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Chair

Mr. Scott Reid

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

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•(1315)

[Translation]

The Chair (Mr. Scott Reid (Lanark—Frontenac—Lennox and Addington, CPC)): Order, please.

Welcome to the 75th meeting of the Subcommittee on International Human Rights of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development. Today is April 16, 2013.

[English]

Today we are hearing witness testimony from Sister Elsie Monge, who is reaching us from Quito, Ecuador. She served on the alternative Truth and Reconciliation Commission in Honduras.

Sister Elsie, welcome to our committee. Please feel free to begin your testimony. We are listening attentively.

Sister Elsie Monge (Executive Director, La Comisión Ecuémica de Derechos Humanos): Thank you very much. I would like to express my appreciation to the subcommittee on international human rights for investigating the serious violations of these rights that have taken place and are still being perpetrated in Honduras.

The coup of June 2008 cracked the social tissue in Honduras and affected the very roots of democracy. The country was polarized. The controversy centres around the convocation of a constituent national assembly and the drawing up of a new constitution that would reorient the nation on the basis of social demands, decolonize the country, revamp the justice system, eliminate historical privileges, redistribute natural and productive resources, and recognize the civil, political, economic, and social rights of the excluded majority, which in turn would place limits on the exercise of power.

On the other hand, a positive effect of this crisis is the intense debate and mobilization around the need to revise the Honduran model of democracy. The expression of that social mobilization is the National Front of Popular Resistance, which is made up of social organizations, NGOs, small businesses, environmental, student and teacher movements, human rights groups, youth, women, artists, intellectuals, indigenous and black people, the gay and lesbian community, and other organized sectors, all of whom comprise the most progressive force in the country.

Nonetheless, the National Front of Popular Resistance has faced continual defamation. Military intelligence labels them as potential insurgents. They face judicial and political persecution. In general,

its members are the principal victims of human rights violations nationwide.

Honduras is the second most violent country in the continent, with a rate of 66.8 homicides per 100,000 inhabitants, similar to that of a nation at war.

The truth commission's report, published in October 2010, points out that in Honduras a persistent aspect is the lack of justice for the victims of the *coup d'état* that ravaged the country over three and a half years ago, and its effects still continue. In other words, the chronic and structural problem of the Honduran society is impunity before, during, and after the coup.

It is hard to understand the fact that the current regime has not proceeded in the face of serious human rights violations, such as extrajudicial executions or disappearances and torture, and that its perpetrators have not been investigated by competent authorities unless these crimes are part of a systemic policy directed to persecute anyone who will be identified as opposing the coup.

The criminalization of the present movement in Bajo Aguán is another matter of concern. Between September 2009 and January 2012, 45 members of peasant organizations and a newspaper reporter and his wife were assassinated in the context of a land conflict in Bajo Aguán. Local, national, and international organizations have repeatedly asked national authorities to investigate these crimes and protect the people who are threatened. The response on the part of the state has permitted these crimes to remain with impunity. Additionally, the peasant struggle has been criminalized and the zone has been militarized.

Between the beginning of 2010 and the middle of 2011, over 166 peasants have been processed. In mid-August the state authorized a new permanent operation in the zone called Xatruch II, involving a thousand police and military personnel.

Within seven weeks previous to this operative, seven peasant men and one woman were assassinated. Two of them were the main leaders of the peasant movement in Bajo Aguán. Five other peasants were attacked and seriously wounded and two peasants were tortured, one of them a 17-year-old son of a peasant organization's president in Bajo Aguán.

According to the victims' testimonies, members of the Xatruch operation participated in the tortures. This information was obtained from the report entitled "Honduras: Human Rights Violations in Bajo Aguán", which was published on July 11, 2011, and presented to the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights subcommittee of the European Parliament.

Another issue I want to point out is that in 2012 the Honduran constitution was reformed in order to facilitate the creation of model cities, provoking serious discussions regarding sovereignty, fiscal protectionisms, detriment of state revenue, and questioning a model which would endow these areas with total administrative and judicial autonomy. Later, the supreme court of Honduras ruled against the model cities, recognizing that such reforms promoted by the executive were unconstitutional.

Nevertheless, the congress appealed this resolution. The government plans to establish these regions of special development in strategic points. One includes the Guatemalan border and Bajo Aguán. Another would be situated in Gracias, also on the Atlantic, and the third around the Gulf of Fonseca on the Pacific Ocean.

According to Tomas Andino, a political adviser, this project responds to transnational private interests, but there is also some state bureaucracy and Honduran businessmen who will benefit or want to benefit from this enclave. Social organizations that oppose such a venture fear that if investors were in charge of making the new laws, there would be a greater privatization of land, imposition of low wages, limits to organizing themselves, and among others, violations of social, economic and cultural rights. This situation would bring about more inequality.

Those would be the main issues that I wanted to point out.

Thank you.

• (1320)

The Chair: Thank you very much, Sister.

What we're going to do now is go to questions from the members of the subcommittee. I think we'll have time for six-minute question and answer rounds.

We'll begin with Mr. Sweet.

Mr. David Sweet (Ancaster—Dundas—Flamborough—Westdale, CPC): Thank you, Chair.

Sister Elsie, we're grateful to have your testimony today. We're short of time, so I'll get right into questions.

You had mentioned that one of the positive aspects of all this turmoil that Honduras has gone through, with the coup and the human rights violations, has been a positive dialogue about the future and protection of individuals, etc.

What is the nature of the kind of protest that has been happening to get the message to the existing regime right now?

I suspect that the national resistance front is leading that. I would think that with the two major panels on reconciliation and the homicides—67 per 100,000, I believe you said—there must be a willingness for the people to really go out and demonstrate, and show the government that they want change.

Sister Elsie Monge: Yes, as I said before, what they see as a more permanent solution would be to draw up a new constitution that would respond to the needs of the majority of the people, which is not the case now. They keep pressing for that. Many times the demonstrations are by, for instance, youth, students, and teachers, but they are very harshly repressed. Also, there have been killings and harassment of newspaper reporters who try to cover these manifestations.

Mr. David Sweet: The people are persecuted when they go into the streets. The press who try to report on it are persecuted as well. Even though this regime has made positive statements, they continue to allow this to happen.

Sister Elsie Monge: Yes, that's true. The truth commission, established by the national Human Rights Platform of Honduras, has recently drawn up a petition or given the information to the international penal court so that some of these crimes will not remain....

Mr. David Sweet: I don't want to make assumptions that I shouldn't. Should I take it that the National Front of Popular Resistance is against the model city notion that was brought about by congress?

Sister Elsie Monge: I don't know if there has been a pronouncement from the Frente, but I know especially the people of social organizations—and, yes, they make up the Frente—would be worried about the consequences and they would be against them.

• (1325)

Mr. David Sweet: Am I to assume that there's at least some level of trust in the supreme court, in the sense that they, certainly in this case that you mentioned, had the courage to be independent and ruled against this model city brought about by this constitutional change? Is that what's seen by the citizens of Honduras?

Sister Elsie Monge: Yes. It was a positive expression or positive move, but in the long run, I don't know how independent they are because congress is pushing it through anyhow.

Mr. David Sweet: You've been talking about the Bajo Aguán state, where there's been a lot of land disputes. We've heard from other witnesses that this was one of the areas where there was a lot of private security, and a lot of the human rights violations were happening because of this private security. Is that still going on in that area?

Sister Elsie Monge: Yes.

Mr. David Sweet: Is there any further evidence about the connection of this private security with either these foreign national companies or with the government?

Sister Elsie Monge: The security forces respond to big landowners. Those are the security forces...I mean, they are the ones perpetrating these massacres or killings or threats to the peasants not only in Bajo Aguán but also in the Zacate Grande Peninsula, in the Gulf of Fonseca. It's curious that the model cities... one would include Bajo Aguán and the other one would include the indigenous organizations in the Gulf of Fonseca. So of course they think that if they have land problems now and their subsistence is threatened, it would be worse when all that land is privatized around these model cities.

Mr. David Sweet: Thank you, Chair.

The Chair: Mr. Marston, go ahead please.

Mr. Wayne Marston (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek, NDP): Sister, I'm Wayne Marston, from the official opposition. I'm very pleased that you're joining us today.

In your testimony, you mentioned the failure of proper investigation of many of the crimes. I would expect that very much compromises the capacity of the judiciary. Notwithstanding the ruling on the charter cities, do you feel that the judiciary there is up to international standards?

Sister Elsie Monge: Well, I'm not there, but from the evidence and the complaints about serious human rights violations, and systematic and generalized violations, it seems to point out that this judicial system is not functioning.

Mr. Wayne Marston: My understanding of your testimony is that even when the supreme court rules, it's just being ignored by the government. Is that correct?

Sister Elsie Monge: That's right. In this particular case, I think they're going ahead.

Mr. Wayne Marston: Is that the general attitude towards lower court decisions?

Sister Elsie Monge: I can't say it is in all the cases, but in this case, yes.

Mr. Wayne Marston: From our standpoint here, looking at the situation, what do you think would be the most effective thing Canada could do in conjunction with efforts to stabilize this country?

Sister Elsie Monge: I think that the socio-economic and political situation is still in crisis. I think they are looking for some guidance from outside. I don't know. Maybe in the judicial system there could be training to make it more efficient, or there could be something like advisers. Something like that would be very positive.

• (1330)

Mr. Wayne Marston: I was recently part of a parliamentary delegation that went to Burma. We were looking at ways we might be able to be of assistance to them as they try to move from military rule to democracy there. It sounds as though something of that nature might be helpful here. Would you think so?

Sister Elsie Monge: Yes. Do you mean in the judicial system or in general?

Mr. Wayne Marston: This was on the parliamentary side of it, where the MPs were not very well informed and not very well supplied. They didn't even have offices in Burma, but it was to give them a sense, after over 50 years of military rule, of just how the democracy could function and be effective.

Sister Elsie Monge: Yes, I think it would help them to see that by implementing social directives that would guarantee food, health, education, work. That to me is where they should orient their policies, and the know-how for all this could be provided through Canadian assistance.

Mr. Wayne Marston: Mr. Chair, how's my time?

The Chair: You have about two minutes and 30 seconds.

Mr. Wayne Marston: I think one of the problems we will face there is the fact that the government is still in a position of power in a way that they can pretty well ignore whatever they choose to. Until

that side of it is addressed, I suspect there won't be a lot of actual movement.

Regarding the truth and reconciliation side of the situation, there have been the two attempts—the official one and then the others that have gone on. How effective do you think those have been? Are they actually making a difference? You mentioned impunity very early on, and that's a major problem in every country that has had either dictatorial or military rule, but have you seen an effectiveness in the efforts so far?

Sister Elsie Monge: In the efforts to sanction these kinds?

Mr. Wayne Marston: I mean in whatever manner they're trying to deal with them. I understand from your testimony that impunity is still rampant there.

Sister Elsie Monge: It is.

Mr. Wayne Marston: If you have a truth and reconciliation group trying to function and trying to find a way to move forward, I suspect that in some instances the perpetrators would kind of be laughing at it, because they're still sitting there with impunity.

Sister Elsie Monge: That's the tragic part about it, because many of the ones who are in government now were part of the conspiracy or the coup, so it is very hard to think that they would change. That's why I think that if there were a new national constitutional assembly, maybe there would be some place for different voices.

Mr. Wayne Marston: I guess the hard part of this is that for anybody who is guilty of previous crimes, facing the fact that their loss of power and their loss of impunity might put them at risk is putting another barrier in the way of progress.

Sister Elsie Monge: That's true. Yes, that's true, but on the other hand, how long can this go on without some minor change at least?

Mr. Wayne Marston: We have to be trying.

Thank you very much, Sister.

Sister Elsie Monge: Okay. We're banking on you.

The Chair: Ms. Grewal, please.

Mrs. Nina Grewal (Fleetwood—Port Kells, CPC): Thank you, Chair, and thank you Sister Elsie for your time and your presentation. Certainly, all of us do appreciate your time. My colleague, Mr. Craig Scott, spoke before our committee previously about the benefits to hundreds of having the truth commission.

Could you please expand on the significant differences between the Truth and Reconciliation Commission report and the report produced by your organization?

Sister Elsie Monge: The Truth and Reconciliation Commission report centres on the human rights violation before the coup, not so much after the coup. The focus is different in that way. Also, the investigation is different, because the truth commission, to which I belonged, did extensive gathering of testimonies all around the most critical parts of the country. That's why our report is called the "Voice of the Victims". It's centred on interviews trying to see the testimony of the victim. That would be one thing. So you have a very detailed account of the testimony. Of course, the focus is again that those responsible for these crimes against humanity, because they're systematic, should be brought to justice.

• (1335)

Mrs. Nina Grewal: Sister, going forward, what do you think are the most pressing concerns for Hondurans, and what specific reforms or policies should be prioritized?

Sister Elsie Monge: Part of the problem is the concentration of wealth in few hands, because the landowners have territories that they control or own, and they're also involved in all the other economic sectors in society, like airlines or businesses. It's sort of like a monopoly in some cases. I think a new structure is necessary in order for the majority of the people to have access to basic needs, such as health, education, land, and work. The emphasis has to be on the social programs to bring up the level of living for these people.

Mrs. Nina Grewal: Sister, the organization you worked with, the truth commission, believed that the official Truth and Reconciliation Commission was ineffective. Could you go into detail as to why you believed that your approach would have a higher chance of finding the truth?

Sister Elsie Monge: As I said before, we tried to emphasize the voice of the people, the voice of the victims themselves, so that not only the crimes but the conflicts would be understood and taken into consideration. How effective is that? It doesn't depend on the investigation. It depends on using the investigation in order to sanction the crime.

Mrs. Nina Grewal: Canada is the second largest investor in Honduras. What can Canada do to improve the human rights situation in Honduras while not stepping on internationally recognized boundaries or interfering?

Could you please say a little bit about that?

Sister Elsie Monge: What kind of investment does Canada have in Honduras? What are the main types?

Mrs. Nina Grewal: Mining and the garment industry; that's what we're talking about.

Sister Elsie Monge: The garment industry should help to create jobs. As long as they give good wages to people, I think that would be positive.

• (1340)

Mrs. Nina Grewal: Sister, my main question was this: what can Canada do to improve the human rights situation in Honduras? Is there anything that Canada can do there?

The Chair: This is your last question.

Sister Elsie Monge: As I said before, regarding the judicial system, some training on the rule of law would be a very positive way for Canada to give some help. You'd have to have some sort of

agreement with the government, of course, but I think the judicial system could improve with advisers from Canada.

Mrs. Nina Grewal: Thank you, Sister.

The Chair: Thank you.

Ms. Murray, please.

Ms. Joyce Murray (Vancouver Quadra, Lib.): Thank you.

I want to add my thanks, Sister Monge, for the work you've been doing.

My name is Joyce Murray. I'm going to go with a different line of questions, partly because I've been involved in a reforestation and rural development enterprise in Honduras to protect a national forest, Pico Bonito, from some of the pressures of degradation and illegal deforestation. My experience with that suggested that really working with the local communities to create alternative economic development is essential to protecting the sustainability of the resources.

First, in terms of rural economic development, which in the case of Honduras clearly requires security of land tenure and property rights, to what degree is that an important place to focus for on-the-ground changing the situation of the local communities so that the income inequality problem can be tackled in a practical way?

Sister Elsie Monge: I agree totally. In rural areas, land and water are indispensable for their subsistence. There may be a hope for agrarian reform, and I think that would be key to really having a substantial bettering of the situation—agrarian reform that is not only distribution of land, but helping, as you were saying, with more means to produce the land, and better technical assistance.

I think land reform is a key issue, yes.

Ms. Joyce Murray: In terms of conflict around land rights and land use in Honduras, to what degree are those challenges political and to what degree are they technical, such as the absence of an effective technology-based land mapping and title system, that could be addressed at that level?

Sister Elsie Monge: I think it has a high political ingredient because the economic and political powers are hand in hand. These big land owners also are in decision-making posts in the state. I think that international pressure can be very effective in that most people feel something has to change in order to overcome the crisis. Yes, I think if there is technological help, it could soften the political aspect of keeping the great differences between those who own the country and those who have nothing.

• (1345)

Ms. Joyce Murray: So the kinds of technologies that are developed in Canada—we're using GPS to do aerial mapping and multi-layered mapping of the various interests in land and resources—are things that could be useful. At the same time what I'm hearing is that the will to actually stabilize some of these land rights in peasants' and community hands is patchy or weak.

I'm just wondering, Sister, whether your truth commission looked at the advances in Nicaragua in terms of indigenous peoples securing rights to the large tracts of land on the Atlantic side of the country. They finally have a chance to be responsible for the management of their own natural resources in that area and for the communities to be able to have rights in that traditional territory. That was many years and decades leading to that success, recognized now by the government. Did you have a chance to learn about that in your commission? If so, is there any application of that process that might be helpful in Honduras?

Sister Elsie Monge: We know of the success of that process in Nicaragua. I think that, yes, empowering the base organizations does have a better chance of raising their standards of living. That could be another suggestion from the Canadian government for the Honduran government, to study that possibility for the rural areas in Honduras.

Ms. Joyce Murray: Thank you very much.

The Chair: Thank you.

Mr. Schellenberger, please.

Mr. Gary Schellenberger (Perth—Wellington, CPC): Thank you, and good morning, Sister; I guess it's good afternoon here.

Do you think that the present government is behind some of these assassinations that are happening?

Sister Elsie Monge: I think that in—

Mr. Gary Schellenberger: I might have put you in a difficult position. I'll change that. I understand your situation.

Does the present government participate in the OAS, Organization of American States?

Sister Elsie Monge: At one point the OAS banned the participation of the Honduran government, but then it opened up and they're a part of the OAS now, yes.

Mr. Gary Schellenberger: Are they now looked on as a positive part of the organization?

Sister Elsie Monge: I haven't heard of any active participation in the OAS; I haven't heard that.

What I wanted to say before is there is a need to listen to a different viewpoint and try to have some kind of an agreement from the different social actors, from the different social sectors. I think when you don't have that opening then it becomes black and white: I mean, those who are with me or those who are against me and I persecute the ones who are against me. I think the whole focus has to be a little different.

• (1350)

Mr. Gary Schellenberger: Thank you for that.

I've only been on this committee about three or four months. We've looked into poverty and human rights abuses in various countries and it seems that respect for law and order, and good law and order, runs parallel to poverty. Is it your sense that there needs to be a strengthening of law and order in Honduras?

Sister Elsie Monge: Like you said, it goes hand in hand. There's such an abyss between those who own the country and those who are marginalized or excluded, and it's hard to have law and order without justice. Yes, everyone talks about going against poverty, but the other side is the accumulation of wealth. I think there has to be, or tends to be, some better balance of these different sectors.

Mr. Gary Schellenberger: On August 12, 2011, Prime Minister Harper announced the conclusion of negotiations toward a Canada-Honduras free trade agreement:

The Canada-Honduras Free Trade Agreement, along with parallel agreements on labour and environmental cooperation, will now undergo a legal review, after which it can be formally signed. Following signature, the agreements will be debated in the Canadian Parliament and Honduran Congress, and following approval by these legislative bodies, the agreements can come into force.

Do you feel a free trade agreement between Honduras and Canada would be a positive for Honduras?

Sister Elsie Monge: That's a very touchy issue because from our experience in Ecuador many times the analysis shows that free trade is not on an equal basis. Yes, the market of the first world expands into these so-called underdeveloped countries, but there is very little reciprocity and many times the cost of production in our country can't compete with the products that come from the developed countries. That is difficult.

Mr. Gary Schellenberger: You mentioned earlier the garment industry, and we mentioned, I think, that we were involved primarily in garment and mining. I think, and this is just coming from me, that you can do more from within than you can from without. Again, in a free trade agreement, if we were there and we have some free trade, do you feel there might be a chance that we might be able to affect some of the law, some of the infrastructure that might be there in Honduras?

Sister Elsie Monge: Like you say, if you're there, what would be the presence? If it's not just product, would you be trying to better the conditions of the majority?

Mr. Gary Schellenberger: That's what I look at. I look at our industry in some developing countries. We'd go in and train people, give them some experience, give them a job. In a lot of these places, if you don't have a job.... I was just in a school the other day, a grade 12 class, and a young lad said to me, "What are you doing for us at my age?" I said that what we're trying to do is to make sure that he has a job when he gets out of school. This I think is very important and I would hope that maybe through a free trade agreement we might be able to affect some of those countries, not just rape and pillage, as has gone on in previous centuries.

Thank you.

• (1355)

Sister Elsie Monge: To me that seems like a different approach. I do believe training in all.... As you said, setting up industry, giving good wages, helping the people, empowering the people to be more efficient or better trained, and of course, creating jobs are very positive things.

When I hear about trade agreements, they tend to focus on commerce and interchange of products, which at this point is not done on an equal basis.

Mr. Gary Schellenberger: Thank you very much.

The Chair: Mr. Scott, please.

Mr. Craig Scott (Toronto—Danforth, NDP): Elsie, if you don't mind me referring you to by your first name, this is Craig Scott.

Sister Elsie Monge: Oh, hi.

Mr. Craig Scott: *Como te va?*

Sister Elsie Monge: It's good to hear your voice.

Mr. Craig Scott: You too. I do need to go on record in the committee saying I was a member of the commission until being elected.

Thank you so much for being here with us. Elsie, I just wanted to ask a couple of quick questions to fill in some gaps. One is in the truth commission's work. Did you or the commission as a whole see evidence of any particular human rights violations or concerns for lack of protection in the LGBT community, maybe particularly the transgendered people?

Sister Elsie Monge: Yes. I think there has been persecution of the gay and lesbian community. Yes, that's considered a crime in Honduras.

Mr. Craig Scott: In terms of the actual conditions, do you feel things have in any sense improved or not improved since the coup or since the election of President Lobo?

Sister Elsie Monge: No, I don't see an improvement in the repression of anybody, in this case the gay and lesbian community, or anyone who does not agree with the coup and its continuation.

Mr. Craig Scott: Elsie, I was wondering if you could elaborate on a couple of things.

Michael Kergin, who is a member of the other commission, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, said something that does line up with what you said. You talked about the Bajo Aguán landowners being interconnected with broader economic elites and how that explains both their interests and their power. Michael Kergin did talk

a lot—a bit, I'm overstating it—about the very closely guarded economic power of a small number of families in Honduras and how those families, along with other economic actors, really do control things from the media down to industry and land holdings.

For the record, I'm wondering whether you'd agree with that summary from Mr. Kergin. What implications do you think the connection between economic power and influence have for our hopes of getting to that newer constitutional order that you have said is probably essential?

Sister Elsie Monge: I agree that the crux of the problem is that economic power, the economic elite running the country. At the same time, they have to see the repercussions on the majority of the people. That's the question I ask myself. How long can you keep making the poor poorer? They should see that it's to the detriment of the whole country.

Mr. Craig Scott: Thank you, Elsie. To pick up on something my colleagues Joyce Murray and Ms. Grewal were questioning you about, it was mentioned that Canada is the second leading investor in Honduras. I think we're also the second leading development assistance or cooperation contributor as well. We do have excellent programs that have begun to move into areas of the justice system with Canadian assistance.

In my own experience—and this is speaking frankly, not necessarily as having been a commissioner—is that on the ground Canada appeared to be rather reticent to use either the language or the analytical frame of reference of human rights when talking about development assistance and development cooperation. It was much more pragmatic, talking about, say, water systems or food security, but it really, really avoided ideas of human rights. The language of economic, social, and cultural rights isn't really part of how development assistance is talked about in Honduras.

Now this might have been a strategic thing or it might reflect a broader trend in our development assistance programs, but can you tell us what your view is on whether we can afford to be talking about human rights without economic, social, and cultural rights as part of the frame?

• (1400)

Sister Elsie Monge: The thing is, in the western hemisphere it has taken a long time to view economic, social, and cultural issues as rights. The north refers to them as needs, but it's the push from the southern countries that has given the importance of treating them as rights. A need is something that you can answer to or not, but a right you have to answer to.

Mr. Craig Scott: Thank you, Elsie.

The Chair: Thank you very much.

We have just a moment left. I wonder if I might just pose a question. We've been trying to locate some of the written materials from your commission, Sister Elsie. At a previous meeting, I asked Mr. Scott if he had a copy of the report and I know the answer was no. That's why I'm asking you if you have any documents in English or French that we can use. Do you have any copies?

Sister Elsie Monge: The report was published last year in October, and now it's being translated into English. We're having a hard time in this process. In Spanish it is available. Would it be of any use to you in Spanish?

The Chair: Yes, it would. I think it's already online in Spanish, is it not?

Sister Elsie Monge: Yes.

The Chair: I don't suppose you have at least the summary done in English, do you?

Sister Elsie Monge: It's being translated, but I can write to my colleagues saying that maybe the first thing to do would be to translate the summary, because the other is bigger.

The Chair: Right. We don't want to inconvenience you in any way. But from our point of view, it would be helpful. It would allow us to get the information at first hand, which is the ideal way.

Sister Elsie Monge: I can ask them to get in touch with you as soon as there is a possibility of putting it online.

Mr. Craig Scott: Elsie, I got an email that they're at the rough-draft stage for the English. So the question then becomes whether the committee having it without actually quoting verbatim from it would be useful. I think we might be able to get it in that stage.

• (1405)

The Chair: I might ask you to chat with the clerk about the practicalities there.

Mr. Craig Scott: Thank you, Elsie.

Sister Elsie Monge: Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you very much, Sister Elsie, we really appreciate your taking the time to provide us with this testimony. It's been very helpful, and all of us are very grateful to you.

Sister Elsie Monge: I'm glad and thankful for the interesting meeting.

The Chair: Thanks very much.

Colleagues, we are adjourned.

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