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# Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development

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Chair: Mr. Ali Ehsassi





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Thursday, November 21, 2024

• (1600)

[English]

**The Chair (Mr. Ali Ehsassi (Willowdale, Lib.)):** I'd like to call this meeting to order.

Welcome to meeting number 128 of the House of Commons Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development.

Today's meeting is taking place in a hybrid format. I'd like to remind all members, as well as the witnesses, to please wait until I recognize you by name before speaking. If anyone's joining us virtually, please do feel free to raise your hand.

Pursuant to Standing Order 108(2) and the motions adopted by the committee on Monday, January 31, 2022, and Wednesday, October 19, 2022, the committee is resuming a briefing on the current situation in Haiti.

I'd now like to welcome our witnesses.

We're very grateful to have with us Ms. Shalini Anand, who is assistant deputy minister for the Americas branch at GAC. We have Mr. Sébastien Beaulieu back. He's the director general of emergency management, legal and consular affairs branch. We also have Ms. Sylvie Bédard, who's the director general for Central America and the Caribbean.

As I understand it, Ms. Anand will be doing the opening remarks.

Ms. Anand, the floor is yours. You have five minutes.

**Ms. Shalini Anand (Assistant Deputy Minister, Americas Branch, Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development):** Thank you.

[Translation]

Today I will be presenting an overview of the situation in Haiti and Canada's response.

[English]

Canada continues to take a comprehensive approach to this complex and evolving crisis by supporting Haitian security sector actors to reduce violence; by supporting the transitional government in restoring democratic institutions; by fighting corruption and human rights abuses; and finally, by alleviating suffering and supporting socio-economic recovery.

On the humanitarian front, gang violence has displaced over 700,000 Haitians, resulting in unprecedented instability and signifi-

cant strain on vital resources, including severe food shortages and limited health care access. The World Food Programme reports that eight million Haitians urgently need food assistance and 125,946 children are acutely malnourished. Furthermore, there is a troubling rise in the exploitation of children by armed gangs, notably by forced recruitment into the gangs. The use of sexual violence as a weapon of war is escalating, with UN statistics showing an increase of over 1,000% in 2024 compared with the previous year. Additionally, the Dominican Republic's ongoing deportations of undocumented Haitians threaten to worsen the humanitarian crisis.

Haiti faces significant challenges in holding elections by February 2026, the agreed-upon date. Taking things back, in March 2024 transitional Prime Minister Ariel Henry resigned in the context of escalating gang violence and a prolonged political deadlock. A nine-person transitional presidential council, or TPC, was set up in April to guide Haiti towards democracy and improve security. The TPC installed Garry Conille as the transition Prime Minister on May 28 of this year. Some initial progress was made, including the appointment of a provisional electoral council. Nevertheless, the overall transition process has been complex, hampered by accusations of corruption against three members of the TPC as well as increasing tensions between members and the sectors they represent. On November 10 of this year, the TPC replaced Prime Minister Conille with now Prime Minister Alix Didier Fils-Aimé, who installed his new cabinet on November 16.

Efforts to restore security have been led by the Haitian National Police, supported by the Kenyan-led multinational security support mission, or MSSM. They have been in place since June 2024. Despite the bravery shown by these joint forces, gang violence unfortunately continues to escalate. Last week three commercial flights were hit by bullets as they landed in Port-au-Prince, leading to the closure of the international airport and the indefinite suspension of commercial flights. The U.S. Federal Aviation Administration has prohibited all U.S. civilian flights to Haiti until at least December 15. This follows a period of increased violence, including a horrific massacre that claimed the lives of 115 people.

Canada has been working very hard to mobilize additional international support for the MSSM. Working with CARICOM, we have also engaged intensively with the transitional authorities, the TPC, to overcome some of the political impasses that have threatened this transition. Canada has committed more than \$400 million in international assistance to Haiti since 2022, and is the largest contributor to the MSSM after the United States, having contributed \$86.2 million.

We have been advising Canadians to avoid all travel to Haiti for more than two years now. The latest travel advisory update, on November 18, highlighted the closure of the airport in Port-Au-Prince and the suspension of flights by international airlines. Canadians in Haiti are of course encouraged to call the embassy of Canada in Port-au-Prince, which remains operational, or to reach out by phone, email or text to our emergency watch and response centre in Ottawa, which operates 24-7.

• (1605)

[Translation]

We are in constant communication with our ambassador and his security team in monitoring the security situation in the country. Security measures and a strict movement protocol are in place.

Our teams on the ground in Port-au-Prince are backing our diplomatic commitment, providing essential security and performing consular functions.

[English]

I would like to thank the committee members for their attention and engagement on this important and fast-evolving issue. Thank you all for having us.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Ms. Anand.

We will now start off with our first round of questioning. Each member will be provided six minutes for the first round and we start off with MP Epp.

**Mr. Dave Epp (Chatham-Kent—Leamington, CPC):** Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you to the witnesses for appearing today.

Canada is a country of law and order and by all accounts, from what we're hearing, unfortunately Haiti, or at least the part of it under gang rule, is not. This committee has undertaken a study of the effectiveness of our sanctions regime and last June the minister imposed further sanctions on Haitian gang leaders.

Can you talk about whether those sanctions have been effective? Are we seeing any effect? Do the Haitian gang leaders have some assets or trade or interests in Canada where these sanctions might be effective?

• (1610)

**Ms. Shalini Anand:** I will begin and then I will turn to my colleague, Sylvie Bédard.

I will simply note that part of our four pillars of engagement in Haiti includes a fight against impunity, and indeed one of the things that Canada has done has been to impose 31 autonomous sanctions against gang members and political leaders with either corruption or gang affiliations.

I will turn to Sylvie to give a little bit more detail on the sanctions situation.

[Translation]

**Mrs. Sylvie Bédard (Director General, Central America and Caribbean, Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development):** Mr. Chair, as my colleague said, sanctions are one of the tools we use as part of our Canadian response in Haiti. Many reports published by experts from the UN Sanctions Committee re-

veal the extent to which the sanctions imposed under the Canadian and U.S. autonomous regimes, as well as UN sanctions, have brought about changes in the behaviour of political and economic elites in Haiti.

The Haitians with whom we're in regular contact tell us they're definitely seeing that the elites now think first before getting involved in corrupt acts.

However, sanctions aren't effective if used in isolation. We have to continue supporting traditional governance bodies as they transition.

[English]

**Mr. Dave Epp:** Thank you.

In your testimony, Ms. Anand, you referenced that the Dominican Republic has repatriated, basically, the undocumented back to Haiti. The incoming U.S. President has also announced that he will revoke Haitian temporary protected status in the U.S.

Are we, the CBSA and our government, preparing to receive more Haitian refugees, and if so, can you outline those preparations?

**Ms. Shalini Anand:** Mr. Chair, I will start with the part on the Dominican Republic and then move on to the other two parts of the question.

Canada is very concerned about the welfare of those being deported and the destabilizing impacts in Haiti of the decision of the Dominican Republic. That being said, it is also important to recognize the impact that the Haitian crisis has had on the Dominican Republic and the support that the Dominican Republic has provided to date to Haitian migrants, especially in the education and health sectors. We want to acknowledge that.

We are working very closely with our regional partners and through international organizations like the International Organization for Migration, or IOM, to reduce irregular migration and ensure lawful migration pathways where human rights, safety and dignity of all deportees are in compliance with international human rights obligations. That is on the question about the DR.

On the United States, Mr. Chair, I am not in a position to speculate on what the position of the new Trump administration on Haiti will be.

**Mr. Dave Epp:** Can you talk about Canada's preparations?

**Ms. Shalini Anand:** I would simply note that for the time being, from the perspective of our IRCC, what they have done is they have a temporary program, and I'm not sure if I have the name at my fingertips, but the IRCC has opted to extend the temporary program that they have for Haitian permanent residents until 2025.

In terms of CBSA preparations, I do not have information at my fingertips, so I would have to defer to CBSA colleagues.

**Mr. Dave Epp:** Thank you.

In your response, you referred to “irregular migration”. I come from an area of the country that has a very innovative sector, and 12,000 to 15,000 temporary foreign workers are here through a great program. However, we also have an estimated 2,000 to 3,000 irregular, undocumented individuals in my home region.

What is the CBSA doing to prevent another Roxham Road? I can declare, through personal interviews in my hometown, that some of those undocumented individuals have come through that avenue. What are the preparations for that not occurring again?

• (1615)

**Ms. Shalini Anand:** Mr. Chair, we are doing our best to ensure colleagues take a whole-of-government approach, are conscious of these types of potential challenges and have appropriate contingency plans.

As to the CBSA's preparations, I would have to defer to colleagues at the CBSA. I'm happy to come back to the honourable member in writing, with his support.

**Mr. Dave Epp:** Could you table that with the committee?

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

We next go to MP Chatel.

You have six minutes.

[*Translation*]

**Mrs. Sophie Chatel (Pontiac, Lib.):** Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

Welcome to the witnesses.

The situation is absolutely devastating. I'm thinking in particular of the women and children, who are often the first victims of these wars, these dramatic situations.

Thank you very much for your work and for what you're doing. It's extremely important. We have a large Haitian diaspora, especially in Quebec, all of whom are greatly affected by the situation in Haiti.

We've closely monitored the situation, and we're proud to be here to support humanitarian aid.

You said that we've invested \$400 million in aid to Haiti since 2002 and that we are the number two contributor, after the United States, to the Multinational Security Support Mission, or MSSM, in Haiti. It's important to emphasize that.

Would you please tell me how that aid is actually being used on the ground?

[*English*]

**Ms. Shalini Anand:** Mr. Chair, I'm happy to speak about that. Then I will turn to my colleague Sylvie, in case she has anything further to add on the situation.

Indeed, we have spent \$400 million since 2022. Canada has long been investing in and supporting Haiti on the humanitarian front. Before we give detailed examples of the results of that important aid work, I will note, from a broader strategic perspective, the way

Canada is operating in Haiti. It is with a view to undertaking a very comprehensive approach to the support we are providing.

We have a four-pillar strategy to address the crisis.

First, as the honourable member noted, we have contributed, from a security perspective, to the MSSM with a view to underlaying and bolstering support for the Haitian National Police, in order to ensure the solution remains Haitian-led.

Second, from a democratic principles perspective, we have invested a lot of diplomatic time, energy and funds to ensure there is a pathway to free and fair elections by February 2026.

Third, we have invested in the fight against impunity, including through sanctions.

Finally, we have looked at both humanitarian aid and development aid. There are a few terrific examples, particularly in the area of support for women and children.

I will turn to my colleague, who can give you some of those examples.

[*Translation*]

**Mrs. Sylvie Bédard:** Yes, no one can remain indifferent to the catastrophic situation in which Haiti and Haitians currently find themselves.

Allow me to give you a few examples of the aid that's being provided locally.

Every day, 400,000 children receive meals as a result of Canada's contribution to the world food programme.

The schools are currently closed in Port-au-Prince as a result of the security situation there. However, the children wind up in the displaced persons camps. In some instances, those same schools are being used as displaced persons camps. The daily meals for children are also delivered to the displaced persons camps when the schools are closed. There are also tens of millions—

**Mrs. Sophie Chatel:** It would be great if you could send us those examples in writing.

My speaking time is flying by, but I'm dying to ask this question. The situation in Haiti is terrible right now, but there's also been a lot of talk about a potential peacekeeping mission. I'd really like you to tell us more about that mission, which is apparently supported by 70% of Haitians.

What form would that mission take and what would Canada's role be?

• (1620)

[English]

**Ms. Shalini Anand:** We are in continual discussions for a possible peacekeeping mission. It is our understanding that discussions to date have not led to a successful UN vote in support of a peacekeeping mission, so that has led us to work through a temporary workaround solution, which is what we have done using the UN trust.

We have helped fund and found the multinational security support mission in Haiti. That is the avenue we are presently working through, but we are continuing discussions to see if we can advance progress on a potential peacekeeping mission. We continue to plug in with allies, and discuss that possibility.

[Translation]

**Mrs. Sophie Chatel:** I would have liked to know if there were any obstacles, but I'm out of time.

Thank you very much.

[English]

**The Chair:** Thank you, MP Chatel.

We now go to MP Trudel.

[Translation]

**Mr. Denis Trudel (Longueuil—Saint-Hubert, BQ):** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Thank you for being here, Ms. Anand.

I am the member for Longueuil—Saint-Hubert, where we have a large Haitian community. I believe that 87% of the Canadian Haitian community currently live in Quebec, and many members of that community have settled in Longueuil.

In the spring, I gathered together nine Haitian women of various statuses. They have been here for two, three, even five years with one or two of their children, having left two or three more behind. Given the present situation, that was awful for them. They obviously left their children with their grandmothers in a remote village partly populated by armed gangs. I prepared a file, which I submitted to Minister Miller. It was very complicated, but we managed to repatriate three children of those three women. Six cases are still outstanding.

I have a very specific question for you. Even through all these efforts, one fact has been clear to us. You said that our embassy was open in Haiti.

We already had a visa office in Haiti, but we don't know whether it's open or closed. I'm talking about the visa office in Port-au-Prince.

Is it open or closed?

[English]

**Ms. Shalini Anand:** At present, our office in Port-au-Prince does remain open. I believe we still have IRCC staff, as well as consular staff, offering essential services through that mission.

[Translation]

**Mr. Denis Trudel:** A week or two ago, we met with people from the Haitian community in Montreal. There was a celebration on *Samedi midi inter*, a Montreal radio station very popular with the Haitian community. People from the community were there and they're obviously very concerned about what's happening in Haiti.

Is Global Affairs Canada working with the Haitian community? Are you conducting consultations? Are you discussing potential solutions with people from the community?

The people obviously seemed concerned, but they felt the government wasn't doing enough. People in the community may not be aware enough of the measures we're taking. They seemed to be saying that Canada isn't doing enough. They asked us what the House of Commons was doing to improve the present situation, which is terrible.

Are you consulting people in the communities across Canada, and more specifically in Quebec, to raise awareness of the solutions that people in the Haitian community who live here have in mind?

[English]

**Ms. Shalini Anand:** In short, yes, we consult actively. Global Affairs Canada is committed to strengthening its exchanges with members of the Haitian diaspora. We often seek their views on Canada's involvement in Haiti and on ideas for solutions. Our continued engagement with the Haitian diaspora here and with Haitian people helped underpin the foundations of our strategy to ensure that the solutions we are pursuing in Haiti are Haitian-led and Haitian-owned solutions.

In addition to ministerial involvement—and I will give an example of that in a moment—GAC does plan regular exchanges with immigrant integration organizations, Haitian churches and international aid partners. We also have political dialogue advocacy organizations and Haitian student organizations that we've consulted, among others.

Most recently, in mid-October, Minister Joly and Minister Hussen hosted a round table discussion in Montreal with members of the diaspora community. I should note that Canada's current ambassador to Haiti, André François Giroux, meets regularly with representatives of the Haitian diaspora in Canada as well.

We are quite conscious of the diaspora numbers. Our data show 165,000 people in Canada. They form a diverse and influential network that we actively seek to engage to ensure that their perspectives are reflected in the solutions that we develop.

• (1625)

[Translation]

**Mr. Denis Trudel:** All right, thank you.

Let's change the subject. Earlier we discussed Mr. Conille, who was installed as the transitional head of the presidential council and who has been replaced by Mr. Fils-Aimé. Canada was quick to acknowledge that appointment, which has been strongly criticized, on social media a week ago. Mr. Macron said it was a terrible decision on Canada's part.

Is Canada the only country that has recognized Mr. Fils-Aimé's appointment?

[English]

**Ms. Shalini Anand:** Canada acknowledged the transitional presidential council, or TPC, decision to appoint a new prime minister. We had a very positive working relationship with PM Conille and we are ready to work with new Prime Minister Fils-Aimé.

I am not in a position, Mr. Chair, to speculate about Mr. Macron's comments on—

[Translation]

**Mr. Denis Trudel:** What criteria did Canada rely on in recognizing Mr. Fils-Aimé's appointment?

[English]

**Ms. Shalini Anand:** I'll invite my colleague to speak.

[Translation]

**Mrs. Sylvie Bédard:** Canada, the United States and our partners in the Caribbean Community, or CARICOM, took note of the change of prime minister that was decided by the transitional presidential council. In so doing, we also underscored how important it is for the transitional presidential council to focus on its major priorities, which are to restore democratic order and security and to establish clear accountability measures for the Haitian executive as a whole.

The situation regarding the transitional government bodies in Haiti is very complicated. As you'll remember, it took two years to put it in place. In fact, last March was the first time that such a large number of political sectors had joined forces to establish a government body. However, the situation remains tenuous. There's talk of a dual executive, with the transitional presidential council on the one hand and the prime minister on the other. It's particularly difficult—

[English]

**The Chair:** Madam Bédard, I'm sorry. I'm going to have to cut you off. We're quite a bit over.

MP McPherson, you have six minutes.

**Ms. Heather McPherson (Edmonton Strathcona, NDP):** Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

Thank you very much for being here and sharing this information with us. I think everyone in this room and across Canada is very deeply concerned about what we are hearing on what is happening in Haiti, and what is happening to the Haitian people.

A lot of what we've heard so far is very concerning. We met recently with Doctors Without Borders/Médecins Sans Frontières, and we learned even just today that they've been forced to suspend all medical activities in Port-au-Prince due to escalating threats and violence, including from some members of the Haitian National Police. This has included threats to execute MSF staff and patients and to destroy ambulances. Also, two patients were executed.

This suspension leaves thousands of Haitians without life-saving medical care each week. We know that Canada is funding the Haitian National Police with millions of dollars and equipment. I

believe this is very important to do, but given the concerns about threats from some of the Haitian National Police towards humanitarian workers, what steps is Canada taking to ensure that the police, who they are funding, training and equipping, are obeying the law and acting appropriately? How is Canada ensuring that Canadian funds and equipment aren't being used to perpetrate violence, threats to humanitarian workers and human rights abuses towards Haitians?

• (1630)

[Translation]

**Mrs. Sylvie Bédard:** That's a very important question, Mr. Chair, and it's central to the way we're thinking about and planning our program in Haiti.

Canada expressed considerable concern following the events that you describe and that targeted Médecins sans frontières and humanitarian workers in Haiti, and it reminded everyone of our considerable responsibility to protect those workers there.

As regards our program and our support for the Haitian National Police, an enormous amount of work has been done to ensure that we perform our duty of diligence and responsibility. Under one of our measures, our program is being established in co-operation with long-standing partners, multilateral agencies that have all the necessary capacity to monitor spending and ensure that it is done responsibly. Thanks to our team on the ground, in particular the coordination and humanitarian assistance group directed by Canada, we are in regular touch with the Haitian National Police and conduct frequent visits on the ground to verify procurement, for example.

Lastly, the training that the RCMP offers the Haitian National Police includes polygraph training to screen new recruits and certain members of the Haitian National Police's strategic units. It also includes inspection and leadership training to prevent the kind of disruption and situations you refer to.

[English]

**Ms. Heather McPherson:** Thank you for that.

I'm not saying the money should not be spent. I'm just wondering what has been put in place to ensure the Haitian police are receiving the training so that they are not committing those humanitarian abuses. It's not the effectiveness of the spending or what sorts of resources and supplies they have, but rather what training is being provided. Now that we have seen that Haitian police are alleged to have perpetrated crimes against humanitarian workers and against patients, what steps is Canada taking to ensure that training is in place?

[Translation]

**Mrs. Sylvie Bédard:** Mr. Chair, Canada is working with the Haitian National Police in two complementary fields of action to ensure that training is properly provided by the right people.

The first is the International Security Assistance Coordination Group, which Canada established at the request of the Haitian National Police to screen training offers that were coming in from many partners around the world and to work with the Haitian National Police to determine what its priorities are and what's most relevant to its needs in its present situation.

Canada, together with RCMP officers through the interministerial group that was established, is assisting the Haitian National Police in developing relevant training plans that better meet its needs.

At the same time, Canada is involved, through the RCMP, in a training plan that's being executed by the latter. Given the present situation of insecurity, the training that the RCMP is providing to the Haitian National Police is currently being done in Jamaica, not Haiti, so that as much training as possible can be provided despite the situation on the ground in Haiti.

• (1635)

[*English*]

**Ms. Heather McPherson:** I would encourage the Canadian government to look at specific training that looks at the protection of humanitarian workers and the protection of human rights.

Thank you.

**The Chair:** We will now go to the second round of five minutes each.

We're starting off with MP Hoback.

**Mr. Randy Hoback (Prince Albert, CPC):** Thank you, Chair.

Thank you, witnesses, for being here this afternoon.

Is it fair to say we've at least stabilized the region now? Are there any indications of the destabilization of Haiti actually going to the Dominican Republic or any of the other Caribbean islands?

Are we seeing any grounding of organized crime or other networks locating in Haiti?

**Ms. Shalini Anand:** I'm hesitant to speculate or to indicate that there won't be any future regional instability. For the moment, the gang situation in Haiti seems largely contained to Haiti, in that the neighbouring Dominican Republic, aside from migration challenges—which I mentioned in my opening intervention—seems to be okay.

One of Canada's continued and vested interests in our engagement in Haiti is to make sure that regional stability remains and does not spill over into other parts of the hemisphere.

**Mr. Randy Hoback:** You said Minister Joly had a round table in Montreal. What were the actual items that came out of the round table, and where are they at?

**Ms. Shalini Anand:** I'll turn to my colleague, Madame Bédard.

[*Translation*]

**Mrs. Sylvie Bédard:** Mr. Chair, the areas of interest we've discussed with Montreal's Haitian community include all issues related to agricultural development and the strengthening of judicial and penal systems.

The point that was particularly raised was that it's important to focus on stabilizing the security situation but, at the same time, that work must be done to strengthen the judicial and penal system, which is now quite fragile in Haiti. Transportation infrastructure has also been discussed.

[*English*]

**Mr. Randy Hoback:** I was just curious. Those are all good things.

If you had the rule of law in place and if you had a functioning government in place, then those would be all noble causes to work towards, which I think we should be a part of. How can you water down what we need to do over the short term if you're spending so much time looking at things in the long term?

**Ms. Shalini Anand:** The situation in Haiti is indeed complex and challenging.

Canada has attempted, with our strategy, to do both, I think. First, we have taken an approach where we look at the fundamental areas that need to underpin a safe society while also taking into account the feedback that we hear from the Haitian diaspora community.

To review those pillars, we are looking at some of those initial fundamental pieces, as the honourable member had noted. First and foremost, we have invested heavily in the security improvement situation in—

**Mr. Randy Hoback:** I only get five minutes. I don't mean to be rude.

I'm curious. There are other countries in the region that have expertise in dealing with gangs. I'll use Colombia as an example, yet Colombia may not have the financial wherewithal to come in and participate.

Have we looked at how we could participate with allies, friends or people within the region to use their strengths and resources in shoring up and getting that rule of law under control, especially with countries that have expertise in doing exactly that?

• (1640)

**Ms. Shalini Anand:** Yes. Canada is working hand in glove with allied countries throughout the Caribbean and the region and with the UN, building on their expertise in this area, as well as allies like the U.S. I can give you a sense that even from a security perspective alone, we are providing training for battalions coming from Jamaica, Belize, Guatemala, the Bahamas, El Salvador and, of course, Kenya. Many of these countries have experiences that the honourable member indicated.

**Mr. Randy Hoback:** Why Kenya? I find it so amazing that we have to go to Africa to get that support, and we couldn't do it in our own backyard. We couldn't put together that type of network among the countries within the western hemisphere.

Why did we have to go to Kenya?

**The Chair:** Answer very briefly.

**Ms. Shalini Anand:** Very briefly, Mr. Chair, the countries in the western Hemisphere have contributed considerably, including contributions through the MSSM and a number of the countries in the Caribbean that I named.

We are deeply grateful to Kenya for their ongoing involvement, including their first deployment and their next deployment, which is upcoming.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

Next, we go to MP Zuberi.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Sameer Zuberi (Pierrefonds—Dollard, Lib.):** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Thanks to the witnesses for being with us today.

[*English*]

This is a really important update on Haiti.

We talked earlier about the UN and the attempts to have a UN peacekeeping mission. I understand that a poll in October 2023 showed that 70% of Haitians reported support for an international mission.

Is this 70% support for an international mission similar to support in other areas where blue helmets are deployed, to your knowledge? I'm curious about that.

**Ms. Shalini Anand:** Mr. Chair, I apologize. I do not have that data point at my fingertips, but I am happy to return to the honourable member if that data point is available.

**Mr. Sameer Zuberi:** Thanks.

My understanding is that at the Security Council, both China and Russia prevented a UN peacekeeping mission in Haiti. Is that correct?

**Ms. Shalini Anand:** Yes, to our knowledge. That is what we understand.

**Mr. Sameer Zuberi:** On the multinational security support mission in Haiti, which started in October 2023 and has been renewed for another year, my understanding is that there are currently 410 police officers on the ground and the idea is to grow the mission to 2,500.

How far along are we in that growth, and when is that growth expected to happen?

**Ms. Shalini Anand:** I will take a moment to expand on the growth plans and turn to my colleague in case she has anything to add.

Jamaica plans to deploy approximately 200 additional personnel. This is expected in January 2025, so it is upcoming. Belize has plans to deploy 50 personnel, including 20 infantry and 30 coast guard personnel, and it is planning to sync up with Jamaica, so it looks like a January 2025 deployment for Belize as well.

Guatemala plans to deploy military police. That's a unit of 150 personnel, including 18 to 19 female personnel, which is encouraging. That is anticipated for mid- to late December 2024.

The Bahamas is planning to deploy 50 maritime personnel, including an offshore patrol vessel and rigid inflatable boats operated by its command, and it hopes to do so imminently.

El Salvador has plans to deploy three personnel in Haiti directly, as well as 75 personnel to the Dominican Republic. The deployment has been slightly delayed on account of the need for additional training and vaccinations to be completed, and medevac plans, but a new date is anticipated quite soon.

In addition to the personnel it has already deployed, Kenya plans to deploy another 600-plus additional personnel, including 40 female SWAT operators. That date is now anticipated to be December 14.

• (1645)

**Mr. Sameer Zuberi:** Excellent.

I did the math. There are 1,125 more personnel, including in the DR, plus three.

**Ms. Shalini Anand:** That's impressively quick.

**Mr. Sameer Zuberi:** That's good news.

I'm curious about the blue helmets that we were hoping to deploy. What was the footprint of the presence, as it relates to this expected increase in the MSSM? What was the expected presence of blue helmets that we were looking for, if you could compare and contrast?

**Ms. Shalini Anand:** I'll turn to my colleague.

**Mrs. Sylvie Bédard:** Mr. Chair, the list of deployments being planned is very much what we're hoping for. Those are also linked to the capacity of the base to receive more personnel.

At the moment, in Port-au-Prince, the local base for the MSSM can have up to 1,000 police officers and soldiers, including women. Thanks to Canada's contribution, we made sure that there were safe spaces for women. It's very important to have women as part of the MSSM in order to help with the implementation of the compliance mechanism in place to prevent sexual abuse and exploitation.

Once this base is full, the plan is to establish what is called "forward operating bases" in various areas of Port-au-Prince in neighbourhood departments to be able to accommodate more police force.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

We next go to Mr. Trudel.

You have two and a half minutes.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Denis Trudel:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I would like to discuss arms trafficking because it's also important, even vitally important. According to one BBC article, armed groups now have, for example, 9mm pistols and AK-47s, a weapon that has considerable strike force. According to a report that the UN published in 2020, there were probably half a million legal and illegal firearms in the country at that time. It also stated that weapons were being transported by land, air and sea and that there were various points of entry.

What is Canada doing to prevent arms trafficking in Haiti?

Incidentally, according to that same UN report, the weapons were mainly coming from Florida, Texas and Georgia, in particular.

Are any discussions being conducted with the Americans? How does that work?

**Mrs. Sylvie Bédard:** Illegal arms trafficking is a major concern for Canada. It's obviously part of our integrated approach to the present crisis. Canada is striving to prevent arms trafficking by supporting partner organizations such as the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. We're also working with the Organization of American States, which is involved in the fight against illegal arms trafficking and, in particular, in increasing the capacity of Haitian border agents, who are on the front line in controlling arms trafficking.

We also support the efforts made through the UN Security Council's sanctions regime, which has been put in place to monitor arms trafficking closely. In its reports, the Security Council comments, for example, on the routes used for arms trafficking purposes and assists international partners in taking the necessary measures to restrict it. In addition, Canada and other partners have established a sanctions regime targeting political and economic elites who finance the purchase of weapons and munitions by gangs in Haiti.

• (1650)

**Mr. Denis Trudel:** When you say political elites, who are you talking about? Can you give us some names?

I see my time is up. Thank you.

[English]

**The Chair:** The last time I gave you a lot of latitude, and you were almost two minutes over.

Madame McPherson, you have two and a half minutes.

**Ms. Heather McPherson:** Thank you very much.

Thank you for the answer to that question from my colleague from the Bloc. I understand you've said that we are supporting the UN and we are discussing with the U.S.

Has Canada allocated funding and resources to investigate? Have we invested in stopping the flow of ammunition and weapons?

[Translation]

**Mrs. Sylvie Bédard:** The answer is yes. I don't have the exact figures, but in the context of the projects involving the United Nations and the Organization of American States, the OAS, more than \$15 million has been granted to those partners to monitor the situation closely and to increase capacity to combat arms trafficking in Haiti.

[English]

**Ms. Heather McPherson:** Thank you.

I wanted to also follow up on the question that was asked by our Liberal colleagues. We talk about the peacekeeping mission. Russia and China have denied it becoming an official UN peacekeeping mission. At the moment Canada—if I understand correctly—has 21 peacekeepers in UN missions around the world. Of those, there is

only one who is a woman, and there are 10 police. Would we even have the capacity, with such a low number of peacekeepers, to participate in a UN peacekeeping mission, if that were to happen?

**Ms. Shalini Anand:** Mr. Chair, I don't have the data points that the honourable member has in front of me, but certainly we can investigate that and come back in writing, unless my colleague has anything further to add on the numbers.

**Ms. Heather McPherson:** It's not necessarily on the numbers but it's even the idea that Canada at this point is wildly under-represented in UN peacekeeping, despite the fact that the current administration promised that several hundred peacekeepers would be deployed around the world. At this point, we have a couple of dozen. I'm just wondering, regardless of the numbers, whether or not we have the capacity to engage in peacekeeping anymore as a country.

**Ms. Shalini Anand:** Mr. Chair, I'm happy to come back to the honourable member in writing in terms of our capacity, but I don't have that information at my fingertips. Certainly, we are in discussion on that piece of the puzzle, but we have not advanced discussion to that level of detail.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

Now we go to MP Aboultaif.

You have five minutes.

**Mr. Ziad Aboultaif (Edmonton Manning, CPC):** Thank you for your generosity, Mr. Chair, and thank you to the panel for appearing.

President Macron criticized the dismissal of the prime minister by the transitional presidential council, blaming Haitians for “letting drug trafficking take over”.

Drug trafficking may lead, of course, to money laundering. I was hoping the minister would be here to answer a question of that scale. Hopefully, Canada's assistance there is not jeopardized or exposed to the money laundering in that country. Do you have any idea where these cartels, beside money laundering, are getting their funds to be able to control 85% of the country?

**Ms. Shalini Anand:** Indeed the situation is very challenging, and there is certainly a cartel and gang problem in Haiti. While I won't speculate on Mr. Macron's comments, I will note that one of the mechanisms Canada uses to ensure that our aid is getting into the right hands is to work with international partners that have deep experience in these types of challenging states with these types of circumstances.

Another mechanism we use is a continued evaluation and monitoring of the results of that aid, to ensure that it is getting into the right hands and delivering the types of results my colleague mentioned earlier.

Those are some of the mechanisms we take to ensure that our assistance is being used in a manner that aligns with the intended outcomes we've set out.

• (1655)

**Mr. Ziad Aboultaif:** Can you be specific about any provisions Canada has taken since April 2003 to ensure, again, that Canadian taxpayers' money that has been given, supposedly to help and support the less fortunate in Haiti, is not contributing to money laundering, by any chance? I would like to hear that, for the record, to make sure we know exactly what measures Canada has taken. Also, I need some more evidence on that, if you don't mind.

[Translation]

**Mrs. Sylvie Bédard:** We've talked enough about sanctions with regard to the 31 individuals who belong to the Haitian political and economic elite. In addition, Canada is the biggest contributor to the trust fund in support of the multinational security support mission for Haiti. Canada has contributed more than \$6 million to that fund, which supports various reforms, such as the Unité de lutte contre la corruption, in Haiti. That organization closely monitors the allegations of corruption that are made against certain persons in Haiti, and it is responsible for conducting the necessary investigations.

[English]

**Mr. Ziad Aboultaif:** In the past six years of training, what we call “peacekeeping” missions.... Unfortunately, the impression is that Canada ended up training cartel members. How are we making sure that we don't repeat this mistake? That is where we're going, whether through the aid we give and the training we give, or if we're going to be part of a peacekeeping mission—although China believes that there is no peace to keep there.

[Translation]

**Mrs. Sylvie Bédard:** Mr. Chair, I discussed the group that Canada directs and that coordinates assistance to the Haitian National Police. One of the biggest priorities established with regard to that coordination group was to initiate Canada's co-operation by setting up an office responsible for screening candidates wishing to take the training offered to members of the Haitian National Police. That office has been operational since April 2023.

In addition, the RCMP has offered polygraph training to members of the Haitian National Police. Participants in various police training courses must first be screened by means of a polygraph test. The aim is precisely to ensure that they aren't lower-rank members of criminal groups. Those two measures that have been taken have changed the situation regarding the selection of candidates wishing to take part in training programs.

[English]

**Mr. Ziad Aboultaif:** Thank you.

**The Chair:** Next we go to Mr. Oliphant for five minutes.

**Hon. Robert Oliphant (Don Valley West, Lib.):** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I want to follow up on the question that Ms. McPherson raised. I think it's really important. I wasn't sure I was liking where we're going on this. I want to raise the issue very specifically of Médecins Sans Frontières and the closing of its operations yesterday but also, generally speaking, of those who are helped by Canada to provide support in that.

We got down a hole there about training. I don't want to go down that hole about training because these are people who we in Canada call peace officers. These are police forces. These are people who are there to protect the people that Canada has spent a lot of time and money training, supporting and engaging.

They're threatening to kill Médecins Sans Frontières staff. They pull ambulances over and threaten to kill the patients. They threaten to kill patients in hospitals.

Médecins Sans Frontières acts every day in countries all around the world, facing extreme danger. That's what they do, and we support them in doing that. I personally support them in doing that, but not for them to get attacked by police officers in uniform, SWAT officers in uniform, and ununiformed police officers.

I'm not buying the training discussion. Help us unravel this. What could Canada do? What should we do? What can we do with our partners? This is extraordinary; this is not normal.

• (1700)

**Ms. Shalini Anand:** We agree. This is an extraordinary and very gravely concerning situation. Clearly, there are some bad actors within the HNP.

We won't go back down the training spiral, as you noted, but it is one of the ways that we have been working closely with allies to try to get out ahead of this kind of behaviour and prevent these types of individuals from being a part of the HNP in the first place, so we can avoid these types of bad actors as part of the HNP.

In terms of next steps, we are engaging with allies. I believe our embassy on the ground has also been in touch with U.S. and UN allies to discuss the situation.

I don't have further insights into some of the other steps we've taken, given that this news has just reached us quite recently, but I will turn to my colleague. We are taking the situation very seriously and we agree that these bad—

**Hon. Robert Oliphant:** Are there other tools in the tool box? I mean, we have spent money on development. We've spent money on humanitarian assistance in crises, including earthquakes and other climate-related crises. We've attempted to shore up with training of both police and other parts of the government.

Are we missing something? Is there something where we, as Canadians, could follow another country's model about how we support?

Is there something you can tell the committee that maybe we haven't thought of? Could we have a new wild idea about what we do?

**Ms. Shalini Anand:** There are perhaps two additional areas that we are investing in and need to continue to invest in. Canada has played a leading role on the international stage in trying to encourage more investment into the MSSM to ensure the Haitian National Police, which are currently being backstopped or supported by the MSSM, are appropriately supported and trained. There is something to say about increasing the numbers of that MSSM support, so that there is less risk of gang and corruption impacts on the Haitian National Police.

That is an area where Canada has played a leading role on the world stage. We continue to invest as the second-largest investor in that security situation.

As my colleague has already mentioned and I mentioned earlier, we are pursuing sanctions to identify bad actors and create a deterrent threat.

**Hon. Robert Oliphant:** What are the discussions with CARICOM in this context? We generally think those closest to the neighbour should understand best. I don't mind at all that Kenya—

**The Chair:** Give a very brief response.

[Translation]

**Mrs. Sylvie Bédard:** Mr. Chair, co-operation with the Caribbean Community, CARICOM, is actually an innovative feature of Canada's current response. The community, the Caribbean countries, previously weren't involved in the search for solutions to the various challenges in Haiti. Now they're involved in strengthening both political governance and security.

[English]

**The Chair:** Thank you.

We next go to MP Chong.

You have five minutes.

• (1705)

**Hon. Michael Chong (Wellington—Halton Hills, CPC):** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

[Translation]

Thanks to the witnesses who are here today. I have a few questions for them.

First, how many Canadian citizens are currently in Haiti?

[English]

**Ms. Shalini Anand:** Mr. Chair, at the moment our latest data is based on Canadians who register through our consular services.

It is about 3,000. I will just turn to my colleague to validate the exact number.

**Mr. Sébastien Beaulieu (Director General, Emergency Management, Legal and Consular Affairs Branch, Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development):** That is correct.

**Hon. Michael Chong:** Thank you.

There was reference to members of the Canadian Armed Forces and to the RCMP.

Just to clarify, do you know how many members of the Canadian Armed Forces and members of the RCMP are present in Haiti? If you don't, that's fine, but please provide that information to the committee, if you could.

[Translation]

**Mrs. Sylvie Bédard:** At the moment, three RCMP members are in Haiti. No members of the Canadian Armed Forces are there.

**Hon. Michael Chong:** Thank you.

[English]

How many diplomatic and consular officials do we have in Haiti today?

**Ms. Shalini Anand:** Presently, we have 22 members of our diplomatic corps. That includes the consular—

**Hon. Michael Chong:** Does that include locally engaged staff?

**Ms. Shalini Anand:** Presently, there are 22 Canadians in Haiti.

**Hon. Michael Chong:** There are 22 Canadians plus locally engaged staff, is that correct?

**Ms. Shalini Anand:** That's correct.

**Hon. Michael Chong:** Thank you. I appreciate that.

I want to turn to the financial assets we've provided for Haiti. The government announced \$86.2 million to support the MSSM. Has all of that money been dispensed? It has. Thank you.

How much has Canada contributed to the United Nations inter-agency humanitarian response plan for 2024? The UN had called for \$673.8 million. How much has Canada contributed to that?

[Translation]

**Mrs. Sylvie Bédard:** Canada's contribution in this regard amounts to \$23 million, but the international community has met only 46% of the demand.

**Hon. Michael Chong:** Thank you, Mrs. Bédard.

You said that 31 Haitian individuals had been sanctioned by the Canadian government.

How many of them own houses or assets here in Canada?

**Mrs. Sylvie Bédard:** We don't have that information to hand, but we can send it to you.

[English]

**Hon. Michael Chong:** I would appreciate that.

The former Haitian prime minister has also been sanctioned. He challenged the sanctioning in federal court.

Can you tell us what the status of that court case is right now?

[Translation]

**Mrs. Sylvie Bédard:** From what we understand, the case is still before the courts.

[English]

**Hon. Michael Chong:** Has it gone to trial yet?

[Translation]

**Mrs. Sylvie Bédard:** I don't have that information, but we will get it to you.

**Hon. Michael Chong:** Thank you.

Have any other individuals challenged the sanctioning in Federal Court?

**Mrs. Sylvie Bédard:** Yes, we've received on a number of challenges concerning the sanctioning. They're following the legal process.

**Hon. Michael Chong:** How many have you received?

**Mrs. Sylvie Bédard:** I don't have that information either. We'll send it to you.

**Hon. Michael Chong:** All right, thank you.

[English]

Do we have any other assets in the region that could be brought to bear in Haiti, for example, diplomatic assets, military assets or development assets?

**Ms. Shalini Anand:** At the moment, we have focused most of our assets directly in Haiti. We certainly have colleagues in neighbouring missions who have provided support, including in the DR. We also have had colleagues work out of neighbouring missions, when the security situation, for instance, has been elevated or aggravated. We are using our diplomatic network to support our current Canadian operations. Beyond that, we've been focused on investments directly for Haiti.

• (1710)

**Hon. Michael Chong:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I have no further questions.

**The Chair:** We'll now go to MP Alghabra, for five minutes.

**Hon. Omar Alghabra (Mississauga Centre, Lib.):** Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

Good evening to the witnesses, and thank you for being here.

It appears to me that last year we had significant international momentum to put in place a multinational plan to resolve the current security situation in Haiti. While there have been some positive steps taken, it appears, maybe to the objective observer, that the critical mass, that momentum, has dissipated.

Maybe Ms. Anand or any of the other witnesses could comment on that, and maybe share their thoughts on why that appears to be the case? Maybe I'm wrong, and maybe you could correct my perception.

**Ms. Shalini Anand:** Mr. Chair, I understand the honourable member's perception.

I would note that the situation is evolving and challenging, and the security situation remains quite dire. However, there have been a number of positive steps taken in the last several months. I will walk through a few of those to show that the needle has moved, in some ways, in the right direction.

One of the key areas Canada has been investing in is Haiti's democratic transition. In the past several months, a transitional

presidential council was named. That is intended to be a time-limited group with a view to two key mandate items, if you will: to improve the security situation in Haiti, and to ensure free and fair elections. One key step the transitional presidential council has taken with the former prime minister was appointing a provisional electoral council, which has started to lay the framework for elections, hopefully in the fall of 2025 and with a view to transition to a democratic government by February 2026, per their mandate. Those critical steps were taken in the last several months and will soon, hopefully, lead to a permanent democratic government. There have been some positive steps in that regard.

Second, I would note that we have spent quite a while pulling together, as an international community, the MSSM and the UN trust fund that supports it, as well as getting the first deployments under way. That is another positive step. We have seen the first Kenyan deployments. I won't go through the list again, but there are a number of other deployments expected over the next several months, which we hope will help anchor and secure the security situation and further bolster the HNP in addressing the gang-related violence that has come to bear on Haiti. Canada has been unwavering in its support from the security, democratic, fight against impunity and aid perspectives. My colleague Madame Bédard has already given you examples of some of the results we've seen on the aid file.

Therefore, while I recognize that the situation is evolving and that the country remains extremely fragile, there has been some positive momentum through the pillars I just outlined, as well as positive momentum in the international community.

**Hon. Omar Alghabra:** Thank you for your response.

I wasn't questioning Canada's commitment. I was curious about what appears to be the attention and focus being placed on Haiti from an international perspective.

You talked a bit about the Caribbean countries and CARICOM.

Can you share with us the efforts they're leading, and how Canada is collaborating with them on those efforts?

[Translation]

**Mrs. Sylvie Bédard:** As I said earlier, the Caribbean Community, or CARICOM, has been particularly involved in supporting the Haitian political sectors in order to establish a transitional governance entity. It's actually CARICOM that steered the political sectors toward the agreement of April 3, 2024, under which the transitional presidential council in Haiti was established.

Once that agreement was implemented, CARICOM continued its involvement by playing a guarantor role. It had to ensure that the parties concerned actually met the agreement's conditions, such as, for example, that the appointed members of the transitional presidential council not be subject to UN sanctions, that they support the UN's security support mission, and so on. To work with the Haitians, CARICOM leaders appointed three former prime ministers, who form a group of wise men or, as it were, a group of eminent persons.

In addition to supporting political governance, CARICOM has been involved in providing personnel for the Multinational Security Support Mission.

• (1715)

[English]

**The Chair:** Thank you.

We'll next go to MP Trudel.

You have two and a half minutes.

[Translation]

**Mr. Denis Trudel:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Mrs. Bédard, we discussed arms trafficking earlier, and you mentioned that political elites could be involved in that. Three members of the transitional presidential council, which you just discussed, were accused of corruption this past October. First, I would like to know if that's related to arms trafficking.

Second, I'd like to know if Canada still officially trusts the transitional presidential council since the corruption charges have been laid against those three members.

[English]

**Ms. Shalini Anand:** Yes, Mr. Chair. I had noted that three members of the seven-to-nine member transitional presidential council indeed had been accused of corruption.

While all that is deeply disappointing and the transitional presidential council has not been without its challenges, I would note a positive element. Canada had strongly encouraged the presidential council to take the allegations of corruption seriously and to conduct an independent report to assess whether the allegations had any merit. The transitional presidential council and the prime minister and his group came together and did issue an independent report indicating that there was a probability that the corruption allegations did have merit.

I highlight that because it is actually a very positive step that they are taking these allegations seriously. It is also a positive step that in the initial report there was enough confidence and autonomy given to the people who were writing the report that they were able to reach this conclusion. We saw that as a positive step.

The next step is for the report to be handed over to the judiciary. Again, we see that as positive, because they are going through appropriate due process, which is something that we and the international community have been strongly encouraging. We have also, on multiple occasions, encouraged the transitional presidential

council to maintain its credibility and focus on its mandate, especially the elements of security and free and fair elections.

Finally, the transitional presidential council took the step to—forgive me, but I don't know what proper expression to use—skip the rotation of the members who were accused of these alleged corruption challenges. It has moved and rotated the presidency on to somebody else who is not in the group that is the subject of these allegations.

We see those steps as very positive, and we see the transitional presidential council as taking this issue quite seriously, but we have continued to strongly encourage it to maintain focus and not let some of these political tensions allow it to lose focus from its mandate.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

For the last question, we go to MP McPherson.

**Ms. Heather McPherson:** Thank you very much.

Thank you very much for your testimony. I see my role in this committee as that of amplifying the voices of Haitian Canadians as well. I think that's very important. My team has reached out to many Haitian Canadians and members of the Haitian community in Montreal this week just to prepare for this.

One of the concerns they raised with us was with regard to the MSSM and the fact that it is being led by Kenya and the people on that mission do not speak the same language.

It is very difficult for them to work in the context in which they find themselves. I know this is a difficult conversation, but I want to ask how Canada sees that, and why Canada continues to invest when we have heard that the Canadian Haitian community is not happy with some of the Kenyan participation.

• (1720)

**Ms. Shalini Anand:** Mr. Chair, I acknowledge the comments the honourable member has made on behalf of Haitian Canadians. I would also acknowledge that it has been challenging to find willing and engaged partners, and we are very grateful to the Kenyans who have stepped up to play a valiant role in this process.

I take note of the language barrier and certainly can reflect on whether or not there is anything Canada can do about that piece of the puzzle, but I would note that, per the deployments list I read out, there are a number of other deployments and battalions coming from the region. Those might not all adequately address the language piece of the puzzle, but we have worked very hard to ensure that there is a regional effort behind this, and a number of other countries that I had named have also stepped up in that regard.

I will turn to my colleague in case she has anything to add.

[Translation]

**Mrs. Sylvie Bédard:** I would briefly like to add that the Organisation internationale de la Francophonie, ou OIF, offers basic French training for all members of the Multinational Security Support Mission. It won't enable them to become bilingual overnight, but it's appreciated and makes interoperability possible between members of the Haitian National Police and those of the Multinational Security Support Mission.

[English]

**Ms. Heather McPherson:** I recognize that this is very complex. As I said, this is me trying to do my best to raise the concerns that have been raised to me and to my team.

Thank you.

**The Chair:** At this point, we're done with questions. I want to thank you on behalf of all of the members.

I also want to emphasize that Haiti has been a country of ongoing interest to every member of this committee. We have revisited the situation in Haiti over the course of the past several years, and it's very regrettable that, for a country that has deep bonds of friendship with Haiti and a country that is blessed to have a large Haitian community, we constantly hear how the situation is deteriorating and that stability is not returning at the pace that we would all like to see.

I'm sure I speak on behalf of all members of this committee when I say that Haiti can't just be seen as a human resource issue. We really have to commit ourselves to making sure that other countries in the hemisphere are also fully engaged and fully committed

to assisting in bringing stability. When we hear about Doctors Without Borders and the situation they found themselves in several days ago, that is very disconcerting. I certainly hope that next time we have the opportunity for a briefing, we will hear that we're committing more diplomatic muscle to this and that there is better news on the horizon.

Thank you very much for your time.

Before members leave, I have one quick question. Given that we've all agreed to allot an extra meeting to an examination of Bill C-353 and that we are going to be hearing from external witnesses, is it the will of the committee that all proposed amendments to Bill C-353 be submitted to the clerk no later than noon on Thursday, November 28, 2024?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**The Chair:** That's excellent. Is the committee in agreement to adjourn our meeting today?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

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