



House of Commons  
CANADA

# Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development

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FAAE • NUMBER 026 • 1st SESSION • 39th PARLIAMENT

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EVIDENCE

**Wednesday, November 1, 2006**

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**Chair**

**Mr. Kevin Sorenson**

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## Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development

Wednesday, November 1, 2006

•(1535)

[English]

**The Chair (Mr. Kevin Sorenson (Crowfoot, CPC)):** Good afternoon, committee. This is meeting number 26 of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development for Wednesday, November 1, 2006.

In our first hour we will consider the main estimates, and in our second hour we will return to our study on democratic development, the committee's major study on Canada's role in international support for democratic development around the world.

In the first hour we're very pleased to have appear before us the Honourable Josée Verner, the Minister of International Cooperation.

Welcome, Minister. It is so good to have you back.

This is the minister's third appearance before our committee.

We also have as witnesses this afternoon, Robert Greenhill, president of the Canadian International Development Agency; Diane Vincent, executive vice-president; and Marc St-Laurent, director of resource management, human resources and corporate services branch.

I should also say we're beginning our study on the main estimates for 2006-07. The minister for the Canadian International Development Agency is here to discuss the votes that fall under her agency, which are votes 30, 35, L40, L45, and L50.

The minister has an opening statement, and I invite her to take the floor.

Thank you, Minister.

[Translation]

**Hon. Josée Verner (Minister of International Cooperation):** Mr. Chair, it's a pleasure for me to appear once again before my colleagues of this committee, this time to talk about the Main Estimates of the Canadian International Development Agency.

I have asked senior officials from CIDA to accompany me here. They are Mr. Robert Greenhill, President; Ms. Diane Vincent, Executive Vice-President; and Mr. Marc St-Laurent, Director, Resource Management.

In the 2006 budget, the government stated its commitment and increased resources allocated to foreign aid by eight percent. It also made a commitment to double the international aid envelope from its 2001-2002 level by 2010-2011. CIDA's Estimates for 2006-2007

reflect that commitment. Relative to 2005-2006, it's proposing a net increase of \$198.8 million from CIDA's reference level.

In addition, in the Throne Speech, the government clearly stated its commitment to implement an accountability regime and to make more efficient use of funding that Canada allocates outside the country.

That is why CIDA's plans and priorities for 2006-2007 are focused on improved efficiency of Canadian aid.

Canada is internationally recognized as one of the efficient donors and a responsible manager of resources allocated to development aid. And yet, although the aid granted by Canada produces tangible results, we think that we can, and that we should, do more to maximize the effects of our aid.

The past 10 years have taught us a great deal about what can make aid more efficient. There is now an unprecedented international consensus on the approach to take.

With the lessons we have learned about making aid more efficient, we are implementing a program divided into four parts: a more strategic concentration of our programs; enhanced program delivery; more efficient utilization of the agency's resources; and clear accountability for results, with the 2007 filing of CIDA's first annual report on development results.

We have started to concentrate our resources in countries where needs are great, in countries that can use aid efficiently, in countries where our action can have a decisive effect. In this fiscal year, we will re-examine our approach in order to focus our resources even further.

For example, the Afghanistan and Haiti programs are among the biggest. This reflects the government's commitment to promoting stability and supporting reconstruction in those countries in crisis. Vulnerable states deserve particular attention and concerted cross-government intervention. These countries have problems in the areas of security, stability and poverty reduction. This is as true for their own nationals as it is for Canada and for development cooperation in general.

I would also like to emphasize that Africa is still a major beneficiary of the government's programs. However, we will continue to respond to significant needs elsewhere, whether it be in the Caribbean, Latin America or Asia.

In Afghanistan, together with 59 other countries, Canada is helping the Afghan population rebuild its country. We support the establishment of conditions conducive to sustainable economic well-being, so that the Afghans have the tools they need to invest in their future. Here I'm talking about access to education, health care and credit.

But what have we accomplished thus far?

Canada has assisted 139,000 Afghans, the majority of them women, in obtaining small loans to start up their micro businesses, and to buy tools and farm animals in order to support their families. More than \$70 million has been distributed in this way in 18 Afghan provinces. The repayment rate is 98%.

More than 10,000 community development councils have been created in the country. With Canada's support, these councils have carried out approximately 5,000 community projects designed to improve health and hygiene as well as the quality of life of thousands of Afghan families. A number of other projects are under way.

• (1540)

Afghanistan has adopted a new constitution and held presidential and parliamentary elections. Five million children are going to school, one-third of them girls. More than 65,000 land mines have been destroyed since 2002.

We can celebrate these successes and we are proud to contribute to them. In May 2006, the Prime Minister announced that Canada would maintain the level of funding for development in Afghanistan at \$100 million a year until 2011.

Haiti is another country that needs our aid to get back on its feet. It is the poorest country in the Americas. Canada has a lot of experience in Haiti, and, over the years, has earned the trust and friendship of Haitians. Moreover, the sizable Haitian diaspora living in Canada can provide links to help rebuild this country. For decades, Canadian non-governmental organizations, universities and institutions, starting with religious communities in Quebec, have worked in Haiti, where close links have been formed between the two populations. These links, which have been built over the years, constitute today one of the main strengths of Canadian cooperation in Haiti.

I'd now like to turn to two of the priority areas of our international development actions, democratic governance and gender equality. Democratic governance is a crucial issue. In order to lay the groundwork for lasting progress, a society must maintain a climate of peace and security. This is only possible in a democratic society, one built on a foundation of freedom, human rights, the rule of law, justice and the accountability of public institutions. It is for this reason that democratic development will be a vital element of all our bilateral programs.

Gender equality remains in the forefront of our work. This is one aspect of all our areas of intervention. Gender equality is a priority of this government, a priority for CIDA and definitely one of my personal priorities. In many developing countries, experience has shown that in order to reduce poverty, create wealth and safeguard human rights, nothing is more effective than concrete actions that permit women to take advantage of their great potential. That is why we need programs and funding that specifically target support to the

economic and social development of women and to reinforce their rights.

During my stay in Mali this summer, I visited a number of CIDA projects that are helping to improve living conditions for women and children. For example, I visited one of the branches of the Nyesigiso savings and investment cooperative system. CIDA provides financial support to this system, which helps Malis, particularly women, improve their means of livelihood and promotes development of the micro-finance sector in Mali. I even opened a personal account at one of the cooperatives to show my support.

The second part of our new agenda is intended to improve the delivery of our aid programs. To support international development, the new government is resolved to involve Canadians across the country. Last June, I launched the new Voluntary Sector Fund. With a \$20 million budget, this fund supports development projects implemented by Canadian organizations, in partnership with organizations in developing countries. The Voluntary Sector Fund is aimed at Canadian non-governmental organizations, institutions and associations, in particular diasporic groups. Our Canadian partners work in cooperation with our Southern partners. Together they are carrying out projects and programs whose objectives are consistent with Canada's development priorities, particularly in the areas of poverty reduction and human rights. The purpose of this approach is to increase aid efficiency, particularly by strengthening the capabilities of civil society and enabling local groups to take charge of initiatives.

Mr. Chair, the role of civil society in international development is crucial, and CIDA's experience in the past 40 years has shown this. The partnership between CIDA and non-state stakeholders is a major factor in Canada's contribution to international development. I want to ensure that Canada is the leader in recognizing civil society in the Paris Declaration. We will work together to make this happen.

• (1545)

[English]

Our program of work includes working on multilateral effectiveness on key issues such as HIV/AIDS, environmental sustainability, and humanitarian assistance. Canada will continue to work with organizations that are the most effective in achieving these objectives.

[Translation]

The third component of our agenda is aimed at a more efficient use of our resources. We're currently exploring several paths to follow to accomplish this. We will remain on track in the move to untie levels of aid.

We will strive to reduce our level of spending on administration. I will also see to it that CIDA's presence is felt even more in the field.

[English]

Lastly, our agenda seeks to strengthen performance measurement and reporting. CIDA and its partners work in some of the worst, most dangerous, and unpredictable environments. Conditions often include armed conflict, famine, infectious disease, extreme poverty, and natural disasters, as well as unpredictability arising from economic instability.

Our ability to assess and manage risk underpins the effectiveness of CIDA's investments. In keeping with the new government's priority on accountability and our aid effectiveness agenda, I will table in 2007 the first annual report on development results. Through this report Canadians will see that the lives of the poor in developing countries have been positively affected through CIDA's support.

The government is also committed to strengthening health systems in developing countries. We will contribute \$450 million between 2006 and 2016 to support country-led efforts to strengthen health systems in Africa. This will address major weaknesses today, leading to improved health outcomes in Africa and to concrete progress in terms of meeting the millennium development goals.

A report on Canada and health results is available for your information.

Mr. Chair, in my remarks today I have given the members of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development a very brief outline of CIDA's plans and priorities for the current year, including our four-part agenda on how to improve aid effectiveness.

Now I would be pleased to respond to any questions the members of the committee may have.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Madam Minister, for your comments.

We'll go into the first round, which is a ten-minute round. We'll begin with the opposition.

*Monsieur Patry, vous avez dix minutes.*

[Translation]

**Mr. Bernard Patry (Pierrefonds—Dollard, Lib.):** Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. I'm going to share my time with my colleague Mr. Martin.

Thank you, minister, Mr. Greenhill, Mr. St-Laurent and Ms. Vincent, for being here with us.

As we only have 10 minutes, I'm going to move right away to questions.

As in previous years, CIDA considers better health one of its sectoral investment priorities, in its report on plans and priorities for 2006-2007. Could the minister give the committee, through our clerk, detailed information on CIDA's spending on health, by providing overall figures, a full breakdown of expenditures by the geographic programs of Canadian partnerships and multilateral programs? We don't want to have that right away, because we know it will take a very long time to submit those documents to us.

My question is as follows: Part III of the 2006-2007 Estimates doesn't provide details on CIDA's expenditures for fighting malaria. Could the minister provide us with detailed information on CIDA's spending in that area, as regards both new announcements and cuts made in old programs?

• (1550)

[English]

I have a second question.

Could the minister explain why CIDA has chosen to support a UNICEF program in Ethiopia knowing that UNICEF admitted publicly their failure in the last five-year program? On the contrary, the International Red Cross program to give away bed nets was very efficient, for example, in Togo, where 100% of children under five years old were covered.

To stop any ambiguity, can you tell the committee if there are negotiations with the Red Cross, after 18 months, to renew a new subvention after the current \$26 million fund is finished?

[Translation]

That's my first question. Thank you.

[English]

**The Chair:** Merci, Mr. Patry.

Madam Minister.

[Translation]

**Hon. Josée Verner:** I want to thank the member for his question.

As regards the malaria program, CIDA remains firmly resolved to continue its anti-malaria initiatives. In that connection, we contributed \$250 million to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria.

Since 2003, CIDA has allocated \$35 million to Africa to distribute bed nets, mosquito netting for beds. To date, we've announced nearly \$250 million, but we will allocate nearly \$300 million to the global fund.

[English]

**The Chair:** Thank you, Madam Minister.

The second question dealt with UNICEF and Ethiopia, and also cross-referenced the Red Cross.

[Translation]

**Hon. Josée Verner:** The member's question was about the announcement concerning UNICEF.

[English]

**The Chair:** It was on Canada's commitment to UNICEF and Ethiopia, despite some problems, and whether or not we will be renegotiating or signing an agreement with the Red Cross.

[Translation]

**Mr. Bernard Patry:** Yes.

**Hon. Josée Verner:** Articles have indeed appeared in the newspapers over concerns regarding UNICEF's delivery of services. We've been told that UNICEF was conducting a serious investigation into the matter. Nevertheless, in March 2006, we paid no less than \$12.5 million to Ethiopia.

Sir, you are in fact referring to what appeared in the newspapers and to the concern that caused?

**Mr. Bernard Patry:** Madam, in your response to the newspaper concerned, which I don't want to name, you say that the bed nets will be distributed in Ethiopia free of charge. However, we know perfectly well that some people in that country are selling the nets, when they should be distributing them free of charge. They're selling them for a dollar a day, knowing perfectly well that Ethiopians earn less than a dollar a day. That's hard for me to understand.

I'd like to be sure that the funds that UNICEF obtains to distribute bed nets in Ethiopia will go to the right place, to ensure free access to the nets for young people and families.

• (1555)

**Hon. Josée Verner:** I've been told that that statement was false and that the program in which we took part was making it possible to distribute bed nets free of charge to children under five years of age and to pregnant women.

[English]

**The Chair:** Mr. Patry.

[Translation]

**Mr. Bernard Patry:** Thank you.

Madam Minister, now I'm going to talk about the Office of the Auditor General.

In its 2005 Status Report, the Office of the Auditor General stated that it had examined the management of CIDA's grants and contributions programs. The percentage of the transfer payments, which are considered as grants, has now reached the 60% level.

Are you concerned by the fact that such a high, and constantly rising, percentage of transfer payments is being made by CIDA in the form of grants rather than contributions? We know perfectly well that CIDA can't have any control over those grants.

**Hon. Josée Verner:** I'll start by saying that I had an excellent meeting with the Auditor General a few months ago. We had occasion to discuss this question. I told her about my concerns, but also about what has been implemented to adequately respond to those recommendations. I'm going to ask Mr. Greenhill to give you more details on the subject.

**Mr. Robert Greenhill (President, Canadian International Development Agency):** Thank you very much.

How can we work together to cut administrative costs and ensure that aid programs are efficient? We often work together with multilateral organizations, or "baskets" of funds that, as you said, are a structure.

What is important to emphasize is that CIDA is not shirking the obligation to account for the grants it makes. We're involved in steering committees of multilateral organizations and in organizing committees of "baskets" of funds, reviewing the financial statements of organizations audited by third parties, reviewing the project reports and annual reports. We also regularly consult the other donors through Utstein groups and other good practice initiatives, and we take part in evaluating program results.

Let's also point out the major improvements that have been made in recent years in efficiency and results, in both education and health. For example, eight million more Africans have begun going to

school in the past four years, which may be attributable to a large degree to these integrated programs.

We're taking all the necessary steps to be duly accountable for these programs.

**Mr. Bernard Patry:** Thank you, Mr. Greenhill.

[English]

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Greenhill.

Mr. Martin, you have about a minute.

**Hon. Keith Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca, Lib.):** That much?

**The Chair:** We all get the same amount of time, and your colleague has used up most of it.

**Hon. Keith Martin:** I know. I'm pulling your leg.

Thank you very much for being here, Madam Verner, Mr. Greenhill, Madam Vincent, and Monsieur St-Laurent.

First, could you please table a list of the specific projects you completed in Afghanistan in 2006? What projects were completed and what were they used for?

Second, could you also table information on the moneys that have been given to the government of Mr. Karzai and what those moneys have been used for by his government?

My only other question is, where's our AIDS announcement? It was promised in the summer by the Prime Minister, and we've heard silence. Perhaps you could let us know when that announcement to battle this scourge is going to be made.

Thank you.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Martin.

Madame Minister.

[Translation]

**Hon. Josée Verner:** As for the list of projects in 2006 and the amounts allocated to them, we'll be pleased, starting tomorrow, to give you a full list of what has been announced, as well as related costs. In short, you'll have the answers to all the questions you've raised.

As regards the government's international contribution to HIV-AIDS, I repeat that, last March, we granted \$250 million to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, 60 percent of which will be dedicated to the fight against AIDS. At the G8 Summit, the Prime Minister also announced amounts of up to \$450 million to reinforce health systems.

CIDA is more actively continuing the implementation of concrete programs to fight AIDS. More than a dozen projects have been approved in recent months, and I will be pleased to provide you with the details on them.

• (1600)

**The Chair:** Thank you.

Ms. St-Hilaire.

**Ms. Caroline St-Hilaire (Longueuil—Pierre-Boucher, BQ):** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Good afternoon, gentlemen, Ms. Vincent and Madam Minister.

I'm pleased to have you here in committee today. We of course learned through the media today that there appears to be a Tim Hortons in Afghanistan and that an amount of \$3.9 million has come essentially from Canadian taxpayers.

Is that a grant from the Canadian government, from CIDA? Are you aware of that?

**Hon. Josée Verner:** Of course, Ms. St-Hilaire. As you know, I went to Afghanistan and I saw everything that was going on there. I think that amount was clearly exaggerated, but the best person to answer that question is obviously my colleague Minister O'Connor, of the Department of Defence.

**Ms. Caroline St-Hilaire:** All right, thank you very much.

I've often put this question to you in the House, always hoping to get an answer. Perhaps I'll be luckier today. It essentially concerns Palestine.

Your government was quick to cut off food to the Palestinian people. I've often asked you if there wasn't another way of doing things. You who are so concerned about women—from what you've said today—have you since found a way of providing aid to the Palestinian people who are currently suffering? You'll probably see it for yourself if you go there one day.

China has problems with human rights compliance. I heard you say that you were concerned about gender equality. There's work to be done over there.

Yesterday, in the Subcommittee on International Human Rights, Mr. Burton said that, indeed, CIDA should absolutely review its programs because they were completely obsolete and unsuitable.

I'd like to hear what you have to say on—let's say it kindly—your government's inconsistency on China as opposed to Palestine.

[English]

**The Chair:** Thank you.

Madame Minister.

[Translation]

**Hon. Josée Verner:** Mr. Chair, I want to thank my colleague for her question.

I note that her interest in Palestine is intermittent. She has asked me questions on Palestine, but definitely not on a regular basis. This will enable me to rectify the situation because, if she had regularly asked me questions on Palestine, that would have enabled me to tell her that we have never cut aid to that population.

However, what we refuse to do in Palestine is to pay money to Hamas; that has nothing to do with the population. We've paid money, we're providing humanitarian aid and until Hamas complies with the plan that has been put in place, the Canadian government will provide direct aid to the population. And that's what it has done.

I hope that answers your question. If I had had the opportunity to hear those questions in the House, I would have been pleased to answer them as they were asked.

**Ms. Caroline St-Hilaire:** That's interesting, Mr. Chair, because, when you ask questions, she doesn't have the answers, and when you don't ask the questions, she does. We should find some ground for agreement.

We'll send you the questions in the mail. That way, you can prepare your answers. Minister, you absolutely must...

**Hon. Josée Verner:** It seems to me I've just given you the answer.

**Ms. Caroline St-Hilaire:** But that's because we've regularly asked you the question.

**Hon. Josée Verner:** We're going to take note of them again, madam. In my opinion, you asked a question on this subject some time ago.

**Ms. Caroline St-Hilaire:** Two weeks ago.

[English]

**The Chair:** Madame St-Hilaire.

[Translation]

**Ms. Caroline St-Hilaire:** On the Palestine question, can the minister tell us how she ensures that the money gets there? What we hear is that the money doesn't go directly to the organizations. I suppose she receives status reports. We want to know what's going on over there.

I don't doubt that CIDA's money is on the way, but we also know that there are problems in Palestine. What we're hearing can't be a fabrication. If you're telling me that the money is in fact getting there, tell me where, tell me how and tell me in concrete terms under what program. The population says it's suffering, and I know you're sensitive to that. Simply tell me where that money is. That's all.

● (1605)

**Hon. Josée Verner:** With pleasure, madam.

We forward aid to Palestine through UN organizations, because we want to ensure that the aid reaches the population, which is living in an unstable situation. That's how we proceed.

Once again I want to correct your remarks: we don't give money to the population; we give it aid; we meet its vital needs and we ensure, through UN organizations, that the amounts are spent on the Palestinian population.

**Ms. Caroline St-Hilaire:** Your former colleagues often asked questions on China, whether it was receiving too much money or whether there were too many programs. It seems CIDA's programs regarding China will be reviewed.

Have you considered that question?

**Hon. Josée Verner:** Absolutely. What we want to do in China is, of course, to work more specifically on promoting democratic rights, but we're reviewing the various programs on that.

One thing is certain, madam: under this government, CIDA doesn't pay and won't pay money to the Government of China. That's very clear in my mind.

[English]

**The Chair:** Thank you, Madame Minister.

Madame Barbot.

[Translation]

**Mrs. Vivian Barbot (Papineau, BQ):** Thank you for being here today, minister.

Ms. Verner, you recalled in your remarks that, in the Throne Speech, the government had confirmed its commitment to establish an accountability scheme and to make more efficient use of the funds that Canada sends abroad. Accountability comes up as a key element among those you address in the 2007 report on development results. In particular, you emphasized the aid that you provide to Afghanistan and Haiti, two countries where the situation is so serious that we're no longer even talking about insecurity. In both countries, Haiti in particular, poverty is rank and events happen against a backdrop of violence and insecurity.

As regards MINUSTAH, we know that the Canadian government sent 100 soldiers there starting in 1995. These are soldiers who were trained here. Fifty of those 100 soldiers were Haitian Canadians. Trained in Regina, they were sent to Haiti.

We had a visit from Mr. Jean Fritz Magny, who was one of those police officers. As you must have seen, in an article published in the October 13 edition of *La Presse* and in another published in *The Montreal Gazette*, according to his allegations, those police officers trained in Canada never saw active service there. They were shelved, as you say in good Québécois. However, for years they received their pay, which wasn't very high. It was nevertheless US\$140 a month. It's said that, even now, there are soldiers in Haiti receiving money but not working.

Your press attaché, Ms. St-Pierre, said that you had ways of knowing what was going on and that you were going to investigate the money that was specifically invested in that program. It was \$2 million. I'd like to know what is going on.

[English]

**The Chair:** Thank you, Madame Barbot.

Madame Minister.

[Translation]

**Hon. Josée Verner:** Thank you for your question, madam.

Indeed, when that article appeared, I asked the agency to check the facts. According to the information I received, that program started in 2001, when the previous government was in power, and now it is terminated. It's not one of the programs that I've administered since I've been at the head of CIDA.

•(1610)

**Mrs. Vivian Barbot:** If I correctly understand what you're saying, none of the Haitian Canadian soldiers who were trained in Canada is currently in Haiti. Is that correct?

**Hon. Josée Verner:** I'm telling you that, according to the article, there are police officers in Haiti who are receiving a salary without working. A training program was established in 2001, but it is now terminated. As for the rest, it's up to the Haitian government to decide whether it wants to keep those individuals in that situation.

**Mrs. Vivian Barbot:** So Canada is not paying any money.

Is there any way of knowing what was paid in 2000, what occurred and what happened to this program? I think that would be

important for the continuation of our work on Haiti. That's one of the objectives of our committee. We're now preparing a report on Haiti.

[English]

**The Chair:** Thank you, Madame Barbot.

Madame Minister.

[Translation]

**Hon. Josée Verner:** We'll be pleased to send you those answers. I can already give you the following clarification: based on our information, the former police officers, including Mr. Magny, have no longer been receiving any salaries at least since October 2005.

**Mrs. Vivian Barbot:** What happened...

[English]

**The Chair:** Thank you, Madame Minister.

We'll now go to Mr. Obhrai from the government side.

**Mr. Deepak Obhrai (Calgary East, CPC):** Thank you, Madame, for coming. It's a pleasure to have you here again.

I'll be sharing my time with my colleague, Bill Casey.

Today I'm not going to ask you questions. I'm going to leave you on the side. My question is directed to Mr. Greenhill.

Mr. Greenhill, you're in an agency that has had a lot of experience over the last forty years in Canada. I have sat in this Parliament for eight years, and I have seen three or four reports coming every two or three years from CIDA. They talk about the same thing you're talking about here—aid effectiveness, working for women...doing the same things. I've heard absolutely nothing in this report that is different from the previous reports your department has thrown at us. So I keep wondering how effective your department has been over all these years. Where is the report card that says this aid has been effective?

Let's take the example of Africa for a change. You've been pouring money into Africa, yet it is still a mess. We talk about achieving the same targeted goals. There's a demand for more money; there's a demand to reach 0.07%. If we carry on giving you money, you're going to come back here after two or three years with the same kind of report, the same kind of situation, the same kind of thing. So where is the effectiveness in what you've done over the last forty years? Why do we keep hearing about the same things?

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Obhrai.

Mr. Greenhill or Madame Minister.

[Translation]

**Hon. Josée Verner:** Before turning the floor over to Mr. Greenhill, I'd simply like to recall that our government has made a firm commitment to make aid efficiency a priority. That was stated in the Prime Minister's Throne Speech. Of course, we intend to focus on results-based management.

[English]

**Mr. Robert Greenhill:** I think those are absolutely the right questions, and the development report of 2007 that the minister made reference to should be providing clear examples of that.

Let me provide three or four examples of what we've been doing under Minister Verner's direction in this regard.

First of all, you'll find here a series of results, which were actually six months of effort within the agency, to ask, of all the money we've been spending on health care, what has actually led to real results, real lives saved, so that we can answer those kinds of legitimate questions? You'll find within it, for example, some of the work we've done with Stop TB, which has saved half a million lives, primarily children, at a cost of \$200 per life saved. You'll find examples of how we worked with the Tanzanian researchers in government and with the IDRC to reduce child mortality by 40% through something called the Tanzania essential health interventions project. You'll also find examples of how Canada has played a leadership role in vitamin A and iodine deficiency, in work that is estimated by UNICEF to save millions of children from mental retardation.

The reason we were asked to produce this was...given the government and the minister's focus on accountability, we wanted to actually find out what had been working in the past that we could actually be leveraging and moving forward on.

A second example I would provide is this. The countries mentioned recently of Haiti and Afghanistan, which are difficult countries, are made impossible if we're not committed for the long term to try to make a difference. So there were two key decisions made in the last few months to make a strong \$520 million, five-year commitment to Haiti to maintain the leadership so that we can actually be there for the long term and be judged in terms of results.

I would note that as a result of key decisions that we have been directed to move on by Minister Verner, likely this year we will have the highest country concentration that we've had in over a decade.

I think there's a lot more we have to do—you know my views on that—but my sense is that with the approach laid out here, we will be in a measure to be held accountable and will be able to provide you with ongoing answers to those questions.

There will never be a perfect answer. In the private sector one always looks at increasing profits, reducing costs, becoming more innovative. Those three issues always come back again and again. What's important is that you show progress against those goals. My strong commitment is to ensure that we do what we can in our agency to support the policy laid out by Minister Verner, to ensure that there's not only effectiveness in terms of strategic prioritization and program delivery, but clear communication of the results back to you and to the public.

●(1615)

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Greenhill.

I would like to remind Mr. Obhrai and also the minister that this committee is in the middle of completing a report on aid effectiveness in Haiti, using Haiti as a case study. I think the recommendations of this committee, of all parties...I'm certain that the government will look forward to receiving that report and adopting some of its recommendations.

Mr. Casey.

**Mr. Bill Casey (Cumberland—Colchester—Musquodoboit Valley, CPC):** Thanks very much.

The minister mentioned the road map and the Middle East peace process, and I just want to follow that up and ask about the involvement of CIDA, if I could, in that process. Part of that process was the working groups that were established under the Oslo accords, of which Canada chairs the Refugee Working Group. That working group is focused on family reunification, job training, child welfare, and social infrastructure. I know it's dormant but still alive. Does CIDA play a role in that? Do they contribute funds to it now? I don't expect to have that exact answer, but do you have a commitment to this process, because it's certainly number one on your graph here, "Strategic Focus"? That would certainly be a way to focus aid on people who need it, and also to relieve the tensions in the Middle East and to help both Israelis and Palestinians, and the whole region.

**The Chair:** Madam Minister.

[Translation]

**Hon. Josée Verner:** Thank you, sir.

Canada, as you know, has made a commitment to support the Palestinian population, which is going through a tough time. Since last March, Canada has provided \$15 million in humanitarian aid to help the Palestinians in the west bank and Gaza.

As you know, like other donors, CIDA will not provide funds to the Hamas government if it refuses to comply with the principles of non-violence and the peace accords or to recognize Israel.

As regards CIDA's cooperation in the process, we know that the agency is giving funds to UNRWA, an assistance fund for Palestinian refugees.

Perhaps you'd like to add a comment.

[English]

**Mr. Bill Casey:** Does the money come through the working group? The working group is not part of the United Nations. Could I ask if I could get together with somebody in the department who knows the connection between CIDA and this working group? I'd like to have a briefing on that.

**The Chair:** Mr. Casey has a long-standing interest in this working group. He's done some excellent background work. It would certainly be good if we could facilitate some dialogue between him and the department.

We'll go now to the NDP.

●(1620)

**Mr. Paul Dewar (Ottawa Centre, NDP):** I haven't yet had the experience of having a parliamentary secretary go after his own government. But there's a first time for everything.

I'll get right to the point on malaria. After five years of spearheading this program of netting, we know that it's working. I think 60% of African children were supposed to have been protected. That was the goal, and people were saying that netting was the way to go. Apparently, we only have about 3% covered, so we're not there yet and we've got a lot of work to do. The fact that we're changing the method is disturbing to many people. It's been in the press recently. Are we going to continue the netting? If not, why not?

[Translation]

**Hon. Josée Verner:** Thank you for your question.

As for the fight against malaria, I can tell you that CIDA is working in cooperation with the Red Cross and UNICEF. In 2006-2007, Canada doubled the budget it allocates to the prevention and fight against that disease. It now stands at \$42 million.

[English]

**Mr. Paul Dewar:** Sorry to interrupt, but that's with the Red Cross?

[Translation]

**Hon. Josée Verner:** That's with the Red Cross and UNICEF.

[English]

**Mr. Paul Dewar:** Why not just the Red Cross? Am I correct in understanding it was with the Red Cross before? Has there been a shift?

[Translation]

**Hon. Josée Verner:** No.

Funds were granted to both the Red Cross and UNICEF.

[English]

**Mr. Paul Dewar:** Did you want to elaborate, Mr. Greenhill?

**Mr. Robert Greenhill:** This is an example of public information not corresponding with the analysis we've received. Canada has actually been one of the leaders in proving the effectiveness of bed nets. In the late 1990s, CIDA, along with the IDRC and African researchers, proved the effectiveness, in practice and cost, of bed nets in Tanzania. Canada has been a leader in distributing literally millions of bed nets through various programs. We've also been a leader in experimenting with different approaches—providing free bed net distribution through the Red Cross and UNICEF, and experimenting in Tanzania with market-based approaches with the Mennonite Economic Development Associates. In particular, the work we are doing with the Red Cross, which is a valued partner, has been successful and is ongoing. It's actually not correct to say that it has been stopped.

The other important element is the results. Where can one see impact? Bed nets have been shown to be extremely effective. There has been a massive ramp-up in the last several years, particularly the last three. The statistics that were referred to, which cite a 3% utilization in Africa, date from 2003. More up-to-date sentinel programming analysis, which looks specifically at what's happening on the ground, shows coverage in some areas of 30%, 40%, or even 60%.

**Mr. Paul Dewar:** And not all regions, just certain areas.

**Mr. Robert Greenhill:** But for the region of Africa as a whole, the number will be well above that 3% three-year-old number.

**Mr. Paul Dewar:** Okay, but we don't have the number yet.

**Mr. Robert Greenhill:** No. We can certainly provide a more up-to-date analysis, but—

**Mr. Paul Dewar:** Sorry to interrupt, because I just have a little bit of time, but on the estimates that we just received the other day, if we can turn to the supplementary estimates, page 17, where it talks about the—

**The Chair:** Mr. Dewar, we're not here to discuss the supplementary estimates.

**Mr. Paul Dewar:** No, I know.

**The Chair:** We're here to discuss the main estimates.

**Mr. Paul Dewar:** Well, if—

**The Chair:** We're in one of these times and places where the supplementaries and the mains will—

**Mr. Paul Dewar:** Okay.

With that in mind, I will then direct my question to CIDA vis-à-vis.... I was going to ask about grants, and you're talking about having accountability, and everyone applauds that.

My question is, in a time when we're talking about accountability—I was on the Bill C-2 committee for accountability, and the direction of the government, and most people would support that direction.... I'm quite concerned and a bit disturbed that we're going in the direction of grants, because when you tell me or other Canadians that we're going to have accountability and aid effectiveness, it's very hard for us to measure that when we go through the World Bank, when we go through other agencies, where we don't have a window on it, and we should. I'm going to ask a follow-up question on that.

My question is, why are we going in this direction of grants instead of the other aid methods that have worked so well in the past?

•(1625)

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Dewar.

Madame Minister.

[Translation]

**Hon. Josée Verner:** Thank you for your question.

Of course, working in developing countries requires that we adapt our contributions to the needs of those countries. They aren't all made at the same level, as regards receiving aid.

Even in the case of contributions to the World Bank, the bank has retained the services of PricewaterhouseCoopers to audit its figures. In addition, we at CIDA audit those audited figures. So we go through a number of steps to ensure that taxpayers' money is properly spent.

If you allow me to complete my answer, I'll tell you, for example, that the French representative in Afghanistan, Mr. Mazurel, publicly congratulated CIDA on the way it ensured that funds were spent in Afghanistan. I'm referring here to his article.

[English]

**Mr. Paul Dewar:** That's kind of him, but that's not my question. My question concerns value for money, and we aren't able to see that value for money.

We've asked time and time again in the House, and I'm saying to you, as someone who is critical of the government's direction, why are we going towards grants when we know—and you've stated—this is something we don't have a window on?

I'm not talking about who audits the World Bank. I'm talking about giving us a list and value for money, goal orientation with evaluation, of exactly how many schools have been built and showing us how much money has been invested. What we see here—and I see it in the supplementary estimates, which we'll get to another time—that we're going down the same path. We're going through these other agencies we don't have a window on.

So that's my concern. But my question is—and this is maybe to Mr. Greenhill—as someone who is a contributor to the World Bank, we have the right to see the value for money. We have the right to have a list of programs the World Bank invests in and the money we contribute. I'm not seeing that kind of detail, and we need that detail.

Further to that, we're hearing that in Afghanistan this micro-credit is terrific, but there's not enough of it, and it's going into administration. Someone has already asked about how much money the government is receiving, and we're hearing things like 60% is going into administration, but we don't know because we haven't been shown the facts.

What we need here first is less going to grants, and second, a window on development money, because Canadians are deeply worried that the money we quite willingly want to help with reconstruction isn't getting there. We just don't know. That has to change.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Dewar.

Madame Minister.

[Translation]

**Hon. Josée Verner:** To ensure that CIDA takes as little risk as possible, the grants are paid to organizations such as UNICEF, the Red Cross, UNESCO and UNAIDS. Their audit systems have been proven.

You mentioned Afghanistan, and I refer once again to the remarks by the World Bank on CIDA's procedures in Afghanistan. That said, Mr. Greenhill can supplement my answer and give you the details you wanted.

[English]

**Mr. Robert Greenhill:** Thank you very much, because it's an extremely important question.

Perhaps the best way to answer is to provide some of the results of the research that we've been directed by Minister Verner to undertake. I refer to the pamphlets in terms of the tuberculosis results. That actually was grant funded, but it was grant funded where the results in terms of outcomes could be measured, and it was \$200 per death averted.

If we look at the issue of measles death rates, this was actually work that was done with UNICEF that resulted in a reduction of measles deaths by almost half in Africa, and *Lancet*, the international journal, actually calculated extremely effective results and also that it was very cost-effective.

Similarly with the vitamin A distribution, where in fact vitamin A deficiency can be cured at a cost of 10¢ per child, and what we've done in terms of river blindness and what we've done in terms of salt iodization, all of which tend to have gone through a grant formula... we tried to ensure in each case that there was, as Minister Verner has noted, third-party verification from an auditing point of view, but increasing this focus that's so important on real results that we can measure and that we can actually determine in terms of cost-effectiveness. That's the way we're trying to ensure that we match some of the effectiveness and efficiency of grant modalities with actual oversight of results.

What I'd also note is that it's just part of the mix, and in different circumstances, different methods would be appropriate. We'd also be happy to provide more details, particularly in terms of issues such as the World Bank and other multilateral organizations, on the kinds of evaluations that are being done to ensure that we're actually getting results.

• (1630)

**The Chair:** Thank you.

We want to thank you for coming, but just before you leave, I do have a couple of very quick questions.

First, it is stated in the estimates that:

In 2006-2007, CIDA will also refine the definition and parameters for aid eligibility that will apply to countries of concentration, fragile states, and a range of other countries in need.

Mr. Greenhill, you've talked about the country concentration, how it has been smaller countries and more money going into those countries. Does the minister agree with the criteria used to select these 25 countries? This says that we will “refine the definition”. Do you agree with that?

Secondly, our committee has undertaken a fairly comprehensive study. We visited some countries in Europe in which 0.7% has been a target for countries all around the world, many of which are doing very well at it. There has been a push from outside sources, including the Make Poverty History campaign, to have Canada commit to reaching the 0.7% official development assistance compared to GDP. How does this target fit into your new aid effectiveness strategy?

[Translation]

**Hon. Josée Verner:** To answer your question on the country concentration, I'll say we're currently involved in that exercise. We also want to review the criteria for targeting those countries. Ultimately, we want to concentrate our efforts so that we get the best results. As I previously said, some countries are better equipped than others to receive aid. Some need another kind of intervention. In short, we're going to establish our criteria so as to ensure that the aid is efficient and produces results.

In response to your second question, concerning the 0.7% objective, I would remind you that, in its last budget, our government expressed its wish to double the 2001-2002 international aid level by 2010-2011. We also have to ensure that aid is efficient.

At CIDA, we, in a way, manage the generosity and compassion of Canadians through the funds that are granted to us. I think that, out of respect for taxpayers, we first have a duty to consider, adjust to and ensure aid efficiency.

[English]

**The Chair:** Thank you.

Thank you very much, Madam Minister. We appreciate your being here for the look at the main estimates. It's your third trip here, and we appreciate that.

We will suspend momentarily, and we will move on to our next witnesses. Mr. Kingsley is here from Elections Canada.

Thank you.

•(1630)

(Pause)

•(1635)

**The Chair:** I call this meeting back to order.

We return to our committee's major study on democratic development.

We have with us today Jean-Pierre Kingsley, Chief Electoral Officer of Canada, who last appeared before our committee when we were studying Canada's experience in Haiti. I believe at that time he brought some friends—those who were involved with the Haitian elections—before our committee. He chaired the International Mission for Monitoring Haitian Elections, which was comprised of electoral organizations from around the world.

Jean-Pierre Kingsley was appointed in February 1990. Since then, he has been responsible for the management of all federal electoral events, including the 1992 federal referendum, five general elections, and numerous byelections. Mr. Kingsley has held a variety of other positions in both private and public sectors.

We thank you for appearing, sir.

Also with us today from Elections Canada is Diane Davidson, Deputy Chief Electoral Officer and chief legal counsel.

I understand that you have an opening statement, Mr. Kingsley. We look forward to hearing from you. The floor is yours, sir.

**Mr. Jean-Pierre Kingsley (Chief Electoral Officer, Elections Canada):** Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I really appreciate this opportunity.

The gentleman who appeared with me was the chief executive officer or executive director of the electoral commission of Haiti, Jacques Bernard.

In terms of byelections, we have two going on in this country right now.

It is a privilege for me to appear before this committee today. I am accompanied by Mrs. Diane Davidson, who is the Deputy Chief Electoral Office and chief legal counsel, as you have said.

My remarks should take about seven or eight minutes, as you've requested.

•(1640)

**The Chair:** Thank you.

**Mr. Jean-Pierre Kingsley:** Today I will discuss the work of Elections Canada in promoting democratic development internationally, the value-added that we bring—at least in our view—to Canadian efforts in this sphere, and the ways in which our collective efforts can be maximized.

Elections Canada has long played an active role on the world scene, assisting countries in their efforts to establish sound democratic electoral processes. Since 1990, as a matter of fact, we've participated in initiatives in nearly 100 countries—admittedly initiatives of varying magnitudes. By the way, my office, through my predecessor, was also involved on the international scene in Latin America, Chile in particular.

Our activities range from sending a single expert to address one aspect of the electoral process to assembling multi-year, multi-country teams to undertake in-depth and ongoing analysis and assistance, to undertaking observation and accompaniment covering all areas of the electoral process. These initiatives have given us the experience that has proven instrumental in evolving a unique approach to international electoral assistance. Our approach is one of accompanying—therefore my use of the word “accompaniment”—electoral management bodies before, during, and after elections, and of helping them develop and strengthen institutional frameworks, skills, and autonomy, or independence, which are crucial building blocks to electoral democratic development.

This approach is an elastic model that allows for mutual learning. It has enabled us to accomplish a great deal, for instance, with our partners and colleagues at the FEI, the Federal Electoral Institute of Mexico.

The principle of accompaniment guides our international work and was most recently exemplified in two multilateral election monitoring missions in which we worked closely with the Independent Electoral Commission of Iraq and the Conseil Électoral Provisoire in Haiti.

The international missions for monitoring Haitian and Iraqi elections, both of which I chaired, are unprecedented examples of the extraordinary level of international cooperation mobilized for those purposes. Each mission was led by a steering committee comprised of executives of electoral management bodies from around the world, who provided expert and independent peer review to both the Iraqi and Haitian electoral management bodies. These missions also passed judgment on the elections, issuing timely reports to the public on the proceedings. We accompanied the Iraqi commission through three electoral events in 2005, the January 30 elections for the transitional national assembly, the October 15 constitutional referendum, as well as the December 15 Council of Representatives elections, the body which is now effectively ruling Iraq.

The value of the IMIE model is best illustrated by what it accomplished after the Iraqi legislative elections last December. In the midst of accusations of fraud against the IECI that threatened to destabilize the situation in Iraq, the mission took the initiative—without consulting anyone—to quickly put together and send a special team of four experts. Two of the experts were chosen by me and two by the Secretary-General of the League of Arab States, Mr. Amr Moussa. The critical and timely report of the electoral experts, including Doug Rowland, president of the Canadian Association of Former Parliamentarians, and Rafael Lopez-Pintor, a Spanish professor—whom I know well—helped to defuse a volatile situation between the Sunnis and the Shi'ites. We also held a post-mortem meeting with the IECI in March 2006 and discussed the full experience of the IMIE in Iraq, as well as the next steps, and provided advice on building a permanent Iraqi electoral commission, on which we have expertise.

In Haiti we accompanied the CEP through the first and second rounds of their presidential and legislative elections in 2006. For the municipal and local elections, and the run-off for the legislative... scheduled for December 3 of this year, Elections Canada has accepted the Haitian government's invitation to continue to accompany the CEP through a longer-term monitoring mission. That initiation was also made by the Canadian government, I should say, through CIDA, so we've accepted the invitation of the Canadian government, as a matter of fact. This mission will provide regular reports to the CEP on developments in the field, as well as electoral experts who will work directly with the Conseil Électoral Provisoire.

Our support for these elections is therefore even more focused on accompaniment, that is to say, helping them along, while still preserving our independence in producing our report on the elections.

•(1645)

[*Translation*]

Now I'll continue in the other official language.

These are some of the substantial accomplishments we have achieved with the resources I have been able to allocate to our role on the international scene. Obviously, my first priority is administering Canadian elections. The needs of Canadians come first. With more money and people assigned to our international role, we would be able to accomplish much more.

Pure observation is not the best way to deploy Elections Canada resources. Our strength lies in providing electoral support that addresses the longer process of democratization. We do this by working to build the capacity and the independence of electoral management bodies — by helping to design, development, implement and strengthen electoral commissions, while respecting the cultures and histories from which they emanate.

Elections may appear simple, especially in Canada, but they are not simple in Canada and, certainly, they are not simple abroad. Elections involve the intersection of different political forces, and managing that process is very complex. Not surprisingly, electoral assistance is also complex work.

The terms of your inquiry include examining ways in which non-governmental organizations and government bodies can best

contribute to democratic assistance globally. It is useful to reiterate that Elections Canada is an independent agency of Parliament. This independence provides us with credibility and effectiveness on the international scene.

There has been a recognition on the part of CIDA and DFAIT of the importance of getting those who are involved in democratic development to exchange information and coordinate efforts. The Democracy Council is beginning to facilitate this. Other witnesses who have appeared before you have spoken about this.

The risks involved when Canada is the only, or the foremost, country engaged in assisting countries where democracy is fragile have been underlined by Ms. Alexa McDonough in her comments on October 4. That's what we did in Irak; that's what we did and are continuing to do in Haiti. These are the risks, whether Canada is acting alone or is leading international missions. And I believe that assisting developing democracies is a riskier endeavour today than it was 10 or 15 years ago, at the start of the post-Cold War era. But today we have a better understanding of the risks involved. There have been failures in the past, there will be failures in the future.

I understand the committee is considering a number of ideas for increasing the efficacy and profile of Canadian democracy promotion. It is important to have coherent and well-considered approaches. The growing interest in supporting political parties, for example, needs to be considered carefully. I even have some observations to make, if that is of interest to you.

Finally, democracy promotion is challenged by the growing perception in some parts of the world that democracy is not bearing fruit in terms of improving the day-to-day lives of the people. Setbacks will occur, but this does not mean we give up.

In my view, there is no alternative to democracy. What is needed is support for the entire process of democracy building and for the system as a whole, based on each country's values, history and culture. That moreover is our international trademark, Mr. Chair.

Thank you.

[*English*]

**The Chair:** Merci, Mr. Kingsley.

Mr. Wilfert, you have seven minutes, if you want to do a split or whatever.

**Hon. Bryon Wilfert (Richmond Hill, Lib.):** I will be, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you, Mr. Kingsley and Ms. Davidson.

Mr. Kingsley, first of all, I appreciate your presentation. I was certainly struck by the comment you made near the end about coherent and well-considered approaches.

The issue of top-down democracy is a failure, in my view, and therefore capacity building at the village level is absolutely critical. Had we been in Cambodia in the long haul, as an example, where we were involved with the communal elections in the early nineties, we might not be in the situation today where we have basically co-opted an opposition that is now essentially one-party rule, culminating in the removal of Prince Norodom Sihanouk's son, by no longer having him head of Funcinpec. They've even put his estranged wife in the cabinet now as a punishment.

I guess the question I have for you is, what can Elections Canada do in terms of assisting more at the village level? You mentioned local elections, for example, in Haiti. I don't remember from my days as president of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities whether you have teamed up with them recently to do any work using FCM's expertise on local elections. To me that is the most important thing in capacity building, to strengthen democracies, so that this will work at other levels as we move forward.

•(1650)

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Wilfert.

Mr. Kingsley.

**Hon. Bryon Wilfert:** That's my question. Then I'll pass it over to Mr. Martin.

**Mr. Jean-Pierre Kingsley:** Mr. Chairman, Elections Canada, as a rule, does not work at the local level. Our expertise, our strength, does not lie there. Our strength lies in working at the national level of elections. This is why bodies invite us; this is why other countries invite us. They want to know how to run a federal election or a national election. That is where we have our expertise, and that's where we can be of particular help to them.

In terms of what happens at the local level, other forces must intervene to allow that to happen. Our strength is in running elections. It's not in fortifying political parties, and it's not in fortifying various political forces in the country. Therefore, we can only contribute that for which we are world experts and for which we are renowned as world experts.

In terms of cooperation with the FCM, we've not done that as a major course on the international scene at Elections Canada. That is not our strength, sir.

**Hon. Bryon Wilfert:** As a follow-up question to that then, what would your role then be in the local elections in Haiti?

**Mr. Jean-Pierre Kingsley:** The local elections are being run nationally, and that's why we're there. All the elections are taking place, and they're being run by the Conseil Électoral Provisoire, which ran the national elections for the president and the runoff for the second round for the legislative assembly. They did not have to do it for the presidency, which was settled at the first round. If it had not been settled at the first round, it would have been at the second round.

So we're there. Effectively, this is the third round of national elections in Haiti, because they're running municipal and local elections through the central body, and that's why we're still there.

**Hon. Bryon Wilfert:** We could go on. I have real concerns about how that approach works in terms of getting people to really appreciate elections and really inculcating in them their importance

at the local level in order to have them participate nationally. But I'll turn it over to my colleagues so I don't cut them off.

**The Chair:** We'll have Mr. Kingsley first, and then it will go back to Mr. Martin.

**Mr. Jean-Pierre Kingsley:** I would like to add, very briefly, though, that as part of what we do, we also provide advice on how the national body should inform the local population or the population in general, even if it's local—all population is local, effectively—through outreach programs and through publicity programs. And that's how we can help there. But we cannot be at the local level. That is not our strength.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Kingsley.

Mr. Martin.

**Hon. Keith Martin:** Thank you very much, Mr. Kingsley and Madam Davidson, for being here.

I just want to again really compliment you on the work you and your colleagues at Elections Canada have done. As you said, it's a real niche area for Canada, and with your leadership and the work you've done and the work your colleagues have done, you really try to provide stability in areas of chronic instability. It seems to me that as a country, this is a niche area that we could, and ought to, really capitalize on in the future.

My question really involves two countries. One is Afghanistan and the other is the Congo. Could you perhaps let us know what obstacles you foresee in the future in Afghanistan in being able to ensure that there are going to be future elections? And what structural changes are required in the Byzantine world of Afghan politics to enable the government of Mr. Karzai, or whoever becomes the government, to develop a structure that provides more stability on the ground?

Second, could you let us know what lessons you learned from the recent Congolese elections and what structures are needed in place to provide stability in that great country that has seen so much violence and heartbreak?

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Martin.

Mr. Kingsley.

**Mr. Jean-Pierre Kingsley:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I'd like to thank the member of Parliament for the laudatory remarks about our work on the international scene. This is much appreciated. And he is right about the fact that this is a niche area for Canada. We are well known for that around the world.

In terms of Afghanistan, our role, initially, went to helping establish a register of electors. It did not delve more deeply into setting up the electoral body and the running of it. Where we could come in handy in Afghanistan, where we could come in handy in the Congo, where we have provided advice to Cameroon, for example, within the last six months, and why the Nigerian electoral commission came to Canada within the last three weeks is exactly the area where we could be helpful. That is to say, we could help devise the kind of reflection that would help them establish what the forces at work in that country are. And how can they get that represented effectively on an electoral commission so that it is established as an independent body and at the same time is reflective of the population? That is something we can help devise.

We're not involved in the Congo at all, so there's no lesson for us to learn there. If we went, I'm sure we could learn with them. But we're not involved in the Congolese elections at this time. We were not involved at all as Elections Canada.

•(1655)

**The Chair:** Madame Barbot.

[Translation]

**Mrs. Vivian Barbot:** Good afternoon, Mr. Kingsley. Thank you for being here with us.

I'm particularly pleased to meet you. In the last election, you had to intervene in my riding, Papineau, which is located in Montreal. Some flagrant irregularities occurred.

That leads me to point out that the electoral process faces difficulties, regardless of the country in which it takes place. Its integrity must be preserved and attention must be paid to ensure that democracy is properly expressed. On that point, I know your reputation precedes you, and we have benefited from it. The goal is full respect for democracy.

Obviously, the context was completely different in Haiti, difficulty there being commonplace. Your intervention was a key moment that enabled people to see that something was happening and that, with the elections being held, there was at least a tangible sign of possible change. The studies we're currently conducting on Haiti clearly show us that the election is a key moment, but a lot of work has to be done in the meantime.

You say your strength lies in support for the democratization process over the long term, and you refer to strengthening the capacities and independence of electoral commissions. In a fragile state like Haiti, what do you do between two elections?

**Mr. Jean-Pierre Kingsley:** Mr. Chair, with your permission, I'll answer that.

We've obtained funding enabling us to send Canadian experts to Haiti to work closely with Mr. Bernard and the provisional electoral council. There's going to be a twinning with Haitians who are qualified in the area, but who are not quite familiar enough with the subject for the moment. So there'll be a knowledge transfer.

In addition, I'm going to have to meet with representatives, including the President of CIDA, to develop a more detailed program to allow for the establishment of a permanent electoral council, which has never occurred in Haiti. So that "p" in the word

"provisional" will mean "permanent". However, with local and municipal elections, members will have to be appointed to the permanent electoral council. We'll have to ensure follow-up.

It will be possible to help develop Haitians' capacity. There will also have to be funding to enable them to achieve that objective. There will be no way to do that without funding. With today's technology, it will no longer be necessary to keep all the paperwork, which is a problem in Haiti. We'll be able to keep everything on a few CDs. So that's what we're headed toward.

I'm going to Haiti next week. I'll talk about all that with Mr. Bernard, whom I'm going to meet, and with other members of the provisional electoral council. I'm going to ask them how we can help them establish a permanent situation there.

**Mrs. Vivian Barbot:** Is illiteracy a special problem when it comes to preparing and holding elections?

**Mr. Jean-Pierre Kingsley:** Of course, it causes difficulty in a developing country, but eliminating or overcoming that kind of difficulty is one of the challenges that the electoral council must try to meet through voter information campaigns.

Our expertise is less specific to that area, but we can nevertheless provide assistance. To do that, we shouldn't necessarily use Elections Canada funding. Funding from CIDA and the Canadian government is available to support the efforts of the provisional electoral council to reach the population and to explain the process to them. Although the process may have seemed complex to the Haitian population at the time of the elections, the advantage was that the average voter only had to make a few decisions. In the first and second rounds, that was to choose a president, senator and member. There was a way to explain that process to Haitian electors.

•(1700)

[English]

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Kingsley.

You have another minute and a half. Perhaps, Madam Bourgeois.... Did you want to do a split there?

[Translation]

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

Good afternoon, Mr. Kingsley.

Fifteen days ago, our committee took a trip on which it visited a few countries. We went to see how countries were working to ensure democracy. You have worked with IDA. So we've heard about you. The comments on Canada's work for democracy was very flattering. I don't know whether my colleagues agree with me, but whatever the case may be, we were very proud of our electoral system and of the work you're doing.

On page 8 of your speech today, you refer to the way governmental and non-governmental organizations can best contribute to democratic assistance globally. You state the following:

It is useful to reiterate that Elections Canada is an independent agency of Parliament. This independence provides us with credibility and effectiveness on the international scene.

I sensed something in your voice when you read that sentence. As parliamentarians, we aspire to help parliamentarians of other countries. What do you think of the idea of establishing exchanges between parliamentarians in order to ensure democracy?

[English]

**The Chair:** Thank you, Madame Bourgeois.

[Translation]

**Mr. Jean-Pierre Kingsley:** Mr. Chair, first I want to express my gratitude for the flattering comments made about us.

What is expressed involuntarily is often what betrays a depth of thinking. There is indeed a wish that I would like to state, and that is that Canada's policy and efforts regarding democratic development assistance be more coherent.

Elections Canada can do its share, but to say it takes more than one election to make democracy is a cliché. I wanted to set that cliché aside and simply say that elections are both simple and complex, even here, in Canada. We forget that that's the case, but we see it when we go abroad. You have realized it. I wanted to tell the committee about certain thoughts.

It seems to me Canada could be more consistent with itself. I heard my predecessor, the President of CIDA, talk about the 25 countries that are considered as deserving Canada's aid. I know we're headed toward this kind of practice, but I would like to determine what the required factors are for establishing a good democracy in various countries. Reference would undoubtedly be made to freedom of the press, general audit, free elections, and functioning parliamentarians. For the parliamentary system to function properly, there has to be respect for the opposition. That's what's lacking in a number of countries.

The idea would be to establish a coherent set of criteria and to determine the needs of each country, not only in certain respects, but with regard to all criteria. You could even involve bodies such as Elections Canada, the Auditor General, organizations that are concerned with freedom of the press in Canada or parliamentarians, when it comes to explaining to other parliamentarians how a real democracy operates. That's what I wanted to suggest by my remarks.

Thank you.

• (1705)

**Ms. Diane Bourgeois:** Thank you.

[English]

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Kingsley.

Mr. Van Loan, then Mr. Goldring, on a split of time.

**Mr. Peter Van Loan (York—Simcoe, CPC):** Right.

In French, you said something to the effect that:

Pure observation is not the best way to deploy Elections Canada resources. Our strength lies in providing electoral support that addresses the longer process of democratization.

Then you go on to talk about capacity building, particularly the independence of electoral management bodies, helping to develop and design them and so on.

I want you to expand a little bit on that, talk about what context in which those kinds of efforts work well. Independence is sometimes a question of perception, and of course there are degrees of independence too. Then there is the risk of getting involved in legitimizing operations that aren't truly independent, that you may actually be providing assistance that helps a kind of anti-democratic regime. I want you to comment on that whole package.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Van Loan.

Mr. Kingsley.

**Mr. Jean-Pierre Kingsley:** Mr. Chairman, in elaborating on my remarks, Elections Canada I think has an opportunity to make a real contribution to the process. I'll use a relatively concrete example. The Nigerian electoral commission came here recently. They were interested in knowing how they can make an election happen. They're caught with this. They get a lot of advice from people who go there, but they don't get the knowledge from people who actually deliver elections.

I've heard this from many countries. When we initially went to Haiti, people were saying that at least we deliver the goods in our country and that they're able to talk to us and get something meaningful. Cameroon came. They were trying to establish—I don't know how far they've gone—how it works. They want to know how an independent body becomes independent, what makes it maintain its independence, and how to relate to Parliament and to government. Through exploring this, we're able to provide assistance to them.

I agree that there may be varying degrees of independence, but there has to be a minimum. There has to be a minimum that's acceptable. And by the way, we look at that before we involve ourselves in other countries. We may be asked to help a particular country, but we'll want to make sure of that. For example, in Haiti, the Conseil Électoral Provisoire was set up in such a way that there is the requisite amount of independence. We did the same thing for the Iraqi elections.

I wouldn't want to go into a country because it's on the list of 25, but the electoral commission is all warped and it's not going to work. I wouldn't want to do that, because there's no point. It's not going to get us anywhere unless the mandate is to change it.

I don't know if I'm answering your question in a way that makes sense to you. I hope I am.

But that is where the strength comes in. Reputation comes from the ability to deliver, and at the same time the ability to advise and to relate, based on their culture and based on the forces that are in play in that community.

In Iraq, there were three basic communities. All three were represented on the Iraqi electoral commission. That gave us a feeling that things were there. The legal mandate was clear that they were independent. At the end, we also made recommendations about the number of people that they should have full-time on a commission. They have eight now. We felt that this was too many. We suggested there may be another way of structuring it or keeping the same structure, but with commissioners who are not there all the time. It makes it very difficult for a chief executive to carry out his or her tasks under such circumstances.

This is where the expertise comes in. It's not a straight transposition of the Canadian electoral system, as you can well imagine. I don't have commissioners overlooking my work. I have the procedures and House affairs committee, principally, doing that work. I have Parliament looking at how I behave and how I perform my tasks.

It's relatively easy to transpose ourselves into other cultures and to discuss ways they could improve their system and enhance and maintain their independence.

• (1710)

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Kingsley.

Mr. Goldring.

**Mr. Peter Goldring (Edmonton East, CPC):** Thank you.

It's good to see you again, Mr. Kingsley, and Ms. Davidson. Certainly your reputation is known around the world for the good work that you and Elections Canada have done.

I would refer to the voter turnout in the last election in Haiti, which was approximately 30%. I believe that indicates there is a misunderstanding by the public on the role of their parliamentarians and the system.

We had another witness here that spoke of Ukraine, where CIDA has been providing money for education at the university level. The question would be why that is at the university level when we know they've had their independence for 15 years. Surely, 15 years ago they would not have been teaching democracy, even in the elementary schools. Why would it be going there?

So my question really is on how much importance you put on education of the citizenry and what has been done in that direction. Have you or the electoral commission from the various countries such as Haiti done anything to bring that along? I think that even if it was started today, this would be a generational, maybe a 20-year process, to have a population that has a literacy level of 60% to 70%. I would think it would be one of the highest priorities to get on with that education process. Have you recommended this to them, or have they initiated anything like that?

**Mr. Jean-Pierre Kingsley:** Mr. Chairman, the efforts that we deploy are made through the electoral body that is there, in light of its mandate to educate the public about the electoral process. That's something that we do in Canada through our outreach programs and our different advertising for an election. Obviously, what we look for and what we encourage is for the electoral body to get its expertise from within its own country and to reach out to its own citizens in ways that makes sense to them.

I'm pleased to hear your comments about the participation rates—not that I'm pleased about the participation rates, but I am about hearing your comments about them—because they do highlight what I consider to be practically unfair expectations on the part of the international community about how quickly democracy will install itself after an election. Initially, a lot of people—I'm not saying members of the committee, but a lot of people in the world—thought that because there was an election there, democracy is there. We saw this in Latin America, and my remarks were about the Latin Americans thinking that democracy doesn't work because they're not seeing the change in their lives. In my view, it's not that democracy doesn't work, it's that the democratic system or the democratic actors or undemocratic actors who are there are not helping the situation evolve. That is the real problem, not democracy. There is no alternative to democracy.

Your point is well taken about the fact that it will take several generations and that more has to be done in the schools. But that is much longer-term and something that I'm not sure the electoral body is best placed to handle in that country.

I think the educational system in those countries is there. If we had a holistic approach to democratic approaches and to democratic development, we could start to address in a very significant way, at primary school and at high school, the flaws that need to be addressed in the electoral system or in the education system concerning elections.

I'll make one further comment. The participation rate of 30% for the second round was better than anything they've ever achieved on the second round in Haiti. In terms relative to Haiti, that's significant progress. In terms of comparing it to the 60% turnout from the first round, it does indicate that there is a problem, and this is the question to which your colleague was alluding a little while back.

No matter how well you explain it, the people perceive that the important elections were for the president and were not for the others. That is because there's a concept that the authority will be vested with the president. This is why the municipal elections and local elections turn out to be so important in Haiti. In essence, as Mr. Bernard was saying before this committee, they will set about a countervailing power base at the local level, so that everything does not flow from the presidency. Perhaps that will have added value for the democratic process in Haiti.

• (1715)

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Kingsley.

Mr. Dewar.

**Mr. Paul Dewar:** Thank you, Chair.

It's good to see both of you again.

I was intrigued by your comments along the lines of capacity building. On page 9, you make the following reference:

It is important to have coherent and well-considered approaches. The growing interest in supporting political parties, for example, needs to be considered carefully.

Just as an aside, my brother was in the former Yugoslavia before their elections. He was helping with a project there on how you run and organize campaigns. One of the issues was to tell them—and this is literal—to leave your guns at home when you go canvassing, and to teach them how to interact. I had the same reaction as you did, that it's absurd. But it was just the culture of their democracy. In that, he was working on the ground in terms of how you formulate a political party, how you come up with an agenda, and how you go out canvassing and get your message out.

I'll just touch on your point here. You were saying it has to be considered carefully. Are you aware of approaches, or have you been involved in how to support political parties and how to nurture that capacity?

**Mr. Jean-Pierre Kingsley:** Mr. Chairman, the remarks were really meant to elicit the kind of question that has been raised, because I was following the transcript from previous appearances by others in front of this committee. The word of caution I was trying to sound is that others have attempted and others continue to support particular political parties when they're abroad. I'm thinking of the IRI and the NDI. The NDI is somewhat less direct than the IRI, the International Republican Institute, in the United States.

What I saw Canada do in the Ukraine—I think it was in 1991, because I participated—which was through a university effort, was to mount a program for different political parties and the Chief Electoral Officer and pollsters in Canada to go speak and explain how to mount a campaign. All the parties in the Ukraine were invited to attend, and they could send delegates.

The difficulty is that if one party or a number of parties are to be supported directly, then that gets into the question of which parties are supported and which parties are not supported—which becomes the other very operative phrase—and on what basis. For instance, there are 157 parties—or another number, I can't remember exactly—in Iraq.

That's what I was trying to allude to. The numbers are a problem. The choice could be a problem. If there's a general approach and you get the expertise, but it's shared equally amongst all of those who wish to partake, then that is what I would suggest might be the way for us to go.

**Mr. Paul Dewar:** I also appreciate your comments about the fact that you are, hopefully, seeing them as independent bodies internationally. It would also be important for the country you're helping out to see that you're not with the “government”, and therefore a party. I think that's an excellent point. Is that understood internationally? Maybe it's not initially, but I'm sure you underline that you are not part of an arm of government or a party.

**Mr. Jean-Pierre Kingsley:** I make it a point whenever I go into another country to meet ministers, prime ministers, or presidents, and the other parties that are there, to make that point very clear to all of them. This is one of the strengths of what we do, actually. It's well appreciated by the media as well in those countries.

**Mr. Paul Dewar:** That's a good point.

Along those lines you've also referenced the idea of perhaps not going it alone. You are asked to do it, and it fits some criteria, which I'm sure you have when you are going to a certain country. Is it

important, in your opinion, to have a multilateral approach when you're approaching and supporting, particularly developing nations, that it not be just Canada going it alone, but that you be supported by other countries?

**Mr. Jean-Pierre Kingsley:** As a matter of fact, my remarks were meant to indicate that I don't think we should hesitate to go it alone, effectively, despite the fact that there are risks. I can only relate to the people whom we're trying to help, and we shouldn't hesitate.

Obviously, it's nice, and in some cases it's important, to have partners, and in other cases it's highly desirable, but I don't think it's essential. I don't think we should hesitate even if there are others to take the lead. If there's failure, there's failure, but the nobility of trying is still there. The fact that we're able to relate to the individuals we're trying to help is what matters to me, and I don't think we should hesitate on that.

● (1720)

**Mr. Paul Dewar:** I have one final question, Chair.

On page 8 you talk about the Democracy Council. I'm not aware of the Democracy Council. Could you elaborate a bit on that?

**Mr. Jean-Pierre Kingsley:** I thought others might have alluded to it in their appearances.

It's a group of NGOs and arm's-length organizations that has been set up within the Government of Canada under the aegis of CIDA and Foreign Affairs. It's co-chaired, co-presided, by the two deputies. Effectively it has become a forum for exchanges among the participants about where we are and what we're attempting to do.

What I was also alluding to in my remarks was that I think we need to establish all the democratic development needs of the countries in which we want to participate—I said this in my remarks in French—so that we have a total picture of everything that is required, and we get all of the people to intervene. Otherwise, if we do it on a piecemeal basis and help one sector because it is more visible, and not help the others, then maybe we're not doing as well as we could or getting as good a bang for the buck—which is always a preoccupation of people—as we could if we did provide that extra \$500,000 for people who would go and explain how a free media, a free press, works in a country like Canada. Sometimes that half million will make the other \$10 million that you've provided really pay off. Until we get the complete picture of the democratic needs of the country we're trying to assist, I don't think we're doing as well as we could be doing.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Dewar.

In reference to your Democracy Council, IDRC and the Parliamentary Centre are part of that, and they have been before our committee.

We're going to go very quickly to Mr. Patry, Mr. Goldring, and Madame Bourgeois for some very concise questions.

Mr. Patry.

[Translation]

**Mr. Bernard Patry:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Mr. Kingsley, Ms. Davidson, I'd like to go back to the elections in Haiti. I have two brief questions to ask. First, is it possible that the provisional electoral council may become a permanent electoral council? Every time there are elections, for security reasons, for various reasons, we have a lot of trouble finding people to be part of the provisional council, who can really work on a provisional electoral council.

Here's my second question. We know there are two presidential rounds — there was only one this time — and two legislative rounds, and that there will be municipal elections. So you're virtually going to have four elections in one year. Since senators are elected for six-year terms, there's going to be another election with alternating terms: 10 senators elected every two years. So there's going to be another election of 10 senators in two years. We also know that all that's well entrenched in the Haitian Constitution, that it's very difficult to amend that Constitution, that the cost of an election is enormous there and that it is completely funded by the international community.

Knowing all that, wouldn't it be possible to conduct studies to see if we couldn't twin, combine the legislative elections with the presidential or municipal elections? The money that's spent on elections could be spent in another way. It could be used to help relieve poverty, to help the country, which so needs it. I wonder, given the cost, whether the international community will still be able to support elections again and again. That's very costly, and Haitians currently can't afford to hold them themselves.

[English]

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Patry.

Mr. Kingsley.

[Translation]

**Mr. Jean-Pierre Kingsley:** Mr. Chair, that question precisely concerns an important part of the evidence that Mr. Bernard gave when he appeared before this committee during his last visit to Canada. In fact, the provisional electoral council will become a permanent electoral council once the municipal and local elections are over, because it is those bodies that will have to elect the members of the permanent electoral council. So this is a movement from the bottom up, as a result of which the members of the provisional electoral council will form the permanent electoral council. Obviously, that will succeed provided there is money to pay them a salary. That's provided for in the Constitution, and that's how it should work. That partly explains the importance of the municipal and local elections. The other part is ultimately to have a local power that meets the public's requirements more fully than if those people were appointed by a central authority.

As to the frequency of elections, Mr. Bernard noted that the cost will become astronomical, as you said, because of the frequency of the elections. Haitians will clearly have to reconsider how they want to manage that. I can tell you one thing: my international experience tells me it will be very difficult to get donors to take part again in the next elections, whether it be Canada, the United States, or the European Union, because people will feel they've made their big effort for the first three rounds of balloting. For the next ones, Haitians will have to get organized. So the Haitians will have to reconsider their constitution in that regard.

• (1725)

[English]

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Kingsley.

Madame Bourgeois.

[Translation]

**Ms. Diane Bourgeois:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I have two questions; I'll try to be brief.

Mr. Kingsley, our committee will have to submit a report in a few weeks on how we view the establishment of democracy. That's very important for us. I realize you have vast experience and that you're making points that we've heard elsewhere, coming from other countries. I see that you're all working together on democracy.

Is it possible to get your opinion in writing? You said earlier that democracy should be based on the values, history and culture of the country. I think that's extremely important. Have you previously compiled all your experience, and information in a document that you could file with the committee? That's my first question.

My second question is this. We see on your Web site that the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade determines whether Canada should take part in establishing democracy, that CIDA funds interventions and that Elections Canada provides the necessary competencies. I suppose that means three separate budgets.

Could you submit to us the budget that is allocated to you when you go to another country and make efforts to re-establish democracy? You said earlier that you were lacking resources.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Mr. Jean-Pierre Kingsley:** Mr. Chair, as regards a compendium of the thoughts of Elections Canada, or of the Chief Electoral Officer, regarding the international scene, I'll check to see whether we have anything on that subject. I have had occasion to make speeches on the international scene, and I would be pleased to provide you with such a document as soon as possible.

Second, as regards budgetary conditions, we can also inform you on that, but I can tell you that Elections Canada's efforts on the three voting rounds in Haiti have cost a little more than \$9 million. The cost for what we were able to accomplish in Irak was nearly \$2 million. We could submit more accurate figures to you in the case of other major missions in which we have taken part.

However, I'd like to add, with regard to my earlier remark, that, ultimately, when we have a majority government and I can deploy resources, out of our core budget, I do so. However, we can't respond to that kind of request out of our budget when we're dealing with a minority government or when a country in particular is asking for too much. I can't do that, and I can't hire experts from outside Elections Canada out of my budget because, in that case, I need the support of other government agencies. However, if we can afford to do it without impoverishing ourselves or Canadian voters, we do so. That can happen.

However, I'm going to cite the example of Nigeria. Its delegation, which recently visited us, asked me as they were leaving the country, if I could immediately provide them with planning experts, who would go with them on their flight back. That's what their country needs: people who know how to plan. That's a particular problem they're dealing with. But, no, I couldn't do that because of the Canadian government's minority situation.

I would need additional funding, and it isn't always easy to go and see CIDA to tell it that Nigeria needs a person and that it's going to cost \$25,000. That's not always easy because CIDA has its own needs. So it's not always easy for us to meet all demands.

• (1730)

[*English*]

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Kingsley, and thank you, Madame Bourgeois. That was a very good question.

We're very close...15-minute bells. We're close to where the bells are, so we'll take a very short, concise question from Mr. Goldring, and then we will conclude.

**Mr. Peter Goldring:** Mr. Kingsley, I was down in Guyana monitoring the elections there. Maybe you could just elaborate a bit on whether Elections Canada had any involvement in that and whether the election process we're helping with in Haiti would be following that model. Is there some commonality of modelling?

You've worked in 100 countries. How is it decided that Elections Canada will be involved in a country? Guyana now is one of the 25 countries under the aid list.

Also, in regard to the machinery that's put in there, in particular in Haiti—a considerable amount, hundreds of computers set up—is that equipment able to be reused in this upcoming election? In other words, is the massive amount of electronic equipment that's put in there maintained from election to election so that it can be reused again?

**Mr. Jean-Pierre Kingsley:** The answer to the latter question is yes, the same equipment is being used. The Conseils Électoral Provisoire continue to exist between the rounds, even though there

was difficulty in arriving at December 3 as an election date. There was a long hiatus there. Mr. Bernard spoke to us about this.

In terms of Guyana, Elections Canada was not involved in any way in the Guyanese election. I don't know who was from Canada, if anyone was.

**The Chair:** Are you invited to these places, or do we advertise or in any way say we're available to go help? Do we just sit back and wait? How do we let them know of our availability and our expertise?

**Mr. Jean-Pierre Kingsley:** Well, sometimes it will be the United Nations that will get in touch with me, sometimes it will be the OAS. They know of our capacity.

But in this particular case, the scenario that was being considered at one time was to mount an effort in Guyana similar to what we did in Haiti, but that fell apart.

Because they were so impressed with how things were done in Haiti, the CARICOM association wanted to mount something similar, but they dropped the idea, for whatever reasons—it may have been financial. After that, the interest evaporated. No one else approached us.

But to answer your question very directly, Mr. Chairman, people know of our availability around the world, and they call and ask. But we're not able to always accept. It so happens that we turn down opportunities. This is what I meant by saying that if just a few extra resources could be made available, the magic that would accomplish through Elections Canada, for Canada, around the world would be felt significantly.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

**Mr. Jean-Pierre Kingsley:** I feel I've been saved by the bell, by the way.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Mr. Kingsley and Madam Davidson, for being here and helping our committee. We always look forward to you, and we welcome you back any time.

We are adjourned.







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

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

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