Afghans.

We will be able to increase training in due course. In fact, we are working on a strategy with the military to build a local training complex as part of the PRT so that we can bring the local police to us in numbers. Of course, that relieves the burden on the military in having to take us out all the time to protect us.

So with the increased number of people on the ground and the fact that we now have money moving and we'll be able to spend money in a logical way, it will increase the number of people on the ground. If we can get this facility built, we'll be able to increase the numbers.

● (1735)

Ms. Alexa McDonough: What other national police are there with you in Kandahar? You spoke about the Germans playing a major role in Kabul, but are there others?

C/Supt David Beer: No, not in Kandahar.

The Chair: Thank you.

Mr. Casey has a very quick question.

Mr. Bill Casey (Cumberland—Colchester—Musquodoboit Valley, CPC): I don't have a question. I have a compliment.

I'm from Amherst, Nova Scotia. It's my home town. We have an RCMP officer who's serving his second deployment in Sierra Leone, and the neat thing is that his wife, when she goes to visit him, does a public drive to gather up pens, pencils, papers, textbooks, and clothes for kids in Sierra Leone—and the kids in Sierra Leone need all those. She provides a great service for the RCMP in public awareness of what the country does and the role they play. Otherwise, people would not even know that you have an officer from Amherst in Sierra Leone. It's a kind of neat "two for the price of one" thing. And for the life of me I can't think of his name or her name. But I will, and I'll get it to you, because—

C/Supt David Beer: Does she know we're recruiting, sir?

Mr. Bill Casey: That would be good. She's free now.

I would like to get their names to you, because they've done a great job, at the highest standards, and that sets a great example.

C/Supt David Beer: Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Casey.

If there are no other questions, we want to thank you for being here today. We appreciate your taking time out of a very busy day to be here. So until we meet again, thank you.

We are adjourned.

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