



HOUSE OF COMMONS
CHAMBRE DES COMMUNES
CANADA

Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration

CIMM • NUMBER 082 • 1st SESSION • 42nd PARLIAMENT

EVIDENCE

Tuesday, November 7, 2017

—
Chair

Mr. Robert Oliphant

Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration

Tuesday, November 7, 2017

• (0850)

[English]

The Chair (Mr. Robert Oliphant (Don Valley West, Lib.)): I call to order the 82nd meeting of the Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration for the consideration of a briefing on resettlement issues related to Yazidi women and girls.

This is really a follow-up study with respect to the status of the government operation on its commitment to resettle Yazidis to Canada.

I am very pleased to welcome officials from the department here today. Thank you for joining us, both from Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development, as well as Citizenship and Immigration. I begin with thanking you for your public service and also for your willingness to come and brief us today on this very important issue.

We'll begin with the Department of Citizenship and Immigration. It's over to you to decide how to use your time.

Ms. Dawn Edlund (Associate Assistant Deputy Minister, Operations, Department of Citizenship and Immigration): Mr. Chair, thank you for the opportunity to appear before your committee to discuss this important topic and to update the committee on Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada's work on resettling survivors of Daesh to Canada.

[Translation]

I am joined today by Corinne Prince, director general of IRCC's settlement and integration policy branch, and by Jean-Marc Gionet, the acting senior director of the resettlement operations division. Also joining us today are Sean Boyd, the executive director for Middle East relations, and his colleague Tara Carney.

My colleagues and I will be pleased to answer any of your questions following my brief opening remarks.

[English]

As you know, in October of 2016 the House of Commons voted unanimously in support of a motion for the Government of Canada to provide protection to Yazidi women and girls who are fleeing genocide.

As Canada offers protection on the basis of vulnerability, rather than religion or ethnicity, the government's response to this motion focused on all survivors of Daesh for whom resettlement would be an appropriate solution. The government committed to resettling 1,200 survivors of Daesh, including vulnerable Yazidi women and

children, by the end of 2017. We have also been prioritizing any applications for privately sponsored refugees who are survivors of Daesh.

Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada has worked closely with the United Nations Refugee Agency, the International Organization for Migration, resettlement assistance program service provider organizations in Canada, and other partners in order to meet this commitment.

The UNHCR has helped us to identify vulnerable Yazidi women and children and other survivors of Daesh and their family members, both inside and outside of Iraq.

Mr. Chair, I am happy to report that as of October 29, 807 survivors have already arrived in Canada, 747 as government-assisted refugees and 60 as privately sponsored refugees. Of those 807 individuals, 81% are Yazidi, including 230 women, 178 men, and 398 children. Of all the individuals who arrived in Canada by October 29, 39% came from Iraq, 35% from Lebanon, and 26% from Turkey.

We have identified and interviewed all remaining cases to be resettled. Of the 1,383 individuals who have been referred to us, almost all of the remaining are from Iraq and the applications are all well in process.

[Translation]

Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada remains committed to meeting the target of resettling 1,200 survivors of Daesh by the end of this year, notwithstanding the fact that operating in the region is complex and can pose risks to the welfare and safety of the refugees, our partners, and our staff.

We continue to monitor political and security developments in the region, and to assess any possible implications this may have on our operation.

[English]

We also continue to schedule or reschedule flights for those whose travel was cancelled in September and October due to the ongoing international flight ban out of the Kurdistan region of Iraq. Although refusal rates are low, arrivals are sometimes delayed for medical, logistical, or other reasons.

As we mentioned at the outset of this initiative, we don't want to bring these vulnerable individuals to Canada in large groups, as they need added supports that we want to ensure are in place in the receiving communities.

Barring any new, emerging security, exit, or transportation considerations beyond our control, we expect to reach our goal of welcoming 1,200 individuals to Canada by December 31.

In addition to the 1,200 government-assisted refugees that represent the government commitment, we are also facilitating the private sponsorship of individuals who fall within this vulnerable group, so more Yazidi women and girls as well as other survivors of Daesh, are arriving in Canada as privately sponsored refugees.

In choosing where to send new arrivals, we considered the extent to which communities had an existing Yazidi diaspora, adequate medical and psychosocial supports, availability of interpreters, and social service provider organizations with experience with similar population groups.

We also took into consideration the advice of Yazidi leaders in Iraq and Canada who emphasized the importance of connections to the religious community in Canada, allowing for the organic formation of community networks amongst the newly resettled families.

[*Translation*]

To date, the majority of arrivals under this initiative have been received in Toronto, London, Winnipeg, and Calgary. We anticipate sending individuals and families to Lethbridge as well.

Of course, when applicants identify a connection to another location in Canada, all efforts are made to ensure that they are destined to an area where they can be close to family or friends and be able to receive necessary supports.

[*English*]

To assist our service provider organizations with the settlement and integration needs of this population, migration officers and physicians with the International Organization for Migration identified specific medical and resettlement needs for each individual and this was shared in advance of their arrival. As well, our department developed and circulated a Yazidi population profile detailing demographic and health characteristics as well as cultural considerations for this vulnerable population.

To assist their successful settlement and integration, all government-assisted refugees, including the survivors of Daesh, receive settlement services both pre- and post-arrival. As such, the International Organization for Migration delivers “orientation to Canada” training to all survivors of Daesh before their departure. This orientation provides them with accurate, relevant information and supports, so that they can make informed decisions about their new life in Canada, develop realistic expectations, and begin the settlement process.

In Canada, IRCC-funded resettlement assistance program service providers play a major role in welcoming the survivors of Daesh and providing transportation centres. Their role is to provide post-arrival services to government-supported refugees to address their immediate and essential needs.

Following their initial settlement, the newcomers receive support services from IRCC-funded settlement service providers including, among other things, language training, crisis counselling, and interpretation. There are also targeted services for youth, such as

settlement support services in schools, homework clubs, and art and recreation-based activities, that are available.

The organizations here in Canada have been coordinating and sharing lessons learned amongst themselves, as well as our department, to meet the needs of these newcomers. In addition, IRCC-funded local immigration partnerships, known as LIPs, are providing support to survivors of Daesh. These LIPs are playing an important role in facilitating supports during the process of resettling and integrating Syrian refugees. They have partnership networks that aim to coordinate services for newcomers at the local, community level, by bringing together various stakeholders. Those include employers, school boards, health centres, other levels of government, service provider organizations, professional associations, ethnocultural and faith-based organizations, and others in the social services sector.

● (0855)

[*Translation*]

Finally, the department also monitors progress in meeting our commitment to the resettlement of these newcomers to Canada.

Regular meetings are held at the local level between the department and service providers, to address challenges, discuss progress in addressing our commitment and lessons learned, and any other issues that may need attention. We are engaging these organizations again later this week.

Mr. Chair, I have provided an overview of where our operation to resettle survivors of Daesh currently stands. My colleagues and I will now be happy to answer any questions the committee members might pose, and to provide any further details that members request.

Thank you very much.

I will now make way for my colleague from Global Affairs Canada.

The Chair: Thank you very much.

Mr. Boyd, the floor is yours.

[*English*]

Mr. Sean Boyd (Executive Director, Middle East Relations, Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development): Good morning, Mr. Chair and honourable members of this committee.

I have been asked to provide an update on Canada's engagement in Iraq and to outline the current situation in the country. I hope this will provide some useful context for today's discussion on the Yazidi resettlement program.

[*Translation*]

Last year, my predecessor briefed you on the expansion of our diplomatic presence in Iraq. The expansion has allowed Canada to deepen its relations with the Government of Iraq and the Kurdish Regional Government. Our diplomatic staff has regular access to a wide range of interlocutors within the Government of Iraq and the Kurdistan Regional Government. We also have regular interactions with local officials such as governors and mayors, the United Nations, as well as community representatives and civil society organizations.

[English]

The majority of Iraqi Yazidis live in the northern region of Iraq, in Nineveh province and parts of the Kurdistan region. The two largest communities are in Sheikhan, northeast of Mosul, and in Sinjar, which is near the Syrian border, 80 kilometres west of Mosul. Both of these are in Nineveh province.

Following the siege of Sinjar by Daesh in 2014, many Yazidis fled their communities. They ended up in camps for internally displaced persons, or IDPs, in host communities within Iraq, mainly in Dohuk, Erbil, and Sulaymaniyah provinces, or as refugees in other countries like Turkey and Greece. Our increased presence in Erbil has enabled us to engage regularly with different representatives from the Yazidi community and maintain discussions with local authorities and the United Nations. The office of the Canadian embassy in Erbil has also provided assistance to IRCC's selection teams who travelled to Iraq to complete the necessary screening of resettlement applicants.

[Translation]

The Iraqi security forces and Kurdish forces have made significant progress over the past year against Daesh, notably by liberating Mosul and Hawija. The situation across Iraq continues to be fluid however. Security in parts of the country, including in the Kurdistan region, remains volatile.

Global Affairs Canada has recommended that Canadians avoid travel to the country and we are monitoring the situation to ensure the safety and security of our staff. Iraq will be heading into parliamentary elections in May of 2018. There may be tensions in the lead-up to those elections.

[English]

On September 25, the Kurdistan Regional Government held a referendum on independence, despite a ruling by the supreme court of Iraq declaring the referendum unconstitutional. The Government of Iraq responded by deploying Iraqi security forces to take control of several disputed territories near the borders of the Kurdistan region, including Kirkuk, Sinjar, and areas surrounding Mosul. It also cancelled all international flights into the Kurdistan region and took over some border crossings previously controlled by Kurdish authorities.

Flight restrictions have made travel in and out of the Kurdistan region more difficult for international visitors, and it is not yet clear when the restrictions will be lifted. The Iraqi security forces took over control of these regions without major incident, though a few minor clashes did occur, particularly around Kirkuk. The composition of the Kurdistan government remains uncertain, as do next steps in the ongoing political standoff with Baghdad.

Heading into the national elections in 2018, the fundamental differences over constitutional rights and wealth sharing remain unresolved.

In the fight against Daesh, the Iraqi security forces with the assistance of the Global Coalition against Daesh continue to liberate Daesh's remaining pockets of territory in western Iraq. Daesh's control has been dramatically reduced, and it now holds less than 10% of the country. Iraqi and international efforts are now increasingly focusing on stabilizing liberated areas and creating an

enabling environment for reconciliation. The conflict has created millions of internally displaced persons with estimates of approximately 400,000 Yazidis living in IDP camps or in host communities. The conflict has also left entire cities and villages in complete ruin. The Global Coalition has placed immediate priority on clearing these areas of unexploded ordnance and improvised explosive devices, and reinstating basic services such as water, electricity, and education, where possible.

Canada is supporting these efforts, but it will take time and many Iraqis will require continued humanitarian assistance for the foreseeable future.

● (0900)

[Translation]

Canada's humanitarian assistance is provided on the basis of vulnerability and needs. Given that the Yazidis are a particularly vulnerable group that has been disproportionately affected by Daesh's campaign of violence, they are part of the population supported through our humanitarian assistance. For example, our UN partners are providing comprehensive services in the camps and host communities where the Yazidis have sought refuge. This includes food, water, access to education, medical care and shelter to displaced Yazidis.

[English]

In particular, with Canadian support, the United Nations Population Fund has established a women's centre at the Dohuk hospital, which provides clinical and non-clinical treatment for the most extreme cases of sexual and gender-based violence. Between September 2014 and October 2016, a total of 824 survivors received assistance at this centre, including Yazidi women and girls who have suffered atrocities under Daesh. The centre continues to function today.

In addition, our funding to NGO partners over the past few years has enabled the provision of health care services at IDP camps and in communities where many Yazidis are located. Through multi-year programming under Canada's Middle East strategy, we are providing over \$150 million in humanitarian assistance to Iraq to meet the needs of the most vulnerable, including the Yazidis.

The conflict with Daesh has also exacerbated inter-sectarian divisions and created an environment of distrust amongst communities. Many, including minority groups, fear discrimination or reprisal if they return to their homes. Canada is assisting in stabilization and reconciliation efforts in hopes of creating an enabling environment that will allow internally displaced persons to return home safely. This includes funding the clearance of unexploded ordnance and improvised explosive devices and supporting community-level dispute resolution and reconciliation initiatives. To this end, Canada is supporting anti-retribution campaigns, supporting community action groups focused on addressing potential local conflict, and supporting institutions addressing property and land disputes in northern Iraq. Ultimately, our stabilization efforts are addressing some of the very challenges that enable Daesh to divide communities in northern Iraq, including traditional Yazidi areas.

The Yazidis have suffered horrendous atrocities at the hands of Daesh. The United Nations' Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic has found that these acts of violence constitute genocide. Members of the Yazidi community have told us that they do not feel safe and that they continue to fear Daesh sleeper cells and other forms of religious extremism.

Canada's resettlement program is assisting the most vulnerable of the community, women and children, who have survived inhumane abuses against them, but Canada is also assisting the Yazidis and other vulnerable minorities who remain in Iraq. By providing humanitarian assistance and supporting stabilization efforts, we hope the Yazidis can eventually return to their homes and continue practising their culture and religion in freedom.

Thank you again for the invitation to appear before you today.

• (0905)

The Chair: Thank you both very much.

I'm sure the committee has lots of questions.

We begin with Mr. Sarai.

Mr. Randeep Sarai (Surrey Centre, Lib.): First of all, I want to thank you all. We're all well aware that despite representatives of the previous government having gone and seen Daesh's brutal attacks on the Yazidi people, the previous government really did nothing to help any of the Yazidi people or to help in their resettlement. As soon as the UN declared the attack a genocide, this government acted swiftly and quickly. We're happy that you made arrangements for the commitment and resettlement of 1,200 Yazidi people, and I'm glad to see that resettlement is on track.

Newcomers to Canada all require specialized and subsidized services based on their unique experiences before they come. This question is for IRCC. What settlement services are required by Yazidi newcomers that distinguish them from other past and present immigration groups?

Ms. Dawn Edlund: I'll ask my colleague Ms. Prince to supplement this, but given the extensive trauma that these individuals have survived, including torture, sexual violence, or deaths of their family members in front of them, a tremendous amount of psychosocial supports and mental health supports need to be put in place.

As I said earlier, we have modified the way in which we conduct our interviews and the way in which the medical examinations are done so we're collecting more relevant information about the specific needs, and then that's being passed on to our settlement provider organizations so they can prepare in advance of people's arrival. Our local immigration partnerships have then ensured, working with us, that the settlement supports are actually available so that we don't have gaps in service.

Mr. Randeep Sarai: How much of the \$27.7 million set aside for the resettlement of the Iraqi refugees is allotted for settlement services?

Ms. Dawn Edlund: Budget 2017 set out \$27.7 million. We later did an evaluation of the amount of money we thought we would actually need and refined our costing, so we've asked for \$21.7 million. I think about two-thirds of that is related to ongoing income

support, interim federal health, and the settlement supports that will be available over the next three-year period.

Mr. Randeep Sarai: To Global Affairs, what is the assessment of the environment in Iraq in a post-Daesh world? Do you think some of the Yazidi people will be able to return, and do you think they will return?

Mr. Sean Boyd: Post-Daesh Iraq, again, remains an area that requires quite a bit of stability, stabilization support, so part of our efforts working with coalition members is to engage in stabilization programs to make the communities safe. That obviously requires political will on the parts of the community members, but we are providing support through stabilization programs, including policing, to help to develop a confidence amongst the communities that they can return safely and deal with issues of demining and unexploded ordnances.

This is an area very heavily polluted with munitions, so there is a need to clear those areas and to ensure the restoration of services, ensure that electricity, water, sanitation, and education services are flowing. That's the focus of the international community going into this next phase of post-Daesh priority for Iraq. Then, based on that, our hope is that community members, including the Yazidis, will feel that they are able to return safely to their communities.

Mr. Randeep Sarai: In what ways has the Canadian special immigration measure complemented pre-existing aid efforts in Iraq? We assumed that we were giving aid in terms of policing. How do you think this special immigration measure to bring 1,200 Yazidis has helped to stabilize the area and helped those people?

Ms. Dawn Edlund: I would answer that in terms of saying that we worked with the regional government of Kurdistan and also the Iraqi government over a targeted program of 1,200, similar to what Germany had done. The goal was to identify the most vulnerable, those who either could not reintegrate back into their communities or who could not receive the necessary medical or psychosocial supports that they needed on the ground in Iraq. It was really getting those most vulnerable people out of a difficult situation. I don't know if that had any impact whatsoever in terms of the overall stability of the community.

●(0910)

Mr. Randeep Sarai: Would you say this is the largest resettlement of Yazidis, or matched with the German model? Is there any other country that has assisted in the resettlement of the Yazidi people that you're aware of, more than Canada or Germany?

Ms. Dawn Edlund: There are a couple of other countries that have been doing resettlement efforts in relation to the Yazidis, but I think Canada and Germany are the leaders in terms of the numbers that we've resettled.

Mr. Randeep Sarai: Okay.

Most Yazidis speak Northern Kurdish, the Kermanji dialect. What translation and interpretation services or resources does IRCC have on hand for the Northern Kurdish language?

Ms. Dawn Edlund: We arranged with the International Organization for Migration that, when we were interviewing overseas, we had appropriate translation and interpretation services available. We continue to work with those translation teams in each of our five interview trips. Equally, post-arrival in Canada, we've been working with Yazidi communities in our four core cities—soon to be five—to make sure that we have those additional interpretation services available.

Mr. Randeep Sarai: Do those four or five core cities have language available to them or Northern Kurdish or Yazidi communities that help them assist?

Ms. Dawn Edlund: Yes, they do.

Mr. Randeep Sarai: Do they have places of worship for them as well, or is that something being arranged?

Ms. Dawn Edlund: They do. I mean, when we resettled the 23,000 Iraqis, we created pockets of Yazidi diaspora in Canada in those four main communities that I mentioned: Toronto, Calgary, Winnipeg, and London. We have kind of a core of Yazidis already present from that previous resettlement movement, and that's why we chose those four cities, and now five, for the majority of our government-assisted refugees. That infrastructure is there in terms of community support, religious community, etc.

Mr. Randeep Sarai: Was it easy to extract those who were in northern Iraq, the Yazidi families from there, or was that a challenging environment in which to select and extract?

Ms. Dawn Edlund: It's a complex operating environment due to safety concerns for everyone. It's not that complicated to get people out. It's been a bit more complicated now that the international flight situation has been stopped out of northern Iraq, so we've been finding ways to work around that to continue bringing people to Canada.

The Chair: Thank you very much.

Ms. Rempel.

Hon. Michelle Rempel (Calgary Nose Hill, CPC): Thank you.

Of the 573 Yazidis who've been brought to Canada, can you please provide the committee with a breakdown based on gender, the city in which they've been resettled, and the location in which they were identified?

Ms. Dawn Edlund: For the Yazidis who are part of the resettlement, both government-assisted and privately sponsored refugees, so far it's actually 650.

Hon. Michelle Rempel: Can you focus on the government-sponsored?

Ms. Dawn Edlund: On the government-sponsored, there has been 590. I think you mentioned 573. We got 17 more out just recently. Amongst those Yazidis, 55% are women and girls. Also, 79% are women and children, because we've discovered in interviews that boys have been quite significantly impacted as well.

Hon. Michelle Rempel: You also mentioned the cities. How many in each city have been resettled?

Ms. Dawn Edlund: I have numbers for the 807, which includes all the survivors.

Hon. Michelle Rempel: Could you provide the committee with specifically the Yazidi component? How many Yazidis have been settled in each of the cities?

Ms. Dawn Edlund: We can provide that detail, but so far 642—80% of them—have gone to the four communities I mentioned, and 165 people have gone to 14 other communities across Canada.

Hon. Michelle Rempel: Okay. If you could provide that detail to the committee, that would be wonderful.

In terms of the intake process, how are candidates identified?

Ms. Dawn Edlund: There are the cases that have been brought to us by communities in Canada of privately sponsored refugees.

Hon. Michelle Rempel: I'm referring to the government-sponsored refugees.

Ms. Dawn Edlund: For the government-sponsored we've relied on the UNHCR. The UNHCR on the ground, in northern Iraq in particular, has worked with the local government, the regional health authority, NGOs, and Yazda, etc., to identify the individuals and refer them to us.

Hon. Michelle Rempel: The individuals then didn't have to apply through the regular UNHCR process. They were identified through other means.

●(0915)

Ms. Dawn Edlund: I think that's true, that they were identified through other means, but I would have to—

Hon. Michelle Rempel: Could you provide the committee with detail on exactly how people were identified and selected? Do you know how many were rejected as part of this process, who were identified and rejected?

Ms. Dawn Edlund: There haven't been any cases of rejections. A few individuals have actually withdrawn their applications.

Hon. Michelle Rempel: Okay.

How many Kermanji translators are currently employed by your department or other government departments as part of the resettlement effort for the Yazidi community?

Ms. Dawn Edlund: They're not our employees because—

Hon. Michelle Rempel: Contracted....

Ms. Dawn Edlund: We've relied on the International Organization for Migration overseas to bring in the right group of interpreters.

Hon. Michelle Rempel: How many?

Ms. Dawn Edlund: I would have to find out the number.

Hon. Michelle Rempel: Can you please give that to the committee?

Ms. Dawn Edlund: Similarly in Canada, it's been through our resettlement organizations.

Hon. Michelle Rempel: I'm specifically looking for the number of Kermanji interpreters who are currently being provided to resettled Yazidis in Canada.

Of the pending or unprocessed privately sponsored refugee cases, how many are Yazidi or from ethnic minorities in northern Iraq?

Ms. Dawn Edlund: In total we've had 88 individuals whose cases have been brought forward as privately sponsored refugees, and 60 of those are already in Canada.

Hon. Michelle Rempel: I'm looking for the total number of PSR cases from northern Iraq, I guess, who are in the queue.

Ms. Dawn Edlund: Of all nationalities, not just Yazidis?

Hon. Michelle Rempel: I'm wondering if you've started breaking it down by ethnicity, persecuted minority group, or that sort of thing.

Ms. Dawn Edlund: We did an interview trip into northern Iraq in early October. At that point, we were focusing on Syrians who were government-assisted refugees and privately sponsored refugees. In the last interview trip, I think we also did a few privately sponsored refugees.

I would have to figure out what the numbers are.

Hon. Michelle Rempel: Just to clarify, I guess the information I would like tabled with committee is the total number of privately sponsored refugee cases that are currently pending from northern Iraq, broken down by ethnicity.

Ms. Dawn Edlund: We can certainly get you the total number of privately sponsored refugees. As you know, we don't track by ethnicity. We track by nationality.

Hon. Michelle Rempel: But you tracked by ethnicity for this particular case. Is that correct?

Ms. Dawn Edlund: We did track by ethnicity because of the specific circumstances of the motion from the House of Commons.

Hon. Michelle Rempel: Okay. But you're no longer tracking by ethnicity.

Ms. Dawn Edlund: This was exceptional. We virtually never track by ethnicity unless we're specifically requested to do so.

Hon. Michelle Rempel: Has the government requested that you track by ethnicity the privately sponsored refugee cases that are currently pending?

Ms. Dawn Edlund: No.

Hon. Michelle Rempel: Thank you.

Ms. Dawn Edlund: I'm sorry. That's other than for the Yazidis.

Hon. Michelle Rempel: Okay, but there has been no other request? All right.

I've had reports of Yazidis who have been resettled in Calgary and do not have access to the Kermanji translation services six months post-settlement, that there's some sort of a six-month cut-off. Is that correct or not?

Ms. Dawn Edlund: I'm certainly not aware of anything of that nature, and I know that we are just moving to.... Actually, the Calgary Catholic immigration service is hiring a young woman from Winnipeg who is a Kermanji interpreter. She wants to move to Calgary to support.

Hon. Michelle Rempel: Can you provide the committee with the number of Yazidis who have been resettled who currently do not have access to translation services? It's been noted that for some of these women having Arabic spoken to them as a substitute language is traumatic, given their experience.

Some of the cases we've heard about anecdotally in my office have been that there are women who do not have access to the translation services six months after resettlement. Many of them can't access services because of that, and isolation is becoming a problem. I would like in short order the number of translators who are available to this community, how many of these refugees who have been resettled still have access to translation services, and how many do not.

The other component that I'd like to touch on is mental health support for Yazidi women and others—essentially, the entire Yazidi cohort. Can you please table with committee the plan to interact with the provinces to provide specialized mental health support for the Yazidi survivors?

Ms. Dawn Edlund: As I said during my opening remarks, the local immigration partnerships have been helping us very much by making sure we coordinate all of the various resources that are available—

Hon. Michelle Rempel: Is there a formal plan to provide that service?

Ms. Dawn Edlund: I think that in each community the local immigration partnerships have been coordinating everybody and have been planning as they go. I don't know if they have a formal written plan.

Hon. Michelle Rempel: You don't have oversight on that integration support.

• (0920)

Ms. Dawn Edlund: We have insight into the integration supports that people have been using, but keep in mind that for access to medical services, because the resettled refugees are permanent residents, their primary health care coverage is coming through the province where they've been resettled.

We do have the interim federal health—

The Chair: I need to end that there. We're a little over time.

Ms. Kwan.

Ms. Jenny Kwan (Vancouver East, NDP): Thank you very much, Mr. Chair, and thank you to all the officials for coming back to our committee to give us this update.

I'd like to follow up a bit, particularly on the resettlement services for the individuals who have arrived. We know about the need for counselling support, and for mental health support in particular, and I'm wondering about the locations where these individuals have been placed to resettle. Do we have any sense in those communities of whether there are indeed medical service providers, counsellors, psychologists, and so on, who have the language capacity to provide that support to these individuals?

Ms. Dawn Edlund: Through the interim federal health program, our translation services are paid for by the federal government. We arrange in the context of the services we're reimbursing that the translation service is available. Again, working with the community, and with what the local immigration partnerships have done, we're very conscious of the idea of individuals being able to have appropriate translation.

We could find more information as to what specific supports they put in place to make sure that's available.

Ms. Jenny Kwan: Yes, if you could, please. I think the issue of translation is important, because we've also heard this from the other study we did with regard to the Syrian refugee resettlement process. There was a woman who told the committee that she was diagnosed with cancer and in fact did not find out about her diagnosis for a very long time because there was no translation provided to her. A stranger standing in the hospital spoke the language, and she recognized that and asked the individual to provide the translation. That's the reality on the ground.

Particularly with this group of refugees, I think the needs are perhaps even more particular in terms of the language requirements. I think it's really important that we try to do that. Even if you're funding it, there might not be the resources on the ground. If there aren't the resources on the ground, what action is being taken to address that issue? I think that's critical.

For the NGOs that are doing this work, are there additional resources provided to them to take on helping in the resettlement of the Yazidi families?

Mr. Jean-Marc Gionet (Acting Senior Director, Resettlement Operations, International Network, Department of Citizenship and Immigration): As Ms. Edlund indicated earlier, funding was provided for this initiative, and part of that funding goes to the service-providing organizations that are receiving additional govern-

ment-assisted refugees above what was originally planned at the start of the year.

Ms. Dawn Edlund: We've also provided funding so each community can hire a wellness coordinator and also more supports for individual hands-on supports for each of the families.

Ms. Jenny Kwan: Did that pocket of money for those additional resources come out of the overall resettlement dollars that have been allocated for the resettlement of all refugees and immigrants, or is that an additional measure that was put in by government?

Ms. Dawn Edlund: It came out of the \$21.7 million that we already had set aside for this specific initiative. It hasn't been touched on from the other pocket of money we have for vote 10.

Ms. Jenny Kwan: This is not additional dollars for the department.

Ms. Dawn Edlund: It is additional dollars.

Ms. Jenny Kwan: Thank you.

The other big issue for resettlement is housing. How large are these families, generally speaking? How long does it take for an individual who is brought here to resettle, in getting permanent housing?

• (0925)

Ms. Dawn Edlund: We were provided advice by the Germans that we should expect very large families, 10 to 12 people, but our practical experience is that the individual nuclear families are quite small, two to three people. We're finding that many of the families want their extended family members who are also coming to Canada to all live in the same household, so we've been looking for housing that would help them do that. It's not just mom, dad, and two kids, but it's also aunts, grandmas, de facto family members, etc., who are all housed together.

Ms. Jenny Kwan: Are the extended family part of the resettlement process among these numbers, or is that another process they would embark on once they are here?

Ms. Dawn Edlund: We asked the UNHCR, when they were referring cases to us, to include the extended family to the extent they could so that we could have the entire group come to Canada together as opposed to coming in separate waves. That's being done. That's part of the numbers, yes.

Ms. Jenny Kwan: That is part of the 1,200 overall. Thank you.

Beyond this 1,200, given that immigration levels numbers are at 7,500 for GARS this year, have you received any direction from the government that beyond this 1,200 for the coming year you will continue to prioritize this group, or has there been no direction?

Ms. Dawn Edlund: For the 1,200, in my opening remarks I said that we received 1,383 individuals identified to us, and we're going to continue processing all of them. They will be arriving into 2018, over and above the 1,200.

We took a targeted approach, as I said earlier as well, in what the host governments were willing for us to do as a resettlement program, which was not a large resettlement effort, so that's how we ended up with the number 1,200. At the moment we're focusing on finalizing the processing overseas, getting folks to Canada, getting them adequately supported and resettled. We're looking at whether there are any individuals who are family members who were perhaps in captivity and have been released and the mechanisms for getting them to Canada quickly to reunite. That's where our efforts are at the moment, but we have not received new direction for a further number of individuals to be sought from northern Iraq.

Ms. Jenny Kwan: Assuming then for the 7,500, the plan numbers, that would be for all the other different countries and then we'd be back to, for lack of a better term, business as usual prior to this initiative. Am I correct in making that assumption?

Ms. Dawn Edlund: In the 2018 levels plan, there are 7,500 for government assisted but there is also 1,500 for the blended cases, so we're operating with a total for government-supported of 9,000. Our focus is on Africa and the Middle East, as it has been for a while.

Ms. Jenny Kwan: On special support for the children, especially psychiatric and mental health support, can you also provide us with information with respect to that to break it down for us?

The Chair: Thank you very much.

Ms. Zahid, I understand you and Mr. Tabbara are questioning together.

Mrs. Salma Zahid (Scarborough Centre, Lib.): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Thank you to all the officials for coming to the committee.

My first question is for you, Ms. Edlund. Before I start, I want to thank you for your leadership in the Syrian operation.

Are there any lessons that you learned from the Syrian operation that were successfully applied to this specific program?

Ms. Dawn Edlund: Yes. What we learned from the Syrian operation and applied here is, first, the pacing of arrivals so we can make sure that the communities where these people are being resettled are able to welcome them fully. Second, we instituted the changes I talked about earlier around providing further information about specific settlement needs to the service provider organizations in the communities where people would resettle so that they would know what is going to happen ahead of time.

We also know from the Syrian project that people need a certain period of time to settle their affairs and say goodbye to folks. In the case of Yazidis, they have a special religious service that they need to do. They have to take a trip to Lalish to receive a blessing for their departure. We've made sure that we've covered that piece, as well.

Mrs. Salma Zahid: How important was the role of partners such as the UNHCR, Yazda, and Operation Ezra to the success of this program?

Ms. Dawn Edlund: It's been key on a number of different levels for Yazda and Operation Ezra, as well as NGOs on the ground in northern Iraq, to provide us with their intelligence, their collaboration, and their information about how to make this a success. That

has been really key to helping us set up the operation in the first place and make adjustments as we go.

The UNHCR, as always, is a key partner for us. We recognize that it stepped out of its normal role in relation to this operation to do referrals of internally displaced persons as opposed to resettling refugees itself. That's not normally its legal mandate, but it recognized that given the vulnerability of individuals in this particular set of circumstances, it would go the extra mile to refer internally displaced people.

• (0930)

Mrs. Salma Zahid: I know we normally don't ask refugees to identify themselves by religion, and I understand that many Yazidis are reluctant to identify themselves as Yazidis. Could you discuss how you are able to report the numbers that you have provided and the challenges you faced around that?

Ms. Dawn Edlund: In terms of the individuals who we've been counting as Yazidi, they're people who have self-identified and who have come through the UNHCR referral process as Yazidi. I'm not aware, of the folks who have been referred to us, of any other group of people who didn't want to identify themselves. I'm not aware of that being a particular challenge. We have the numbers because people self-identified.

Mrs. Salma Zahid: I'll pass the rest of my time to Mr. Tabbara.

Mr. Marwan Tabbara (Kitchener South—Hespeler, Lib.): Thank you.

My question is about the situation that started to arise with the conflict in northern Iraq. A big portion of why the atrocities first started was when the Yazidis were forced to leave their homes and were forced on Mount Sinjar, where roughly 40,000 Yazidis were trapped. That was August 2014.

Can you tell the committee how many Yazidis were settled within Canada between that incident in August 2014 and August 2015?

Ms. Dawn Edlund: From August 2014 forward...?

Mr. Marwan Tabbara: Yes, until August 2015, within that one-year time frame.

Ms. Dawn Edlund: Let me just make sure I have the right year.

Mr. Marwan Tabbara: You can just table that. I'll go on to another question.

Ms. Dawn Edlund: Part of it is that it will be difficult because until we started the specific operation for resettling Yazidis, we did not identify people by ethnicity or religion. We know from our resettlement of 23,000 Iraqis that we ended up resettling Yazidis, and that's how we ended up with the core communities here in Canada. Those were created, but we didn't set out to create them by specific ethnicity or religion.

Mr. Marwan Tabbara: Okay.

My second question is for Mr. Boyd. You mentioned post-Daesh and some of the programs that we want to put in place to help those communities that are suffering from lack of water, electricity, etc. We know that Daesh has now been decreased to around 10% control in certain regions.

Can you tell us about some of the programs that you're putting in place for post-Daesh, or what you've been working on with multilateral organizations?

Mr. Sean Boyd: Thank you.

We're focusing very closely on rehabilitation of local communities, so that's working with organizations such as the UNDP in terms of its stabilization programming. We're contributing funding to that. We're part of that stabilization working group that's looking at how we can restore services in these local areas.

We are also involved in transitional justice programming, so that's how to work with organizations to collect evidence of crimes against humanity and crimes against international law and build case files that can be used in due course to, again, allow communities to begin to heal and address the issue of accountability.

Third is in the area of reconciliation and conflict prevention, working with local organizations' programming to ensure that women's voices are engaged in the process, and helping to rebuild a sense of community to rebuild these shattered communities.

Mr. Marwan Tabbara: Thank you.

Maybe you could elaborate on that, about the confidence within the community. What types of things can we do? These communities have lived alongside each other for many years. Yes, there has been some conflict, but I don't think to this large scale of conflict.

Are there more programs in place to bring in that confidence of the many different ethnic groups there?

Mr. Sean Boyd: One key area that our programming is focusing on is policing, starting to introduce the concept of civilian policing. The plan is that Canada will deploy up to 20 Canadian police officers. We have about five who have now been deployed to Iraq. We'll be deploying more, to start introducing concepts that we know here in Canada such as community policing, how the police can work with community members to develop that trust and confidence in institutions at the community level.

• (0935)

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Boyd.

Ms. Rempel, you have five minutes.

Hon. Michelle Rempel: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Going back to my previous line of questioning, has the government directed IRCC to provide or develop any plans to provide specialized mental health services for the Yazidis who have been resettled, anything in the vein of what the Germans did in terms of providing specialized mental health services for these people?

Ms. Dawn Edlund: Of course the health provision is a matter for the provinces, not for the federal government. Within our sphere of jurisdiction, we've made sure, for the interim federal health program, that we have adequate resources available and the medical services available.

Hon. Michelle Rempel: That's a comment that would be written large for this particular cohort. Has the government directed the department to provide any sort of plan to provide specialized mental health services to Yazidi genocide victims?

Ms. Dawn Edlund: I'm not sure it was a question of direction, but rather a recognition, from everything we learned from the Germans and others, that we had to make sure those types of supports were available, and then working collaboratively with the provinces and the territories so that our programming is complementary.

Hon. Michelle Rempel: A case was presented, through a resettlement service provider, to me in Calgary.

The adult mother is receiving trauma counselling related to her kidnapping and extensive sexual abuse. She frequently says she is crazy and cannot cope. She says she's consumed by the thoughts of her past and finds herself unable to learn. She also says her daughters are crazy and they are not coping well with the violence they have experienced. The girls have formed no meaningful friendships and cannot communicate their feelings well.

They display deep hostilities toward Muslim men, which often come to the surface when they interact with Arabic-speaking men. They frequently say "Arabic bad" and become agitated, causing many misunderstandings and further isolating them, as they live in an area with a large Arabic population.

She went on to talk about how there, essentially, aren't mental health services being provided specifically to deal with the trauma these women have seen in their captivity.

Can you provide the committee with any details on the specific, perhaps specialized mental health support that would be provided to these women? I think there are probably some gaps.

Ms. Dawn Edlund: Yes, we can do so.

Corinne, do you have something you'd like to say now?

Ms. Corinne Prince (Director General, Settlement and Integration Policy Branch, Department of Citizenship and Immigration): Thank you.

I would just add, particularly regarding the situation in Calgary, that the local service provider organizations are working extremely closely—more than ever, actually—with the local health authorities, not only in terms of mental health but even, as a specific example, ensuring that the local paramedic teams understand the issues this particular population is dealing with and can adjust the services they are offering to ensure they're dealing with the deep issues that are—

Hon. Michelle Rempel: I guess I'm just getting a bit of a mixed message here. You are saying there is no oversight. However, Ms. Prince, your testimony seems to suggest that there is oversight. I'm just wondering what's fact here.

What I am looking for is whether the department has been instructed by the government to provide some sort of plan for specialized mental health support for these women, and what you are doing to implement that. Is it the province? Are you actually working with them?

Can you table any sort of plan with the committee?

Ms. Corinne Prince: Our settlement policies require our service provider organizations to provide, especially with the additional funding that has been provided for this particular population—

Hon. Michelle Rempel: Sorry, I'll ask another way, just for time.

What metrics for mental health recovery is IRCC using within this cohort to determine whether their mental health needs have been appropriately met?

Ms. Dawn Edlund: I can speak specifically to what we have seen in the interim federal health program context.

Hon. Michelle Rempel: Just because I am out of time, would you be able to table those metrics with the committee?

Ms. Dawn Edlund: Yes.

Up until now, there has not been a large number of individuals who have received individualized counselling.

Hon. Michelle Rempel: How many have received individualized counselling?

Ms. Dawn Edlund: It would be less than five—

• (0940)

Hon. Michelle Rempel: Five?

Ms. Dawn Edlund: —people who have come to individualized counselling.

What the Canadian Mental Health Association has told us, though, is that in situations like this you have the initial euphoria when people arrive in Canada, and then their mental health needs resurface six to 24 months in. These people are partially getting services from the provinces and territories, and partially coming to us. Then we have 50 individuals who have access to IFH services for medications, which are possibly related to mental health supports.

Hon. Michelle Rempel: Out of 590 Yazidis, five have access—

The Chair: I need to cut you off there, Ms. Rempel. I'm sorry.

I want to make sure I have time for Mr. Fragiskatos and his five minutes.

Mr. Peter Fragiskatos (London North Centre, Lib.): Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

Thank you to all of you for being here today.

My colleague Mr. Tabbara asked about the number of Yazidis who were able to enter Canada from the summer of 2014, when the real violence targeting Yazidis emerged in the area around Sinjar, over the course of the next year. What is known on this comes from an audit that shows that three Yazidis, in fact, entered Canada over that period. Details about this were revealed in reports that emerged in July 2016.

On that point, in fact, I have a question for IRCC. Did the previous government express any interest to your department about admitting Yazidis into Canada, beginning in August 2014, when the devastating violence emerged in the Sinjar region of northern Iraq?

Mr. Jean-Marc Gionet: Certainly, my recollection is that there were discussions at the time in terms of exploring the situation and what could be done in response to the situation.

Mr. Peter Fragiskatos: I'm talking about putting in place a focused plan of resettlement.

Mr. Jean-Marc Gionet: Again, there were discussions. As the situation was evolving, we were asked to look at the situation. For example, was the time right for a resettlement? How would resettlement—

Mr. Peter Fragiskatos: I'm sorry. "Was the time right for a resettlement?"

Mr. Jean-Marc Gionet: In terms of—

Mr. Peter Fragiskatos: We know that thousands of people were fleeing. They were trapped in mountains without access to water in conditions where the temperature ranged between 40°C and 50°C, and there were still these preliminary discussions to see if it was appropriate.

Mr. Jean-Marc Gionet: Perhaps I misspoke there. In terms of resettlement, it's not—

Mr. Peter Fragiskatos: You didn't misspeak. The previous government didn't act correctly.

Mr. Jean-Marc Gionet: Resettlement is not always the first and immediate response to a humanitarian crisis. First and foremost is looking after the safety and security of the individuals. The UNHCR steps in and looks to find durable solutions for the individuals' protection in the country or in a country of asylum, and eventually the discussion turns to whether there is a need for resettlement out of the region for some individuals.

Mr. Peter Fragiskatos: Did it move along this path? Was any concrete plan put forward by the government with your department? It doesn't sound like it.

Mr. Jean-Marc Gionet: The plan that was ultimately put in place was announced in February 2017 as a follow-up to the unanimous motion in Parliament.

Ms. Dawn Edlund: There was the resettlement of Iraqis who were outside of Iraq, the commitment of 23,000 we did over the course of several years under the previous government. We didn't know it because we don't track it, but that did bring Yazidis to Canada.

Mr. Peter Fragiskatos: I'm talking about emphasis on Yazidis by the previous government. We've seen the opposition, after the most recent election, for example, proclaim a real interest in the persecuted minority that are the Yazidis. I want to see where the facts lie.

I have another question, about federally supported services available to Yazidi newcomers.

Ms. Edlund, you talked about the interim federal health program. Could you expand on that and tell us about the program and how Yazidis can access it? What benefits are available?

Ms. Dawn Edlund: This is the same as what's available for all resettled refugees. We have the programming in place for resettlement, which involves income support over the period of a year. There's another program called the joint assistance sponsorship where, for particularly vulnerable families, that income support can be extended to a two-year period. That's income support.

Then we have interim federal health, which is in relation to these individuals. Because they're permanent residents, it's a top-up to what they would get from their normal provincial health services.

• (0945)

Mr. Peter Fragiskatos: I don't mean to interrupt; there are just time constraints.

How critical is this to their transition, in terms of integration? Can you speak to it even from a values-based perspective? How important is this program?

Ms. Dawn Edlund: The interim federal health, in particular...?

Mr. Peter Fragiskatos: Yes, and refugee access to it.

Ms. Dawn Edlund: What we know for this particular group is that 636 people have accessed interim federal health services. The highest number of services have been in relation to medications and to vision care.

Mr. Peter Fragiskatos: Would it be irresponsible for a government to cancel that access?

Ms. Dawn Edlund: That would be the government choice at the time.

Mr. Peter Fragiskatos: Fair enough.

The Chair: I'm sorry, I need to end there. We've come to the end of our first hour.

I want to thank the officials again for being with us. I want to especially thank Ms. Edlund, not only for today but for your ongoing work in these last many, many months in your role in operations. It has been a daunting task. We can tell that.

You will be back at the committee again. You go with our thanks and our respect for all your work, on this file and the other files. Thank you.

We'll take a brief pause as we break for our next witnesses.

• (0945)

(Pause)

• (0950)

[Translation]

The Chair: Let us now continue the meeting.

[English]

We're beginning our second hour and I'm very pleased to welcome again to the committee, from the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, or UNHCR, Monsieur Jean-Nicolas Beuze, who is the representative in Canada.

[Translation]

Mr. Jean-Nicolas Beuze (Representative in Canada, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

[English]

Honourable members of Parliament, I'm very pleased to be back at this committee to speak about the situation of the survivors of ISIS who have been relocated to Canada.

First, thank you to Canada for having offered this opportunity for UNHCR to work with the Iraqi authorities and the Canadian

authorities on the relocation of the most vulnerable survivors of Daesh. In particular we have been working very closely in Iraq both with the central government in Baghdad and with the authorities in the Kurdistan region of Iraq, and particularly three departments: the department of public health, which as you have heard is supported by another UN agency in providing support to victims of sexual violence; the directorate combatting violence against women, which is co-chairing with the UNHCR the protection working group in Kurdistan; and the directorate of labour and social affairs, which is primarily concerned with working with children.

We had a common objective with Canada, and as mentioned earlier, with Germany, which also provided a number of relocation spaces. The common objective was to identify the most vulnerable survivors of Daesh who could not survive or who needed specific treatment that was not available in Kurdistan where they were living. Therefore, we worked with all the partners to identify those survivors in a safe and dignified manner.

One key element of all those relocation and resettlement programs is really to ensure the dignity of the people concerned and their freedom of choice, for them to be informed about what relocation or resettlement entails. Ultimately, it's very much the decision of the individual to leave a country to be resettled or relocated to a country such as Canada.

It is outside our traditional legal mandate to do relocation of persons who are still within the boundaries of their own country, but we have done that in exceptional cases when we were not able to provide assistance and protection to the people concerned.

We focused primarily on survivors of sexual violence—women and girls, but as mentioned earlier, we also need to recognize that violence of a sexual nature has been exercised against men and boys as well—persons who had been held captive by Daesh for prolonged periods and subjected to forced religious conversion, physical and psychological torture and abuse, risk of trafficking, forced labour; and people who had been separated from their families.

In doing so, we also reached out to our partners on the ground to get referrals not only from the three directorates I mentioned, of public health, social affairs, and the directorate to combat violence against women, but also our NGOs, not only in Iraq but also in Canada. I personally met a number of NGOs that were showing interest in providing us with lists of names. As a result, four NGOs in Canada have submitted names. They are the Calgary Catholic Immigration Society, the Manitoba Interfaith Immigration Council, Canadian Lutheran World Relief, and the office for refugees of the Archdiocese of Toronto. They have submitted altogether 34 names, out of which 18 were already in the database of the Kurdish authorities, and therefore, in the database of UNHCR. They provided altogether an additional 16 names, which were presented to the Canadian authorities.

I will make a point that is a little outside the purview of this study, but as you well know, the resettlement or relocation addresses only the most vulnerable cases and it is usually less than 1% of the refugee population.

•(0955)

I want to note our worries regarding the funding for the operation in Iraq. As we speak, at the end of our fiscal year, which is the end of December, we will have received less than 20% of the funding required to assist more than four million displaced, including among those displaced, a large number of people who have been subjected to abuse by Daesh.

I'm saying this because, while we do very much appreciate the opportunity to relocate the most vulnerable, we also need to be able to provide assistance and protection to the people who are still in Iraq, including in Kurdistan, including victims and survivors of Daesh. With only 18% of our budget, that makes our life extremely complicated, and that's our problem. It really makes the survival and the protection assistance that we can offer to the displaced extremely limited.

I will stop there, and I will be happy to answer questions from members of Parliament.

The Chair: Thank you very much.

Mr. Anandasangaree will begin for seven minutes.

[Translation]

Mr. Gary Anandasangaree (Scarborough—Rouge Park, Lib.): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Good morning, Mr. Beuze.

[English]

With respect to the role of the UNHCR, I know, as mentioned by our officials as well, that this is a unique scenario in which we're looking at IDPs, but this is not the first time that this has come up.

How does UNHCR manage an amendment to the mandate with respect to protection of the vulnerable where it doesn't necessarily meet the conventional definition under the convention of refugees?

Mr. Jean-Nicolas Beuze: The relocation program, to distinguish them from resettlement, which is for refugees who are outside their country of origin, we very much need the approval and the collaboration of the authorities on the ground who have to allow their own citizens to be relocated for protective measures outside their own country, their country of origin.

As mentioned rightly, this has been done in the past. We did it recently with the survivors of Daesh. We have a program, for example, in Central America, where we are doing exactly the same thing for El Salvador, in particular for women and children subjected to sexual violence in El Salvador and Honduras, who are identified from within their own country, relocated temporarily to Costa Rica, and then sent mainly to the United States for their protection.

•(1000)

Mr. Gary Anandasangaree: You mentioned that the most vulnerable represent about 1% of the overall refugee population or the IDP population.

Mr. Jean-Nicolas Beuze: The most vulnerable represent 10% of the refugee population, but we are only able to relocate and resettle 10% of those 10%, which makes 1% of the total number of refugees.

Mr. Gary Anandasangaree: You're suggesting that there is a great number of people who are still highly vulnerable, but who we are unable to resettle.

Mr. Jean-Nicolas Beuze: Throughout the world, we have more than 22 million refugees. We have identified 1.2 million of them who are in need of resettlement, and out of them, we will be able this year to resettle less than 90,000, mainly to the United States, Canada, and Australia.

Mr. Gary Anandasangaree: I know you've spoken to some of the agencies in Canada. You've probably even met with some of the new arrivals. Can you give us a sense as to how their faring in integrating in the last few months since they've arrived?

Mr. Jean-Nicolas Beuze: I'm pleased to do so, with a disclaimer that UNHCR is not involved in the services that are being provided upon relocation to Canada.

Having said that, I was at the airport in Winnipeg when I welcomed Emad, this child who had been separated for years from his mother, who had been relocated to Canada through this program. I was able, then, to see the support that settlement agencies were able to provide to the Yazidi community in particular, but also to other groups, in terms of integration, the psychosocial support they were receiving, and help with their daily lives in terms of navigating their new environment. It's positive.

As was mentioned by the IRCC previously—and we see that in all situations—there's a period of enthusiasm and of good and positive energy, which always at some point goes a little bit into kind of a low.... I don't know how you say that, but people, in the end—and we have all the statistics available here and elsewhere—after a certain period of time, catch up and become full members and productive members of society. We have no particular concern that this specific category will not thrive, like other refugees resettled to Canada.

Mr. Gary Anandasangaree: With respect to resettlement, right now it's Germany and Canada that are primarily the focus of resettlement. How do we get more countries engaged, especially on the Yazidi community resettlement? What does Canada need to do to have more of a multilateral engagement on this?

Mr. Jean-Nicolas Beuze: I'm not sure that the prioritization of the need will be necessarily for the relocation of an additional number of survivors of Daesh. As I mentioned earlier on, our main concern is the fact that we have 4.2 million displaced persons in Iraq, we have more than 250,000 Syrian refugees in Iraq as we speak, and we have only one-fifth of the money required to help them. Resettlement and relocation, as was the case here, is only for a very small percentage of the population.

In addition, I will say that for UNHCR it is important that we do not focus on a particular country of origin or a particular ethnic group, but very much that we prioritize the needs of those 1.2 million people already identified in our database and who need resettlement, out of which 9,000 will come to Canada—9,000 out of 1.2 million. Therefore, what we need to keep is the space for all of the refugees whose need is a matter of survival. We have heard of the issue of cancer, medical treatment. We need this solution in Canada and elsewhere. I will not necessarily indicate a wish for further relocation of survivors of Daesh.

•(1005)

Mr. Gary Anandasangaree: Just to conclude, with respect to those who have been referred, you mentioned 34 people have been referred through the different partners here, different organizations. What is their basis of connection with those 34? What is their rationale for the referral?

Mr. Jean-Nicolas Beuze: Many were extended family members who they knew were in need of such a relocation program.

The Chair: Thank you very much.

Go ahead, Ms. Rempel.

Hon. Michelle Rempel: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Can you tell us how many Yazidi are currently residing in UNHCR-sponsored camps?

Mr. Jean-Nicolas Beuze: We don't do a breakdown by ethnic group.

Hon. Michelle Rempel: Okay.

Mr. Jean-Nicolas Beuze: We never do. We will be looking really at the vulnerabilities, such as persons with a disability, the elderly, children.

Hon. Michelle Rempel: Thank you.

I'll be brief because I don't have a lot of time.

The motion that Parliament unanimously adopted focused on much more than resettlement. It focused on other recommendations that were developed in the June 2016 report, "They came to destroy". One of the motions that we adopted to support was section 213. It recommended that "a clearly understood reporting system for harassment and crimes committed against the Yazidis in the camps" be established. Has this been done in UNHCR camps?

Mr. Jean-Nicolas Beuze: In all UNHCR camps and outside the camps, because a number of displaced are living within the communities, we have mechanisms for not only the displaced and the refugees to complain, but also for all service providers to complain against any mismanagement and mishandling of the cases, and that's throughout the world. I had the pleasure to write to this committee not so long ago to explain in detail what are the mechanisms—

Hon. Michelle Rempel: How many complaints have been made by Yazidis?

Mr. Jean-Nicolas Beuze: We don't break down this information by ethnic group, so I would not be able to respond. Nobody will be able to respond.

Hon. Michelle Rempel: To be clear, the UN report said, "Set up a clearly understood reporting system for harassment and crimes committed against the Yazidis in the camps", but you don't track complaints made by this group. Is that correct?

Mr. Jean-Nicolas Beuze: It's correct because we don't do the breakdown. We don't ask people to identify themselves as belonging to a certain ethnic group or religion. We will look at the complaint and investigate the complaint. The investigation is not done by the staff in Iraq. It's done by a special team that comes from Geneva.

Hon. Michelle Rempel: You can't tell me how many complaints have been made through that process by Yazidis.

Mr. Jean-Nicolas Beuze: By Yazidis, no, I cannot.

Hon. Michelle Rempel: Okay. For the same reason, you also can't tell me how many Yazidis are located in your camp.

Mr. Jean-Nicolas Beuze: Exactly.

Hon. Michelle Rempel: Has the Government of Canada asked the UNHCR to prioritize Yazidis or other ethnic groups beyond the special initiative, for example, going into the 2018 tranche of government-sponsored refugees? Are there any plans by the UN to prioritize Yazidis within the 2018 tranche of government-sponsored refugees on your list?

Mr. Jean-Nicolas Beuze: Canada, like other countries, has asked the UNHCR to prioritize cases that are falling within the global resettlement criteria, which have been adopted by all the countries.

Hon. Michelle Rempel: So that would be no. There's been no special direction for additional identification of Yazidis or other persecuted groups from northern Iraq?

Mr. Jean-Nicolas Beuze: As you know, this is not the way we function in camps of resettlement—

•(1010)

Hon. Michelle Rempel: I'm just asking for a yes or no.

Mr. Jean-Nicolas Beuze: We look really at—

Hon. Michelle Rempel: I know. I'm just asking for yes or no. Thank you.

How were the Yazidis who were included in the special project identified by the UNHCR?

Mr. Jean-Nicolas Beuze: They were identified by the three directorates that I mentioned, because they're the service providers. It's through medical care and psychological attention that those people can be identified as being in need of services that are not available in Kurdistan for the time being and need, as a result, to be resettled to another country.

In addition, NGOs on the ground, which are operating in the communities, and NGOs in Canada, as I mentioned, were also encouraged to provide names for us to go to these people, identify their needs, and look at whether they fit the criteria to be resettled.

Hon. Michelle Rempel: What is the average wait time for a secondary interview to become listed on a UNHCR list to come to Canada, so between the first interview and the second interview, for somebody who's applying—

Mr. Jean-Nicolas Beuze: Do you mean in the specific instance?

Hon. Michelle Rempel: Let's say using as a baseline one of the camps that the Yazidis would have been located in.

Mr. Jean-Nicolas Beuze: It's between a couple of weeks and a couple of months.

Hon. Michelle Rempel: Thank you.

In July 2016, this committee undertook a study on internally displaced persons, etc. We had evidence from someone named Mr. Mirza Ismail, as follows:

I have the evidence on some of the UN papers with me, and...I am willing to show anybody—

He's suggesting that there was discrimination against Yazidis. He said:

It's the UN papers. At the initial meeting, they give...a certain amount of months or years—

I asked:

How long is that wait?

He said:

For example, now we have some families who are waiting and their next appointment is on July 7, 2022.

I was incredulous, so I asked if he had any evidence of that fact, and he said:

Yes, I have it with me.

I asked:

Would you be willing to table it with the committee?

He did.

How is it possible that members of the Yazidi community are experiencing wait times that long when you're saying that it's between one and two weeks?

Mr. Jean-Nicolas Beuze: We have 1.2 million people who have been identified for resettlement throughout the world and we have been given only 90,000 spaces by countries, so you can imagine why there are so many delays: 90,000 spaces for 1.2 million people who have been identified.

Hon. Michelle Rempel: In this specific instance, Mr. Ismail—and this evidence was presented to our committee over a year ago—said:

The problem is that most of the UN staff, as sister Nadia said...the UN is not helping, because most of the UN staff are Muslims, and they don't like us. Unless we lie to ourselves, they don't like us. They don't treat us equally.

Was this case investigated by the UN?

Mr. Jean-Nicolas Beuze: Was this case put in complaint form to the UN?

Hon. Michelle Rempel: When I met your staff, when they came to my office, I did raise this testimony, so—

Mr. Jean-Nicolas Beuze: All investigations are confidential. They are done by our oversight team in Geneva, and staff members are not privy to the results, but the person concerned will receive the result of the investigation.

Hon. Michelle Rempel: How many similar investigations have been raised for Yazidis?

Mr. Jean-Nicolas Beuze: To come back to my earlier response, we don't disaggregate population to UNHCR by their ethnic origin.

Hon. Michelle Rempel: Has there been any effort by the UN, or any special measures to reduce discrimination against either Yazidis or other persecuted minorities heading to UNHCR camps in instances such as this?

The Chair: Be very brief.

Mr. Jean-Nicolas Beuze: I don't think there is any discrimination against Yazidis or other minorities by UNHCR or partner staff, and where there are allegations, those allegations are taken seriously and are investigated.

The Chair: Ms. Kwan.

Ms. Jenny Kwan: Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

Thank you for your presentation.

I am wondering. You mentioned that you have limited resources at the UNHCR to do your work, which I don't doubt. With respect to Canada's contribution to your resources, could you advise the committee how much Canada provides to the UNHCR to assist us with the refugee initiatives?

Mr. Jean-Nicolas Beuze: Specifically on this initiative, most of our funding from Canada is thankfully unearmarked, so we receive core funding for our operation, which allows us the flexibility to allocate the funding where the needs are for our operation, so it would not be in protection work, support through psychosocial or medical. Most of the money will come from this unearmarked funding, and Canada this year has provided to the UNHCR globally, \$108 million Canadian.

We ask Canada not to earmark the funding to specific programs.

Ms. Jenny Kwan: It's \$108 million for all the work you do for Canada related to any of the refugee—

Mr. Jean-Nicolas Beuze: For 66 million displaced people....

Ms. Jenny Kwan: Correct, but particularly with respect to this initiative, were no additional dollars provided to you?

Mr. Jean-Nicolas Beuze: On this initiative, no, it came as the money that is unearmarked, or earmarked just at the country level, but that will be for any of the interventions we are doing throughout Iraq, not specifically in Kurdistan.

Ms. Jenny Kwan: In terms of the GAC allocation, the \$108 million, how much, if any, is being provided to the individuals on the ground for the supports they need at the camps?

Mr. Jean-Nicolas Beuze: Do you have five hours? It's very complicated because we have different programs, so let's say that we have a program of cash, then 97% of the money will go straight into the hands of the refugees or the displaced, but if we look, for example, at relocation, we need to do the registration of the—

Ms. Jenny Kwan: Sorry, we have limited time. I apologize for interrupting, but I wonder whether or not you can submit to the committee a breakdown of the \$108 million Canadian on the allocation and where it goes: to administration, direct aid to *x* camp, which camp, etc., just so we have a sense because I certainly don't know—

• (1015)

Mr. Jean-Nicolas Beuze: The administrative costs are between 13% and 17%, depending on which operation.

Ms. Jenny Kwan: If we could get a breakdown, that would be great.

Mr. Jean-Nicolas Beuze: It's 13% to 17%, and the rest is going entirely to interventions to support protection and assistance for the refugees and the displaced.

Ms. Jenny Kwan: Is there a breakdown for which camps those dollars are allocated to? Could we get that detailed information as well?

Mr. Jean-Nicolas Beuze: There is a detailed—not by camp but by country.

Ms. Jenny Kwan: Okay, even by country would be useful for us so we get a sense of it.

Moving forward, in the 2018 service levels plan that we have—because at this point we're at 7,500 GARs for Canada—will you be getting additional dollars from the 2018 budget from the government to assist with this work, or is that \$108 million covering future years as well?

Mr. Jean-Nicolas Beuze: This year the IRCC gave us specifically \$4 million to go to resettlement programs throughout the world, not specifically out of Iraq or for survivors of Daesh. We are in negotiation with the IRCC to see whether they can extend this financial support next year.

Ms. Jenny Kwan: I see.

Mr. Jean-Nicolas Beuze: The \$4 million is different from the \$108 million that we received from Global Affairs.

Ms. Jenny Kwan: I see. So that is in addition to....

Mr. Jean-Nicolas Beuze: It's not specific to this program that we are discussing today, but for all resettlement programs.

Ms. Jenny Kwan: Okay. Are there any additional dollars then beyond the \$108 million and the \$4 million that you received? No. The \$4 million is for the resettlement of last year's—

Mr. Jean-Nicolas Beuze: This year.

Ms. Jenny Kwan: It's for this year's numbers, so for next year you don't have a figure just yet.

Mr. Jean-Nicolas Beuze: No.

Ms. Jenny Kwan: You won't get that until after budget 2018 I am assuming. Once you do, could you provide us with that information so that we're aware of it?

I'm curious as to how often you get specific requests from other countries with special measures such as the one in which we were talking about in Iraq right now with the Yazidis.

Mr. Jean-Nicolas Beuze: It's very rare because countries have adopted some global resettlement criteria to guide our work to ensure this unique solution is carried out in a very fair and non-subjective manner according to the needs of the people.

Ms. Jenny Kwan: All right. I'm just going to go back to the budget issue. This year you got \$4 million. How much did you get for the Yazidi initiative from the government? Did you get any additional dollars from the government? You got zero dollars from IRCC.

Mr. Jean-Nicolas Beuze: For the identification and the referral of the cases, no, but it's part of this envelope that we received from IRCC for all our resettlement and relocation programs.

• (1020)

Ms. Jenny Kwan: Okay. Was the UNHCR involved with Germany with their Yazidi initiative? Was that one example of where a special measure or special undertaking was taking place with Germany?

Mr. Jean-Nicolas Beuze: Yes.

Ms. Jenny Kwan: Okay. Whenever a genocide has been declared is it the experience of the UNHCR to get special requests from countries to participate or to be involved in...?

Mr. Jean-Nicolas Beuze: No. Let me point out here something that all honourable members of the committee know. Whether you are a rape victim as part of a genocide or a rape victim as part of any other conflict, you are a rape victim. If that person needs to be resettled because—I am sorry to be a bit descriptive here—they have a fistula that cannot be treated in eastern DRC, it's not that, because she's not part of a genocide, we will not prioritize this victim to come to Canada or another country to be treated.

The Chair: Thank you very much. I need to end there.

This goes now to Mr. Whalen.

Mr. Nick Whalen (St. John's East, Lib.): Thank you very much. Thank you very much, Mr. Beuze.

Does the UNHCR consider the genocide against the Yazidis to be ongoing?

Mr. Jean-Nicolas Beuze: UNHCR does not make that kind of qualification. It would be another part of the UN. The Security Council can make that kind of assessment. To some extent, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights can make that kind of assessment, in particular, through the special procedures of the Human Rights Council, but UNHCR does not qualify the types of atrocities that people are subjected to. We look at the needs.

Mr. Nick Whalen: Okay, great.

I just wanted to help you qualify the fact that your programs are not based on whether or not a genocide is occurring against a group. It's provided based on their refugee status.

Mr. Jean-Nicolas Beuze: On their refugee status or their displaced status and the nature of the needs that the person has.

Mr. Nick Whalen: In terms of resettlement you were mentioning that UNHCR maintains statistics on how displaced people are doing when they are resettled into different countries. How have the refugees who have been resettled into Canada over the last two years been doing compared with refugees who are being resettled in other countries? Is Canada doing a good job on intake of refugees?

Mr. Jean-Nicolas Beuze: I would just make a clarification. We do not maintain statistics because we are not involved with the settlement services. This is very much done by civil society, the federal and provincial authorities. But we are aware of a number of studies undertaken by those partners but also by academics, which show that, indeed, the integration of resettled refugees in Canada is exemplary.

Mr. Nick Whalen: In terms of the particular population that we're focused on, people who have been displaced by Daesh, it seems to be that the priority is to help them stay in situ, close to their communities, and then to return to their communities. What other factors beyond access to medical conditions might give you guys concern that these people do need to be moved to a separate country? Is there specific targeting? Could they be at additional or heightened risk due to other factors that aren't medical?

Mr. Jean-Nicolas Beuze: Children born out of wedlock to women who have been held captive by Daesh are particularly at risk of reprisal from their own families, unfortunately, and from their own communities because of the so-called shame that has been brought upon the family from having a female member of the family raped.

Those would be cases in which we would consider resettlement, so that the person or the family is not under the social pressure from the rest of the community to eliminate those children.

Mr. Nick Whalen: I'm getting the sense from some of the testimony today that we're starting to reach the end of the demand for people to be relocated to Canada and to Germany for this purpose. Is that in fact the case, or do you see that this is an ongoing, continual demand, and that Canada and Germany will be continually called upon to take a certain small percentage of displaced peoples for this special type of protection?

Mr. Jean-Nicolas Beuze: No, we are very grateful that Canada and Germany have offered this possibility. Let's keep in mind that those situations are constantly evolving. People are being released from captivity. People who were afraid of coming to the service provider with a specific story or specific needs, after a certain period of time may come out and request additional assistance. It's difficult to ascertain at this point in time whether there will be additional needs for a similar program.

• (1025)

Mr. Nick Whalen: Before I hand the time over to Mr. Tabbara, Turkey is doing a lot of work to help support displaced people in the region. Can the people who were looking to resettle to Germany and Canada receive a comparable level of support and protection in camps in the region, such as camps in Turkey?

Mr. Jean-Nicolas Beuze: We are making maximum efforts to provide the support in the camp and in the host communities. Again, it's all a question of the amount of funding we are receiving.

Mr. Nick Whalen: Mr. Tabbara.

Mr. Marwan Tabbara: Thank you, Mr. Whalen.

My question relates to identification and how you decide who the most vulnerable groups are.

Before I talk about that, I want to let members of the committee and you, through the chair, know that it's important not to confine people to certain boxes, whether by sex, religion, or ethnicity. Doing that causes a lot of problems, and I'll let you elaborate on that.

I understand that there have been complaints, maybe from a certain minority group, maybe from Yazidis or other minority groups, but it's important to understand that if a family identifies as Christian, Yazidi, or Muslim, maybe the children or extended family members may not identify as that. You mentioned, when you were

asked, that you look at a complaint as a complaint, and it's not specific to a certain religion or ethnicity. I want you to elaborate on the importance of that.

Mr. Jean-Nicolas Beuze: Thank you very much for this question, because it allows me to go back to the global resettlement criteria, which are at the core of our program.

We are looking at whether the person has the capacity and the ability and is receiving the services to survive in the first country of asylum, or in his or her own country when we're talking about internally displaced people. We have identified certain categories of people who are at greater risk of not being able to survive in exile. These are rape victims, torture survivors, people who are at risk of being detained and sent back to their country of origin where they may be at risk of persecution, children at risk, and women at risk. For example, there could be a widow with several children, who will have difficulty surviving economically and who may be forced to resort to survival sex as a way to feed her children.

The categories are very limited, and it's on this basis, and not on the basis of, as you rightly mentioned, sex, religion, ethnic origin, or being a linguistic minority that we look at vulnerabilities. It's the same when we are looking at complaints that we receive about our own staff or our partner staff discriminating against a certain person.

Mr. Marwan Tabbara: In terms of your own staff, how do you identify if there are people with complaints?

Some people say that the UN staff are mostly Muslim. How do you identify if they are mostly Muslim and whether they are discriminating against people? Is there a measure for that?

Mr. Jean-Nicolas Beuze: In all our operations, we disseminate information on where people can complain. They can complain online. We have a complaint box in the camps, in the health centre, community centre, registration centre. We have text messaging and video, which are disseminated throughout the refugee and displaced community, so that people are empowered.

Plus, the senior staff exercise oversight on our own staff. We have many partners and NGOs, including Canadian NGOs, who are also providing information when things are not carried out in line with our mandate.

The Chair: Thank you very much.

Mr. Maguire.

Mr. Larry Maguire (Brandon—Souris, CPC): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Thank you for your presentation today as well. It's a pleasure to meet you.

I want to go back a little to just see what you're relying on.

You talked about 1.2 million people, I believe it is. Is that up or down from what we've had in the past?

Mr. Jean-Nicolas Beuze: It's up. We have never seen so many refugees and displaced persons since World War II.

• (1030)

Mr. Larry Maguire: Obviously, the United Nations Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic is part of that reason. They've identified it as genocide, so that means an awful lot more people trying to be resettled.

Mr. Jean-Nicolas Beuze: Yes, but there's also the more than three million internally displaced people in the Democratic Republic of Congo, or the....

What I want to specify is that this is no more than any other victims from any other conflict or individualized persecution.

Mr. Larry Maguire: Yes.

You mentioned 66 million people as well, worldwide. I think one of your comments, or one of the comments I heard earlier, was that 1% are impacted persons. Is that 1% of the 66 million?

Mr. Jean-Nicolas Beuze: No. We are looking at the refugee population, which is 22 million. The 66 million is both refugees and internally displaced.

If you look at the refugees, we have identified 1.2 million more, because they are rape victims, torture survivors, women at risk, children, who need to be resettled. We will be able to resettle much less than 10%. It's going to be 8% actually.

Mr. Larry Maguire: I just wonder if you've received persons based on the receiving country's ability to supply certain supports. Having gone through the genocide that many of these women and children have, I would say they're in a situation of extreme trauma. I guess that might be cover words for being polite about rape and torture.

Can you indicate why, with the expertise you have, more of those people—particularly, as you say, this is a special case with the Yazidis—haven't been identified and sent to particular areas? I mean, they're all going worldwide. You mentioned Canada, U.S., and Australia particularly.

Are they being sent there on the ability of these countries to provide the mental stability, mental training, or mental work they need to do with the people who have been struck by this genocide?

Mr. Jean-Nicolas Beuze: Do you mean specifically to Canada rather than another country?

Mr. Larry Maguire: I'm just saying with those three countries versus others. What's the criteria?

Mr. Jean-Nicolas Beuze: The countries that have resettlement programs are very few. I think there are less than 20 countries in the world that are doing resettlement. They have similar capabilities and capacities in terms of the services they can provide, from psychosocial support to education and economic integration.

We are speaking of a handful of countries, which are mainly in the developed and western world.

Mr. Larry Maguire: You have a report on the genocide survivors and that sort of thing, through the UN.

One of the things I'm looking at is that you say you don't look at the ethnic backgrounds of the individuals when you send them to

other areas of the world, or try to help. Yet IRCC just indicated that they rely on the UNHCR's ability to identify vulnerable Yazidi women and children to have them come here.

How can you do that if you don't identify them?

Mr. Jean-Nicolas Beuze: We identify survivors of ISIS. I understand that was the motion of this Parliament, and that was the co-operation we had with both the Canadian government and the Iraqi authorities, to identify survivors of ISIS—of Daesh—that needed to be relocated to a third country such as Germany or Canada because of their extreme vulnerability.

Mr. Larry Maguire: Canada relied on your ability to identify those people to get them out.

Mr. Jean-Nicolas Beuze: The survivors of Daesh. Yes.

Mr. Larry Maguire: I would like you to elaborate on whether or not countries receive these particular individuals that have been through genocide based on their ability to supply them with mental health support, because they are extremely traumatized. You're saying it's sometimes weeks before this help is sought.

Do they receive that kind of mental support the minute they land in Canada?

• (1035)

Mr. Jean-Nicolas Beuze: That's not for UNHCR to respond to, because we are not involved in the settlement services upon arrival.

The Chair: I need to end you there. Sorry.

Mr. Fragiskatos.

Mr. Peter Fragiskatos: Thank you very much, Chair.

I'm not a regular member of this committee, but in a previous life I did a great deal of research on the Yazidi and Kurdish issues. I taught on those subjects as well, so I've been following this question closely.

I want to ask you a general question at the outset. As you well know, the High Commissioner for Refugees was here yesterday. I watched a few interviews with him, and the issue of asylum seekers came up in the following way.

The questions posed to him by journalists made the point that because Canada has been dealing with asylum seekers, particularly in the summer months, perhaps this would dampen the interest that Canadians have in continuing to welcome refugees. He made the point that Canada remains a welcoming country.

For your purposes, and for his purposes, and for the purposes of the work we're doing here today, it's important to put the numbers into context. Yes, we dealt with some asylum issues in the summer months and continue to face that, but the University of Calgary's school of public policy, based on analysis it has carried out looking at IRCC numbers, has come up with the following.

In 2017, Canada will have 36,000 people here seeking asylum, which is a sizable number to be sure, but in 2008 that number was 37,000. In the year 2000, that number was 38,000. In 2001, that number was 45,000, so I want both you and Mr. Grandi to know that Canada has dealt with these challenges before—weathered the storm, so to speak—and we will do so again.

More to the point with respect to the question of the Yazidis and what's taking place in northern Iraq, we heard this morning testimony that Canada is actively involved in situations on the ground in terms of transitional justice in particular, as well as other approaches to conflict resolution.

Mr. Grandi has made the point—and you have made the point in other committees where you've testified—that resettlement is actually a very small part of the approach we take when it comes to dealing with the displacement crisis the world is facing, which, as you correctly said, is the worst the world has seen since World War II.

Could you speak specifically about transitional justice, and the importance of that in helping societies repair? Canada is making it a focus in terms of our global efforts. I refer here to northern Iraq specifically, but it is the case in other areas as well. This is tremendously important in helping societies to heal, so that those who have been displaced can perhaps return one day.

Mr. Jean-Nicolas Beuze: Thank you very much, and thank you for the reminder that indeed Canada had received in previous years a similar number asylum seekers. I will go one step further to remind all honourable members of this committee that we've done an analysis to see whether the increase in asylum seekers had a correlation with the number of resettled refugees. Thankfully, Canada has not had that approach and remains a valued partner on both fronts. There is no correlation of an increase in asylum seekers meaning a decrease in resettled refugees, and we very much hope that in the years to come, as announced by Minister Hussien, in its resettlement level, Canada will maintain the protection of asylum seekers and a larger program, hopefully, of resettled refugees.

Transitional justice is an extremely important point in the case of communities that have been divided by the conflict, especially when minorities feel that they have been particularly targeted by the conflict. Transitional justice is usually over a much longer time frame than the humanitarian operation, because it requires a process of historical clarification, getting communities together to analyze what happened. There's always an element of criminal responsibility in addition to traditional justice mechanisms, which will be very important in the case of Iraq and northern Iraq, especially for the Yazidi community, so that justice is carried out in a very culturally appropriate manner. It's only when all those elements have been put in place that we think refugees in that place will feel comfortable returning home and resuming their regular lives.

• (1040)

Mr. Peter Fragiskatos: Thank you very much.

Chair, do I have time for one more question?

The Chair: You don't.

Mr. Peter Fragiskatos: Okay. We'll leave it there.

The Chair: Mr. Maguire, I could give you two more minutes, if you would like, or Mr. Schmale.

Mr. Larry Maguire: Mr. Chair, thank you.

That was the concern I had. I want to follow up again on the numbers that you talked about.

You're talking about fewer than 90,000 resettlements this year. Is that a consistent number, or has it been higher or lower in the past?

Mr. Jean-Nicolas Beuze: Compared with last year, it's a decrease of 43%. We have lost almost half of the space.

Mr. Larry Maguire: You had a number last year that was much higher. How has that compared to other years?

Mr. Jean-Nicolas Beuze: Under the Obama administration, there was a target of 110,000 resettlements. Last year, the actual number of arrivals was around 85,000 to 90,000. This year, under the Trump administration, the target is 45,000 or 50,000 resettlements. We have lost already 45,000 just from the U.S. allocated space. A number of countries, in particular in Europe, because they had a massive increase in asylum seekers since 2015, have also reduced their resettlement programs.

Mr. Larry Maguire: Are there other areas of the world that you're looking at, then, to help make up that shortfall? I know it might be a limited number of countries, but can you help us with that?

Mr. Jean-Nicolas Beuze: Do you mean in terms of resettlement countries?

Mr. Larry Maguire: Yes.

Mr. Jean-Nicolas Beuze: We are exploring, and Canada is helping us a lot in promoting the model of both the GAR and the privately sponsored refugees, to see which other countries will be able to join. We have some prospects in Latin America, especially in the southern part. We have interest from countries such as Brazil, Uruguay, Argentina, and Chile. We are also working a bit on countries such as Japan, but our main countries for resettlement remain the United States; Canada, which has the second-largest program; and a few European countries.

Mr. Larry Maguire: That's the end of my questions. Thank you.

The Chair: Very good.

That ends this part of the meeting. Again, thank you, Mr. Beuze, for being with us today.

One issue that has come up in the questioning today that I just want to bring to the committee's attention for maybe a future meeting is the issue around translation and interpretation, community interpretation and those issues, and whether we need more information on that as a topic. We don't have that at our second meeting. There is the Canadian Translators, Terminologists and Interpreters Council, CTTIC. There are other organizations that do, particularly, interpretation in non-widely disseminated languages.

Whether this committee has done that work before, it seemed to me there were some questions around that and that we don't really know very much about availability and those things. Do you want us to do some looking into that?

I'm looking particularly at the opposition, because both parties raised the issue, yet we don't have that.

Mr. Whalen.

Mr. Nick Whalen: I didn't get a chance to ask, but I'm also interested in, within the medical profession itself, what level of language proficiency we have from—

The Chair: There are specialized interpreters, too, both trained, as well as community, and there's a difference.

Mr. Nick Whalen: Yes.

The Chair: Those in the booth know it well.

Go ahead, Ms. Kwan.

Ms. Jenny Kwan: Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

Particularly within the medical profession, in the provinces, it's up to the province to determine whether they will provide for that translation. Often they don't because there's a cost to the provincial government. Certainly, my province of British Columbia does not provide for that, although I think it should. Very often people are asked to bring family members. Frankly, from the immigrant community, they often let them bring children. They are sometimes required to tell their parents that they have some illness that could be fatal.

From that perspective, it will be an issue of determining a policy, if you will, both federal and provincial, in terms of where the contributions would come from.

• (1045)

The Chair: I don't want to get into the debate about the issue. I just wanted to get a survey of whether it's of interest to the committee.

Go ahead, Ms. Rempel.

Hon. Michelle Rempel: It is of interest to us, Mr. Chair.

I would also say that, if we are going to continue the study on this, it might be useful to have end users of these services to actually give their experience. I'm not sure that we've had enough time in this committee to allow that.

That would be my suggestion.

The Chair: I'm getting a general nodding that we could look into it. We'll come back with a proposal on whether we need to do a third meeting on this particular topic around some of those issues.

We're not making a decision today. It's just for your information.

Ms. Jenny Kwan: I'm fine with that, but my point is this. It's not just about whether the service is available. You need to actually incorporate into that the issue of how it's going to be resourced. Otherwise, it's not really going to do us much good.

The Chair: Good. Okay.

The meeting is adjourned.

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

SPEAKER'S PERMISSION

The proceedings of the House of Commons and its Committees are hereby made available to provide greater public access. The parliamentary privilege of the House of Commons to control the publication and broadcast of the proceedings of the House of Commons and its Committees is nonetheless reserved. All copyrights therein are also reserved.

Reproduction of the proceedings of the House of Commons and its Committees, in whole or in part and in any medium, is hereby permitted provided that the reproduction is accurate and is not presented as official. This permission does not extend to reproduction, distribution or use for commercial purpose of financial gain. Reproduction or use outside this permission or without authorization may be treated as copyright infringement in accordance with the *Copyright Act*. Authorization may be obtained on written application to the Office of the Speaker of the House of Commons.

Reproduction in accordance with this permission does not constitute publication under the authority of the House of Commons. The absolute privilege that applies to the proceedings of the House of Commons does not extend to these permitted reproductions. Where a reproduction includes briefs to a Committee of the House of Commons, authorization for reproduction may be required from the authors in accordance with the *Copyright Act*.

Nothing in this permission abrogates or derogates from the privileges, powers, immunities and rights of the House of Commons and its Committees. For greater certainty, this permission does not affect the prohibition against impeaching or questioning the proceedings of the House of Commons in courts or otherwise. The House of Commons retains the right and privilege to find users in contempt of Parliament if a reproduction or use is not in accordance with this permission.

Also available on the House of Commons website at the following address: <http://www.ourcommons.ca>

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

PERMISSION DU PRÉSIDENT

Les délibérations de la Chambre des communes et de ses comités sont mises à la disposition du public pour mieux le renseigner. La Chambre conserve néanmoins son privilège parlementaire de contrôler la publication et la diffusion des délibérations et elle possède tous les droits d'auteur sur celles-ci.

Il est permis de reproduire les délibérations de la Chambre et de ses comités, en tout ou en partie, sur n'importe quel support, pourvu que la reproduction soit exacte et qu'elle ne soit pas présentée comme version officielle. Il n'est toutefois pas permis de reproduire, de distribuer ou d'utiliser les délibérations à des fins commerciales visant la réalisation d'un profit financier. Toute reproduction ou utilisation non permise ou non formellement autorisée peut être considérée comme une violation du droit d'auteur aux termes de la *Loi sur le droit d'auteur*. Une autorisation formelle peut être obtenue sur présentation d'une demande écrite au Bureau du Président de la Chambre.

La reproduction conforme à la présente permission ne constitue pas une publication sous l'autorité de la Chambre. Le privilège absolu qui s'applique aux délibérations de la Chambre ne s'étend pas aux reproductions permises. Lorsqu'une reproduction comprend des mémoires présentés à un comité de la Chambre, il peut être nécessaire d'obtenir de leurs auteurs l'autorisation de les reproduire, conformément à la *Loi sur le droit d'auteur*.

La présente permission ne porte pas atteinte aux privilèges, pouvoirs, immunités et droits de la Chambre et de ses comités. Il est entendu que cette permission ne touche pas l'interdiction de contester ou de mettre en cause les délibérations de la Chambre devant les tribunaux ou autrement. La Chambre conserve le droit et le privilège de déclarer l'utilisateur coupable d'outrage au Parlement lorsque la reproduction ou l'utilisation n'est pas conforme à la présente permission.

Aussi disponible sur le site Web de la Chambre des communes à l'adresse suivante : <http://www.noscommunes.ca>