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Chair

Mr. Stephen Fuhr

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● (0845)

[*English*]

The Chair (Mr. Stephen Fuhr (Kelowna—Lake Country, Lib.)): Good morning, everybody. Welcome to the defence committee and our discussion on Canada's contributions to peace support operations.

This morning we have with us Zoé Dugal, Deputy Director of Field Operations, CANADEM; Alexandra Novosseloff, Senior Visiting Fellow, International Peace Institute, from New York; Ms. Peggy Mason, Former Ambassador, from the Rideau Institute; and as an individual, Major-General (Retired) David Fraser.

Thanks to all of you for coming.

I'll turn the floor over to you, Ms. Novosseloff. We have you via video and we have a good feed right now, so in case we lose you later on, I'd rather get your testimony on the record up front. Without further ado, I'm going to give you the floor.

Everyone will have up to 10 minutes. If you see my signal, it means that I need you to start winding down within 30 seconds so that I can keep the time fair for everybody. Thank you very much.

Madam Novosseloff, you have the floor.

Dr. Alexandra Novosseloff (Senior Visiting Fellow, International Peace Institute): Thank you very much for having me here today. I'll give brief remarks just to kick-start the conversation this morning.

I will start by saying that peacekeeping is one of the most difficult tasks there is, and it is a very specific activity that differs from other types of military intervention. It is an inherently temporary measure, a limited instrument that creates the space for a nationally owned political solution.

Peacekeeping is also one of the most criticized activities of the UN, prone to a lot of debates and regularly making headlines for its alleged failures. It is also one of the less understood ones. It is complex. It often creates a lot of expectations. These operations have often been given mandates that are too ambitious and create too many expectations. At the same time, they are given too many tasks. They are provided with the unachievable protection of civilian mandates, conceived in security terms, in countries where there is no infrastructure and where the willingness of the parties to the conflict to comply with Security Council resolutions is questionable at best.

We tend to assess peacekeeping also on what it cannot deliver—meaning enforcing peace—forgetting that the UN can only be a facilitator, an honest broker, in those crises that need to be solved by the parties to the conflict themselves.

It is also an activity that has always been suffering from a lack of investment, whether political, financial, or military. Peacekeeping operations have always been done on the cheap.

When the Secretary-General requested 8,000 troops to protect the security zones of Bosnia-Herzegovina in the 1990s, the council authorized the deployment of only 3,000 peacekeepers. Where an American soldier costs $800,000 annually, a UN peacekeeper costs only $20,000. When NATO deploys some 130,000 soldiers in Afghanistan, the UN deploys about 11,000 blue helmets in the north of Mali, which is twice the size of Afghanistan. When NATO is deploying 50,000 soldiers in Kosovo, the UN is deploying 16,000 blue helmets in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, which is the size of continental Europe.

Although 80% of peacekeeping operation expenditures are militarily related, they are financed through limited civilian budgets, and not through the larger military budgets where peacekeeping spending could be more easily absorbed.

Contrary to what people generally think, UN peacekeeping is a particularly cost-effective activity, but of course there's a limit to what you can do and what you can achieve in those circumstances. Peacekeeping is also a very diverse activity, from observation and monitoring missions to multi-dimensional mandates and political assistance and mediation. It is also an activity that has gone through constant reform for almost the past 20 years, the latest reform being the Secretary-General's action for peacekeeping initiative. I can also, of course, go back to this in the debate, if you wish.

Peacekeeping is also an activity that is constantly evolving in a changing and increasingly challenging environment, with the most challenging one today, certainly, being MINUSMA, which in my view is testing the outer limits of peacekeeping.

● (0850)

Peacekeeping operations are also the only international interventions where, for the most part, with the noticeable exception of China, those who decide and mandate—i.e. members of the Security Council—are not the same as those who contribute financially, and therefore, decide on budgets in the fifth committee after mandates are voted upon. Also, those who contribute in troops...and 2017 has been the deadliest year for peacekeepers, with 134 peacekeepers who have died.

That situation creates a delusion of responsibility, where it is often easy to put the blame on the UN. It is easy to see the UN as an exit strategy for the deployment of some countries or regions in the most remote places of the world, where big powers' strategic interests are not at stake.

Nevertheless, having said that, I think that these peacekeeping operations are value for the money. They concern the stability of our planet as a whole. In the way they manage crisis and conflicts, I think that they are the only method worth pursuing, combining the political with the military, the police, the rule of law, and respect for human rights.

As I said earlier, it is an activity that is constantly improving and, of course, like any other endeavour, it depends on the investment of its member states, on their capacity, and their comparative advantage. The universal composition of peacekeeping is what forms their added value and of course, it has a cost, in terms of interoperability.

Peacekeeping needs a diversity of contributions and western countries' contributions can fill some of the traditional gaps that these operations often face, such as medical assets, helicopters, engineer companies, reserve capacity, and staff officers. There are certainly operations that are much more integrated than NATO or EU ones, which are more contingent on operations. For western countries contributing to peacekeeping, it is also a way to be willing to work with African and Asian countries that often have less capability and training.

I think I will stop here and answer your questions.

Thank you.

● (0855)

The Chair: Thank you very much for your opening remarks.

I'm going to turn the floor over to General Fraser.

Sir, you have the floor.

Major-General (Retired) David Fraser (As an Individual): Mr. Chair and members, thank you very much for the opportunity to talk to you today.

I believe your work is of critical importance to our country. I served with the Canadian Armed Forces for over 31 years, and I took pride in my country every day I wore my uniform. I continue to be proud of the men and women in uniform who protect the life we take for granted, and I'm especially proud that our country believes in helping others in need and providing them with the same hope and opportunities you and I take for granted. That is why I think the decision by our government to contribute to the UN is of national importance. Canada as a founding member of the United Nations has a long and distinguished history of supporting the organization and other international organizations. Canada has contributed to the UN Charter, including maintaining international peace and security, developing friendly relations among nations, achieving international co-operation, and solving international problems of economic, social, cultural, or humanitarian character while promoting and encouraging respect for human rights.

In 1957 our Prime Minister Pearson committed Canada to the United Nations Emergency Force, which resulted in his being awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. More to the point, this represented Canada's commitment to fulfilling our contribution to the UN Charter and our nascent what I would call whole-of-government approach for the time, which was to have military and police necessary to keep the borders at peace while a political settlement was being worked out.

Peacekeeping from that point onward has evolved as our own national contribution has evolved. The 1970s and 1980s brought us to support missions like the one in Cyprus, where I earned my first UN medal. Peacekeeping in those days, while dangerous and demanding, was still a state-to-state mission. In those days, the host nation asked the UN to assist in the resolution, and affected states by and large adhered to the rules for UN participation. Peacekeeping continued to evolve into missions like the one we experienced in Bosnia in the 1990s, which were far more dangerous than previous missions. The key factor was that there continued to be state actors that to a degree adhered to conventions while a political settlement was found. The success of Bosnia is a tribute to the United Nations in facing adversity and the ever-changing scope of operations, and in working through to allow affected nations to find their own path to resolution. It was heartening to see Croats in Afghanistan working alongside us on our latest mission to provide peace and stability in that war-torn country.

Our notion of peacekeeping is dated and not helpful at all. The original definition, which stated that peacekeeping was “the deployment of international military and civilian personnel to a conflict area with the consent of the parties to the conflict in order to stop or contain hostilities or supervise the carrying out of a peace agreement” was good enough up until about Bosnia. Since then there has been a paradigm shift and the notion of state actors has been replaced by other players including terrorist organizations that respect no laws and no human rights.

The result of this new reality is that UN operations today are far more dangerous than ever, and the concept of operations to prosecute missions must be amended to the reality on the ground.

In short, I do not believe peacekeeping or peacemaking in the traditional UN sense of the word truly reflects the operational reality on the ground today. In short, the terms are misleading. Average Canadians don't understand them and have a perception of them, based on history, which is that we should be proud of them, but that's not the reality of where we are today.

Mali is a perfect example of how dangerous UN operations have become. Over 160 UN soldiers have been killed on this mission, and in addition to UN operations, there are counterterrorist operations occurring simultaneously. There are no state actors who are willing to comply with any guidelines.

● (0900)

In short, this is more complex than the average Canadian citizen's understanding of what UN missions mean. This includes our Canadian citizens.

I commend the Vancouver conference and the announcement of the QRF, the Elsie initiative, and child soldier guidelines. These are all good initiatives, in keeping with Canadian values and our contributions over the years to the United Nations.

The government announcement will provide needed capabilities to UN missions. The March announcement of four helicopters and up to 250 personnel to Mali will be a welcome addition to strapped, limited UN capabilities. These are valuable. However, I wonder if we could not better package our contributions into a more coherent package that comprises our C-130 aircraft, QRF, and helicopter contribution into one mission where greater effects can be achieved.

Penny packeting our efforts, while useful, does not give us a strategic voice or effects on the ground. Like what we did in Afghanistan, Team Canada came together with a whole-of-government approach and achieved significant improvements on the ground, while giving Canada a strategic voice. Going back to the Pearson commitment that Canada had in 1957, he took a whole-of-government approach. I think we've learned that a whole-of-government approach, a Team Canada approach, is an effective way to use our resources, and also gives us a voice to achieve the Prime Minister's intent.

Combining our efforts of the military and other government departments along with our diplomatic efforts, in my opinion provides a more comprehensive approach that achieves the national effects and voice that I understand our Prime Minister and government want. While the national interest of establishing peace and security for Mali is understood, what is not clear is the national end state. What are the metrics for success following the 12-month participation of our helicopter contribution? I asked myself this question, which is probably what most Canadians have asked themselves to have a better understanding of what our UN strategy is. I believe that Canada, as a G8 nation, has much to offer, and people are looking to Canada for leadership and ideas.

The other question I have is on the time it is taking to go from a stated intent to the announcements of delivered capabilities on the ground. DND and the Canadian Armed Forces are superb planners. They will ensure that risks are mitigated and understood, and determine what resources are needed to deliver the governmental effects that are expected. Why all this has taken this long continues to elude me.

Canada is a great nation, and one that has a history of meaningful contributions to international organizations and helping those less fortunate than us. Our historical contributions to the United Nations, to NATO, and other international organizations have been significant. I believe we can achieve a tremendous international contribution of significance that is in our national interest, as our PM has stated.

The mission to Mali is dangerous, and the traditional idea of UN missions or peacekeeping is a thing of the past. This is not a reason not to participate. It is a call to understand the strategy of how we will harness all the Canadian government capability, like we did in Afghanistan. In other words, the whole-of-government approach that we have learned in previous missions brought better comprehensive effects on the ground and mitigated the logistical requirements for multiple locations, creating the conditions for a strategic voice.

I wonder why we are not enacting the lessons learned from our previous missions in history. This includes why we no longer have our super deputy minister, who can break down the silos here in Ottawa and harness all the departments together, working for a Team Canada approach.

We have much to offer, and the contributions being offered, if packaged in a more comprehensive manner and within a strategic plan, would offer us a greater return on our investment. I believe that we have capabilities that are needed by the United Nations and in keeping with the UN Charter, which are also supported by our own Canadian values.

● (0905)

The men and women who participate in these missions will do their best and will make us proud. I want to make sure that what we do is recognized in the international community.

I look forward to your questions. Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you, General.

Ambassador Mason, the floor is yours.

Mrs. Peggy Mason (President, Former Ambassador, Rideau Institute on International Affairs): Thank you very much.

My comments will focus on the value added of UN peacekeeping and the urgent need for Canada to upgrade its training for effective re-engagement. I will hopefully build very much on the previous speakers.

UN peacekeeping is no miracle cure and there are no guarantees of success, but when properly mandated, resourced, and managed, UN peacekeeping offers the best chance for a country to transition from civil war to stable governance. Peacekeeping is the front end of a complex, long-term process of helping conflicting parties create the necessary conditions—political, socio-economic, and security—for sustainable peace. At the centre of this effort is the peace process.

Complex political problems always lie at the heart of violent conflict and require political solutions that are negotiated and agreed to by the parties. A capable security force will be essential in both the peace negotiation and implementation phases, but it is the supporting element of the overall mission nonetheless.

As our Afghanistan experience has so dramatically and tragically illustrated, no amount of military robustness and professionalism on the part of international military forces can make up for the lack of a credible peace process. That, of course, remains true to this day. The statistical evidence is clear. Looking at all past wars of the last quarter century, only 15% have ended decisively on the battlefield and, in these cases, the rebels prevailed at least as often as the governments they fought. All the rest ultimately had to be settled at the negotiating table.

It is precisely because of the primacy of the peace process that today's multi-dimensional UN peace operations are much more than military operations charged with providing a safe and secure environment. The core of the effort comprises civilians mandated to facilitate the peace process, promote the rule of law, and support the establishment of legitimate and effective institutions of governance. Increasingly, mandates like that of MINUSMA in Mali also include security assistance to the elected government so that it can reassert its authority nationwide. This military assistance is in concert with diplomatic and technical support for national political dialogue and reconciliation efforts.

For a collective enterprise of this magnitude to succeed, as UN peacekeeping does more often than not, the international effort must be perceived as legitimate and impartial. It must have the broadest possible international support within a coherent legal and operational framework. Only the UN Security Council can mandate such an operation, and only the UN organization can lead the mission if it is to be broadly, internationally acceptable.

Headed by a civilian in the role of special representative of the UN Secretary-General—of course you had at least one here in Carolyn McAskie, Canadian former SRSG—with all the other components, including the military and police reporting to him or her, the very structure of the UN peacekeeping mission reflects the centrality of the peace process. This stands in sharp contrast to NATO-led military missions, even where authorized by the UN Security Council to assist in stabilizing the conflict, because the military mission is separate from the UN political, diplomatic, humanitarian, development, and governance mission, not an integral part of it.

How can the military effectively support the peace process under a separate command structure? My 10 years of training exercises with senior NATO commanders preparing for their deployments to Afghanistan, Bosnia, and Kosovo have demonstrated time and again that a divided command structure at the operational or strategic level is a recipe for a less effective command structure.

NATO-led stability operations lack the perceived legitimacy and impartiality of UN-led operations precisely because their political and military leaders are seen to represent a very specific set of powerful countries and interests. Not only does the separate military command structure undermine coherence in the international effort, NATO leadership can constitute a gift to spoilers on the ground decrying alleged foreign occupation, the presence of additional non-NATO forces notwithstanding.

Of course I hasten to say that narrow national interests are still in play in the capitals of UN troop contributors, but the structure and composition of a UN peacekeeping mission at least works to mitigate this tendency in both perception and reality. An integrated mission under the overall authority of the SRSG also allows the UN command and control to be decentralized to the operational level. This contrasts with the more centralized top-heavy command structures operating in NATO, which was a constant focus of concern in all those years of exercises that I participated in.

● (0910)

To recap, the main comparative advantages for a UN peace operation is its integrated command structure under civilian authority, which in turn reflects the primacy of the peace process, and which facilitates unity of purpose and of effort, and the fact that the UN is the only organization through which the forces of the P5 and all major powers, including rising and regional powers, can jointly participate. Only the UN, therefore, offers the possibility of a politically diverse and operationally capable mission, but if and only if the P5 and other major powers invest in UN operations.

I want to touch briefly on the challenge of consent. This picks up very much on the comments by the opening speaker on the outer limits of UN peacekeeping, and on General Fraser's comments as well.

Consent, impartiality, and non-use of force are core principles of UN peacekeeping, yet Security Council mandates have grown increasingly ambitious, especially around the use of force. Peacekeepers are deployed in theatres where they do not have the consent of all parties. Extension of state authority through military means and policing is now part of the core UN peacekeeping mandate, as we've seen in Mali, requiring use or projection of force not only to fend off direct attacks from spoilers but as part of deliberate strategies to expand and secure the authority of a government in contested territories.

This type of mandate and use of force against spoilers must not obscure the fundamental lesson from the landmark 2000 Brahimi report on UN peace operations, that peacekeeping cannot substitute for an effective political process. This in turn means the greater the number of parties outside the agreement, the greater the difficulty in keeping the peace process credible.

Exacerbating this problem is the increasing tendency of the Security Council to include in mandates the “targeting” of certain groups for “degrading”, so as to seemingly move them totally beyond the negotiating pale. This might be seen as the anti-terrorist them-or-us mindset infecting peacekeeping, but peacekeeping is based, and this is its value-added, on the fundamental premise that even highly problematic rebel groups must still be engaged to the maximum extent possible if peace is to be achievable.

I want to briefly turn to training. Leadership and international peacekeeping training and practice requires a world-class international training centre at home. As all the speakers have said, peace operations have evolved dramatically since Canada was last engaged in any significant way and continue to do so. Modern, complex, multi-dimensional UN peace operations require in-depth training and education. That was the recommendation of the Somali inquiry way back when peacekeeping was a lot simpler.

If the Government of Canada is to fulfill its oft-repeated promise to lead an international effort to improve and expand the training of military and civilian personnel deployed in peace operations, then we must urgently re-establish our own capacity to undertake world-class, multidisciplinary peacekeeping training here in Canada for Canadian and international military police and civilian peacekeepers. Such training is also indispensable for an effective re-engagement by Canada in UN-led peacekeeping operations.

To this end, Canada should establish a Canadian international peace operations training centre under civilian leadership, at an arm's length from government, with reliable funding, and clear links to and support from the Department of National Defence and Global Affairs Canada.

Thank you very much. I look forward to your questions.

● (0915)

The Chair: Thank you, Ambassador.

Ms. Dugal.

Ms. Zoé Dugal (Deputy Director, Field Operations, CANADEM (Canada's Civilian Reserve)): Members of the committee, thank you very much for giving me this opportunity to address you today.

I will echo some of what my colleagues have said before.

Canada has had a long history of involvement in peacekeeping. Since 1948, the UN has established more than 60 peace missions on five continents. Canada has been part of most of them through the deployment of military and police personnel, as well as civilians.

The nature of conflicts has changed greatly since 1948. Peacekeeping was initially created to address conflicts between states after a ceasefire had been agreed upon. Although challenging, this work was fairly straightforward and could be carried out by military observers and other personnel in relative safety.

Conflicts today are mostly taking place within states and involve insurgent groups, armed factions, organized crime, and terrorists. New threats have emerged that were not present during the initial creation of peacekeeping. Those include terrorism, human trafficking on a large scale, and the use of the Internet to spread hatred and violence, amongst other things. Many times, peacekeepers from the UN and other multilateral forces are all that stand between civilians and violence, in contexts in which there is often no peace to keep.

The changing nature of conflicts has led to a crisis of peace operations, as challenges faced by the UN and the international community in general have increased. Having said that, peace operations are still the best and often the only instrument at our disposal to respond to conflict and human suffering. Therefore, as the international community, we must find ways to address these challenges and adapt peace operations to the new realities of today's world.

Canada has not been as active in the last decade and is only now trying to re-engage. In my view, it is crucial that this engagement is informed by the latest trends and developments in the UN system, to ensure that Canada's contribution achieves the highest impact possible.

The UN has commissioned a number of reviews of its peace operations system over the years, including the “Report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations” or the Brahimi Report, in 2000, named after its chair, Lakhdar Brahimi, which my colleague mentioned, and more recently, the report of the High-Level Independent Panel on Peace Operations, known by its acronym as the HIPPO report. The high-level panel was appointed by the then-UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon in 2014 and conducted extensive consultations with UN member states and practitioners over a period of several months before publishing its final report on the June 1, 2015. The report is considered by the UN as the new road map for contemporary peace operations. As such, it should be integrated in Canada's planning and policies for peace operations.

I would like to turn now to the main points from the report that I think are especially relevant to Canada as it re-engages in peacekeeping and peace operations.

The report recommends four shifts in how peace operations are conducted.

The first one is that politics must drive the design and implementation of peace operations. Some of my colleagues have touched upon this topic. Lasting peace can only be achieved through political solutions, not through military means only. For that reason, the civilian aspect of peace operations is crucial and Canada should invest in supporting the numerous, highly qualified Canadian civilians working in the UN and other peace operations around the world. CANADEM, the organization I work for, was created by the Canadian government in 1996 to strengthen UN peace operations. It continues to act as Canada's civilian reserve by deploying and supporting Canadian experts in peace and humanitarian operations within the UN system all over the world, and with other multilateral organizations like the OSCE. We have 40 Canadians serving with the OSCE mission in Ukraine at the moment.

The second shift is that the full spectrum of UN peace operations must be used more flexibly to respond to changing needs on the ground. Peace operations include, but are not limited to, traditional peacekeeping. As such, Canada must invest in diplomacy, the creation of partnerships, and long-term inclusive development to prevent conflicts from reoccurring.

The third shift is that a stronger, more inclusive peace and security partnership is needed for the future. This means engaging with our partners in the international community and fostering a common understanding of democratic values, human rights, and the protection of civilians, especially women and children.

Lastly, the UN Secretariat must become more field-focused and UN peace operations must be more people-centred. Canada can play a role in UN reform.

The report then recommends new approaches to effect these shifts. Many of these approaches are directly in line with Canadian values, foreign policy interventions, and expertise.

● (0920)

I would like to highlight a few of these new approaches recommended by the report that, in my view, Canada should consider in priority.

The first and most important one, in my view, is that we should focus on prevention. This is the idea that it is much more efficient, in terms of resources and the avoidance of unnecessary destruction and human suffering, to prevent conflicts than to solve them after they have erupted. This may sound obvious, but the international community does not have a very good track record on conflict prevention. This has partly to do with funding arrangements that are only designed for ad hoc responses rather than acting before problems arise.

Second, we must invest appropriate resources in the protection of civilians. This has been a long-term Canadian field of engagement, and Canada has been at the forefront of international debates on this topic for decades, notably on the concept of the responsibility to protect, which Canada has sponsored. States have a legal and moral duty to protect their citizens, and when they fail to do so, the international community has a moral obligation to intervene.

We must also foster sustainable peace, which requires an involvement in the long term. Peace agreements and ceasefires will not effect sustainable peace on their own. For this, reforms, development, inclusive governance, and economic recovery are necessary. A special focus must be put on the security sector in countries after conflict. This includes creating state institutions like a justice system, the police, etc., that are transparent, inclusive, and representative of the population and that respect the rule of law and human rights.

In addition, the speed of deployment and capacity of uniformed personnel under the UN system must be improved. This can be achieved by selecting military and police officers who have specific skills relevant to each peace operation they are going to be deployed to and deploying them in a timely manner where they are needed. In terms of Canadian involvement, this may include, for example, deploying police officers with specific language skills—such as French in Mali and the rest of francophone Africa—community policing experience, expertise in combatting organized crime, and other things. Following on this recommendation, the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations has started requesting personnel with specific skill sets from member states. Canada should liaise with DPKO and attempt to fill the needs as they arise.

Finally, we must improve leadership in UN headquarters and in the field, including by having more women in decision-making positions. This includes civilian leadership that is experienced, competent, and diverse. We have a lot of Canadians who have those skills. The high-level panel recommends the appointment of more women to positions of leadership as well as at all levels of civilian and uniformed personnel deployments in line with UN Security Council resolution 1325. This is also a priority of the Government of Canada and should be addressed as a matter of priority in our deployments.

In conclusion, peace operations cannot be seen exclusively in terms of peacekeeping with military personnel, but have evolved to include a wide range of activities at the disposal of the international community. The high-level panel insists on the fact that political solutions are necessary to prevent, manage, and resolve conflicts and foster sustainable peace beyond post-conflict transitions. Technical, bureaucratic, and military approaches often come at the expense of political efforts and in-depth analysis of each situation. Each peace operation and the range of tools it will use must be tailored to the specific context.

I thank you for your attention.

The Chair: Thank you.

As all four of you have mentioned, much has changed with regard to peace support operations in the last two decades. Canada has a new approach and we have a mission, so there's lots to talk about.

I'd like to turn the floor over to MP Robillard for the first seven-minute question. The floor is yours.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Yves Robillard (Marc-Aurèle-Fortin, Lib.): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I want to begin by welcoming all our guests and thanking them for their important contributions.

My question is for Ms. Dugal, of CANADEM. In CANADEM's report titled “Canada and Peace Operations 2018 Onwards: The 'civilian' solution to bringing Canada back: Needed — Easy — Low-Cost”, the Executive Director, Paul LaRose-Edwards, proposes to re-establish the concept of Canada Core created by Paul Martin, in 2004.

Could you explain to us the benefits of that program and how it could be re-established?

● (0925)

Ms. Zoé Dugal: Thank you for your question.

At CANADEM, we feel that we need a mechanism for deploying Canadian civilian staff, just as our armed forces and the RCMP have mechanisms to deploy their soldiers and police officers around the world.

However, those civilians lack support. So we have a large number of civilians who participate in global missions of the UN or other multilateral organizations, such as the OSCE, but who do not receive much support from the Canadian government or Canada in general. I have worked as a Canadian civilian in a number of locations, such as Afghanistan and throughout Africa, but it had nothing to do with Canada. I was rather working for various multilateral organizations or even for the German government.

However, we are still Canadians and we represent Canada, whether we like it or not. We are seen as Canadians, and we take our Canadians values with us. There are many extremely qualified Canadians around the world, including many women. In that regard, it is important to recognize under UN resolution 1325 that there are a lot of Canadian women on mission around the world. The goal of Paul LaRose-Edwards and CANADEM is really to establish a centre that could support all those Canadians and train them.

As Ms. Mason explained a few minutes ago, not much training is provided to civilians. Soldiers and police officers receive training before deployment, but Canadian civilians don't have that opportunity. A number of countries have training centres, such as Sweden and Germany. Those countries are somewhat similar to Canada in the sense that they have the same values and the same desire to be represented in international forums.

The idea would really be to create a centre to help Canadian civilians be better trained and equipped once on the ground, but also to establish improved connections with the Canadian government, so that the government would be better informed of everything those people are doing around the world.

Mr. Yves Robillard: My next question is for Ms. Novosseloff.

In the article you co-authored with Patrice Sartre, you talked about the principle of robust peacekeeping. In what way would that change the current nature of peacekeeping?

Dr. Alexandra Novosseloff: Thank you for the question.

That does not change the nature of peacekeeping. Robust peacekeeping is an attitude, a posture, which in no way challenges the fundamental peacekeeping principles described by Lester B. Pearson and Dag Hammarskjöld.

Robust peacekeeping is not just a military concept. It should not only be viewed from a military angle. It must also be political. That robustness also comes from the support that can be provided by organizations like the Security Council, and especially its permanent members, which can support processes under way and have the ability to sway host states that must be convinced to move toward peace.

Mr. Yves Robillard: Thank you.

Ms. Mason, given that the UN has constantly put emphasis on the need for peacekeeping operations to ensure the protection of civilians as a matter of priority, what measures has the United Nations implemented to prevent attacks on civilians? Are those measures effective? Can peacekeepers intervene and use force to protect civilians?

Ms. Peggy Mason: Thank you very much for the question.

I will answer in English, if that's okay, because I will use technical terms.

Mr. Yves Robillard: No problem.

[*English*]

Ms. Peggy Mason: This is a very important question that is being raised about what is now routinely included in UN mandates—the protection of civilians. It's a very difficult and demanding task, and a great deal of experience has been gained, particularly in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, with rapid reaction teams and various other measures that allow for rapid assistance to civilians.

However, one thing that has not developed—and this is something that some organizations, including ours, have been calling for, for a long time, and that could be done if we had an international peacekeeping training centre.... The essence of the military is their training. Doctrine is developed, and then standard operating procedures flow from that doctrine. Then they train and train and train on it, and that allows them to have the flexibility to respond in differing circumstances. However, with respect to the protection of civilians, which really is a very challenging area, that doctrine has not been developed. In short, it needs to be. That's an area that Canada could work on with others that have peacekeeping experience, like the Dutch and the Germans, to develop that doctrine, discuss it more broadly with other troop contributors, and really work on moving it forward so that all of the forces engaged can train on it.

Thank you.

● (0930)

Mr. Yves Robillard: Thank you very much.

The Chair: MP Yurdiga.

Mr. David Yurdiga (Fort McMurray—Cold Lake, CPC): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I'd like to welcome our guests, who are joining us on this early morning.

A witness to our committee, General Lewis MacKenzie, said that the word “peacekeeping” is a misnomer for modern missions like Mali, as “There is no peace to keep”. General MacKenzie also believes that the French should be taking the lead in Mali, not the UN, because the other three forces that are in the country are not prepared to accept UN leadership.

General Fraser, is peace possible in Mali when the UN is considered an enemy by the Islamic rebels?

MGen (Ret'd) David Fraser: I think it's not a binary question of yes or no. I think the example of Afghanistan has shown us that.... As the ambassador said, there was a UN mission in Afghanistan. There was NATO. The chain of command was as complex as anything I had ever seen, at that stage of the game, in 25 years. That being said, you needed NATO to do the fighting and to establish the conditions necessary for the UN and the peace process to have some chance of succeeding.

I think in Mali, definitely, the counterterrorist operations led by the French and what the French are actually doing, which is fighting against a terrorist organization, are absolutely necessary to create the conditions to the point where in fact the UN comprehensive peace process can start to take place. It will take time. The UN is not mandated, organized, structured, or trained to operate against the insurgents that you see in Mali. They don't have intelligence capabilities. They have information capabilities. The quality of the troops that go out there has a direct effect on the types of effects you'll get on the ground. In fact, as complicated as it is, you need the French to actually set the conditions that allow for the UN.

The other thing I want to mention here is the human geography of any nation or country that you're operating in. Do the locals view whatever international agency as having credibility? Do they have the credibility to talk? For example, Afghanistan is a warrior nation. It's broken down essentially into three tribes—the Tajiks in the north, the Hazaras in the centre, and the Pashtuns in the south. They understand one thing: strength.

In Afghanistan, whether you liked it or not, the reality was that it was a male-dominated society. It was a warrior society. They understood strength. They looked to NATO, and mainly the United States, because they were an equivalent for them philosophically. They did not look to the UN as an equal. Quite frankly, the UN could not operate in Afghanistan because there was so much fighting going on, but they were there to start a process called a “peace settlement”.

You need to keep pushing the peace settlement process. That's where the diplomatic efforts come in. I think Mali's a prime example. Ultimately, there is no military solution to operations today. Where you had a Wellington and a Napoleon who could stand up and say, “The war is....” The ambassador said it: 15% of operations around the world have been resolved militarily. I would say that today it's going to be zero.

All that military operations give you is time—time for a peace settlement to find itself and to come in. In that peace settlement, you have to give voice to the opposition called “the terrorists”. You have to find out who in those organizations are moderate enough that they want to come over and talk, in whatever government process, and then create a voice for them. Once you start having that dialogue, peace has a chance. But until those conditions are set, all the military operations are doing is buying time—time for diplomatic efforts to happen until you bring all the parties together, around a table just like this, where they leave the guns at the door and go in and debate the issues.

That's what we're going to need to do.

● (0935)

Mr. David Yurdiga: Thank you.

General Fraser, how would you characterize the capabilities of the rebels in Mali? Who is financing them? Obviously they're buying weapons. They have money to do other operations. Can you summarize that, briefly?

MGen (Ret'd) David Fraser: Some of what we are facing in Mali is as a result of what happened out of Libya. When we bombed and got rid of the government structure in Libya, a lot of the fighters there came home. They went to the northern part of Mali and they started fighting again. All they know is fighting. It's an economic issue for them. Somebody's paying them. For them, to put money on their table and fund stuff, they're going to do whatever they can, even though their life expectancy may be measured in days or weeks. If they were working for a government, their life expectancy would be measured in years, if not generations for their family. It's an economic problem. We have to find jobs for predominantly the men. Once you find the men jobs and you start training them, you talk to the women. Once you talk to the women, they will tell the men to stop fighting, because then they don't have to have big families. It's an economic issue.

Who's funding it? I couldn't tell you. It's probably any terrorist organization. ISIS, al Qaeda, you name it, they're probably funnelling money. They want the regions destabilized. There's just a general philosophical difference between those fighters who came back versus what they see as a credible alternative to stability or government in the state called Mali.

The Chair: You have a little less than a minute for a question and a response.

Mr. David Yurdiga: Okay. I'll find a short question.

To Zoé, what progress has the UN made so far in Mali? They've been there for a while. Have they created safe zones? How far are they advancing? So far, peace talks have failed. Can you give me a brief summary of your points on that?

Ms. Zoé Dugal: That's a tall question. I don't want to be overly negative, but the situation in Mali is still extremely complex.

To echo what the general was saying and maybe to add to your previous question, you have to see Mali as.... It's not a country. You have to see the region because, for these countries, such as Burkina Faso, Niger, and Mali and the whole of the Sahel region, which is the bottom of the Sahara, it is very lawless. It has always been lawless because it's a desert. There's very little border security. People roam around these countries. There's very limited government authority in those regions.

If you look at the south in these countries, you can see that the south of Mali is fine. The north of Mali is not. It has never been very fine. However, as the general was saying, because of the situation in Libya, you've had this influx of fighters coming in, and the weapons also come from there, largely.

In terms of financing—

The Chair: I'm sorry. I'm going to have to leave it there. We've run over time, but I'm sure that will come up again and we'll be able to circle back.

MP Garrison.

Mr. Randall Garrison (Esquimalt—Saanich—Sooke, NDP): Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

Despite the chair's comments earlier, the committee hasn't decided to retitle this study at this point.

Voices: Oh, oh!

The Chair: I didn't say we were.

Mr. Randall Garrison: Certainly, from talking to experts, we know that a new title other than “peacekeeping” may be what we end up with, but in talking to the Canadian public, I think peacekeeping is still where they're tuned into, so there's a usefulness to that terminology.

My question—and I'm going to start with you, Ambassador Mason—is that both in the media and sometimes here in Parliament we hear people talking about how there is no peace to keep. I'd like you to talk about that, because I think to keep repeating that devalues our efforts and the UN's efforts. Can you talk about that in the context of UN operations?

● (0940)

Ms. Peggy Mason: Yes. I might note at the outset, with respect to polling, that the most recent polling introduces the element of risk and puts forward to Canadians that peacekeeping is now of greater risk. That doesn't seem to have diminished their support for it.

Peace operations is a more accurate term, yes, but for better or worse, peacekeeping is the UN term. As long as member states are using that term, we shouldn't abandon it.

With respect to this really important question about there being no peace to keep, that was really what I was trying to talk about. Building the peace is actually perhaps the most accurate way to describe what the UN multi-dimensional missions are trying to do now, because it's not a sequential process. It's not that the military tries to stabilize everything and then the peace process works. It has to work in tandem.

That really was the problem with respect to Afghanistan. For most of the time the UN was there, it had no mandate to work on a comprehensive peace process. Actually, it never had a mandate to work on a comprehensive peace process. Even when there was relative stability, there wasn't that opportunity to take advantage of it and to bring all the players in, because that's the story with Afghanistan.

I've heard General Fraser talk in past days about the frustration of the Taliban fighters going back to Pakistan for R and R, but Pakistan had its own security interests that had to be addressed, and it didn't do any good to lecture and tell Pakistan to stop doing this. There needed to be a comprehensive peace process that took into account Pakistan's concerns over India.

Zoé's comments about the regional complexities of Mali also hit on a really important factor. I would just like to quote one comment from the observations of the Secretary-General in the December report on Mali. With respect to this interrelationship of the counter-insurgency force and the UN mission, he said:

> I commend the commitment of the States members of the Group of Five for the Sahel to tackling the threats to peace and security, terrorism and transnational organized crime through the establishment of a joint force. While it has the potential to contribute to an enabling environment for MINUSMA, only a multidimensional approach that addresses the root causes of instability will be effective in countering terrorism, including by improving governance and creating opportunities for young people while bringing those who are disenfranchised back into the fold of society. Consequently, the success of the joint force—

This is the counter-insurgency force.

> —remains intimately linked to the full implementation of the [peace] Agreement.

To come back to the question, no, there isn't a peace to keep. There's a peace to build, and it can be done by a fully resourced UN multi-dimensional peacekeeping mission.

Mr. Randall Garrison: I have the usual frustration this morning of a distinguished panel, and it's tempting to go all over the map, but we're looking for some specific recommendations on what Canada can do. I'm going to stick with Ambassador Mason for a minute. You talked about the establishment, or re-establishment, of a capacity for training for civilians and military in Canada. You were at the end of your presentation, but I'd like you to talk a bit more about how you see that working, and its value.

Ms. Peggy Mason: Yes, thank you very much. I'm very pleased to do that.

Before I do that, though, I'll echo comments that have been made by others here about this whole-of-government approach. Canada needs to focus on supporting the peace process. If we're going to send military peacekeepers, then we have to do more with respect to supporting the Mali peace process. We have contributed some money to the UN trust fund in support of the peace process, but I think we can do a lot more in that regard.

Turning to the training, of course the frustration for many of us is that we were ahead of the game back in 1995 when we set up the Pearson Peacekeeping Centre. It was the first, if you will, integrated training centre—civilian, military police. That's the key. They have to be brought together.

Part of the challenge of a multi-dimensional operation is all of these key actors with their own role to play: How do they interact? What are the limits? What can they expect of the others?

Therefore, if you have a training environment where you bring together all those elements, in both your training staff but also in the composition of those being trained, then you can start to get at some of these problems. You cannot only train for current missions, but you can be thinking ahead and looking at these problems, the one that was raised earlier about protection of civilians, but also accountability, such as for sexual misconduct or other misbehaviour of forces. This is a tremendous problem but it's not something the Secretary-General can solve. It's individual troop contributors who maintain the discipline. They will not allow the UN to handle it.

These are the kinds of things that a multi-dimensional centre can look at. The most important part, though, is what Zoé Dugal said, that there is no opportunity.... I mean, the military needs this kind of training in conjunction with civilians. They get a bit of training, but most organizations cannot provide this training. It's really, really important. If we recognize how important the civilian dimension of peace operations is, then we better step up on the training in that regard.

● (0945)

Mr. Randall Garrison: Ms. Dugal, you're nodding. Would you like to jump in on this?

The Chair: I'm going to have to hold it there, because that's your time.

MP Fraser, welcome.

Mr. Colin Fraser (West Nova, Lib.): Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

Thank you all very much for being here. I appreciate your expertise in this important study.

General Fraser, if I can begin with you, I take what you're saying. I think it's well known that there has been a change in the paradigm of conflicts regarding non-state actors filling a void in any failed state, so failing states that don't have civil society or institutions to keep the peace.

Are there other factors, though, that we can look to that have changed the evolving nature of conflicts within states, such as different types of weapons being used, or different tactics, or the rise of technology, that could inform our view of how we can rebuild or keep peaceful situations in countries that have failed institutions?

MGen (Ret'd) David Fraser: The biggest change, and I think Bosnia was a transition.... Up until that point, national institutions were in place when we went in to conduct operations. I don't want to call them peace operations. I'll call them UN operations. It's a more generic term. It still uses something so that people understand it's the United Nations and that embraces a concept.

We had institutions that were still in place in Bosnia onwards. If I use Iraq, if I use Afghanistan, if I look at Mali, those national institutions were erased, destroyed. Colin Powell said once, "You break it, you own it". Well, we, the international community, broke a lot of countries. We broke Afghanistan, we broke Iraq, and we broke Syria. We took national institutions and erased them, which made operations.... I hate the term "root cause" because it's too generic, but the root cause was getting rid of the national institutions, because you set the country back about four generations. Now it's going to take four generations at least to build what an institution that is called a country looks like again.

That's not a military operation, that's a whole-of-government operation. That is diplomatic. That is judicial. That is policing, and we start with policing first, not the army. It's about social policing and those institutions. When we look at any situation today around the world, if we look at a country, we can't think about it in terms of what Canada looks like. We're starting from a blank piece of paper, and we have to rebuild it.

Capacity building is the idea. Capacity building is how you want to do things. I firmly support what the Pearson Peacekeeping Centre did, but that was stage one. Capacity building, in my recommendation, is done in the host nation, not here in Canada but in the host nation, so that the legacy that Canada leaves, as part of an international community, is a college, a university, or a training centre in the host nation where we train the trainers, they train their own people, they build it, and then we exit from that. It's not a combat operation and it's not missions out in the field. It's about building capacity and building national institutions that, in today's operations, are completely obliterated because of the lack of state actors. They are gone.

● (0950)

Mr. Colin Fraser: Thank you, General.

Ms. Dugal, I suppose that touches very much on the point you made about prevention being the key and about supporting institutions within civil society to avoid this situation where non-state actors can come in and overtake a population.

Do you think that what General Fraser has just said is an important point, that judicial resources, helping build institutions including police forces, having them on the ground, and supporting civil society are key to the prevention of these types of situations?

Ms. Zoé Dugal: Yes, absolutely. I completely agree. Prevention is at two levels, in my view. The second level is what the general was just referring to. After a conflict, we send in peacekeepers, we stop the fighting, and now we have to rebuild the country. This is the second level of prevention, because you want to prevent the conflict from reappearing. Police are crucial. It can't be taken in isolation. As you've just said, the police, the justice system, the prison system, etc., are a continuum.

The military is important, but what affects civilians' lives day to day are the police and the justice system. This is absolutely crucial. It cannot be done in isolation, either. You have to rebuild all state institutions at the same time, and it's a huge task.

The first level of prevention, though, is to prevent the conflict in the first place. This is where the international community has not been very good. We are better at trying to prevent reoccurrence of conflict after a transition. The UN and others have been learning a lot over the last 50 years on how to rebuild states. It's not been very successful in Afghanistan or Iraq, I agree with the general. It's been much more successful in other countries like Bosnia, East Timor, and Kosovo, for example. There are a lot of UN successes that we can build on. There are a lot of lessons learned that are there for the UN to use. There have also been a lot of successes in Africa. We could spend the rest of the session discussing those.

However, instead of doing this, you could also start with not having a conflict in the first place, in which case the institutions wouldn't get destroyed. They could be reformed at a slower pace within the society itself with some help from the international community.

When there's a risk of conflict, it's because there's a problem in the society that cannot be addressed through the traditional means of government. The government needs to reform, and the state needs to reform, but it doesn't have to pass through this phase of violent conflict, which is extremely disruptive in terms of infrastructure, human suffering, and destroying institutions. It's much better if we can try to prevent conflict and work on reforming institutions without having to destroy them in the first place.

Mr. Colin Fraser: Thank you very much.

Ambassador Mason, I'll turn to you. I appreciate very much what you're saying about the importance of training and the element that will play, and I understand it's not the whole picture, as General Fraser said earlier.

I represent West Nova, which has Cornwallis Park in it, which was the centre for the Pearson Peacekeeping Centre in the nineties. The people there did amazing work in training peacekeepers, not only practically but theoretically, about what they needed to know before going into conflict situations and to keep the peace. Is this the type of training centre that you would envision?

Obviously the focus would have to change a little bit given the changing nature of the actors involved in these operations, but do you see that type of centre being what we could look to, having one place where there's practical and theoretical work going on and training people not only those from Canada but from around the world who come here to learn how to keep peace?

The Chair: I'm going to have to hold it there. I'm sorry. We'll have time at the end.

Ms. Peggy Mason: Yes.

Voices: Oh, oh!

The Chair: Well, there's your answer.

We're going to go to five-minute questions now.

MP Spengemann, the floor is yours.

Mr. Sven Spengemann (Mississauga—Lakeshore, Lib.): Chair, thank you very much.

Thank you all for being with us. My first question is to General Fraser.

Going back to the reality on the ground, when we're talking about a setting in which we have multiple insurgent groups, rebel groups, and shifting alliances, all enmeshed in a civilian population that may or may not be displaced internally or turn into refugees, how important is the exercise of gathering good intelligence? What could Canada do as a contributor to peace operations with respect to knowing who is who in a very, very fluid and often rapidly changing environment like the ones we saw in Iraq and Syria and Afghanistan?

● (0955)

MGen (Ret'd) David Fraser: Let me use a different term, which is “human geography”. People who understand the human geography are far more effective in communicating and establishing relationships. To give an example of human geography, in Afghanistan we were using the wrong maps, because we were using maps written and done up by people back in the 1800s. I asked my staff to go and get me a tribal map. When we understood the human geography, the complexity just exploded off the page. We started to have different relationships, and we started building those relationships and having a better understanding of the cultural sensitivities of the groups that we were dealing with and an understanding of what their grievances were with each other and what their grievances were with us, because we didn't understand them—wrong culture, wrong race, wrong religion, blah, blah, blah.

The more we sat down and talked to them, the better we could understand it. You put a big bowl around that whole thing and that's called intelligence, intelligence and understanding the situation that you have to deal with. The better intelligence you have, the better informed decisions you can make and you can actually deliver the right effect at the right time with the right results. It's not about killing. It's about engaging in relationship building, and we need significant capability.

One of the greatest assets that Canada has provided on operations throughout our history.... I used “us” in Afghanistan. I said, “We're multicultural, multi-ethnic.” I used to show up in meetings. I had my political adviser, who was a woman, and my development adviser, who was a woman. I was a guy. I had an imam with me, and I had a guy you might know. His name is Harjit Sajjan and he is a Sikh. I said, “Welcome to Canada. This is Team Canada. This is what we come with. This is just us.”

The one thing about Canadians is that we'll talk the crap out of you, because all we want to do is talk to you and we want to understand what's going on. Then the imam would say a prayer, and they'd be really confused because he was wearing a uniform and he was speaking in their language and he was praying with them. After we had the prayer, we sat down and had a talk. You want to talk about a multiplying effect? Canada was a superstar over there. We found out stuff that the Americans and other international agencies did not because we are just unique because we are multicultural and multi-ethnic. That's intelligence. Understanding that, Canada just being Canadians going over there and doing what Canadians do best.... I don't think there's another country in the world that can do it as well as we can. We just don't give ourselves enough credit.

Mr. Sven Spengemann: It's fair to say that we have an excellent starting point. If we have the right maps and the right people, we're in the game.

How long does it take to build the relationships to actually get valuable information on an ongoing basis? You can't just walk in.... With all the good circumstances you outlined, that's a great starting point, but it takes time to build trust.

MGen (Ret'd) David Fraser: It's at least a year.

When you first walk in there, they don't believe us. They have a history. Pick a country and they have a history. After about a year, six months, they're going to start talking to you. I'm talking about the key people, what the ambassadors are talking about, the political people, the people who are going to do the process. That's a long-term relationship. You don't change those people out quickly.

The police force and the security people, the apparatus underneath it, you can change. But where the peace process happens, that's a long-term relationship. You have to put people in there for a couple of years to make this thing work.

Mr. Sven Spengemann: In addition to people and good maps and good insights, are there technologies that Canada could bring to the table in peace operations?

MGen (Ret'd) David Fraser: Yes. We have to get our private sector to invest. The best way to fight corruption is what we did in Afghanistan. We created a banking system, an electronic banking system. By creating an electronic banking system, we paid everybody using this thing because everyone had it. The Germans came in, built a telecommunication system better than in Canada. If you read my book, you'll see how Canada built a bank and we gave Afghans banking and stopped corruption. Technology is the solution.

Mr. Sven Spengemann: Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: MP Gallant.

Mrs. Cheryl Gallant (Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke, CPC): Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I will be directing my questions to General Fraser.

A report by the United States federal aviation authority states that extremist militant groups in Mali are suspected to possess or have access to MANPADS, the portable air defence systems. They may have originated from the conflict in Libya. So far, we've been told that they don't have the capability yet to know how to use them, but we understand that these MANPADS can fire ammunition that can reach 25,000 feet. With our government deploying six helicopters to Mali, would you be at all concerned about the presence of these weapons?

● (1000)

MGen (Ret'd) David Fraser: You're always concerned about any weapon system, but as soon as you hear about MANPADS, it becomes a new level of concern. We had this threat in Afghanistan and we always—going back to the question about intelligence—tried to gain an understanding of how many of these systems were in the country and whether they had used them. Understanding the pattern of use is important because it's always a threat and you have to take everything into account.

Understanding the human geography, you see that these are status symbols. Somebody who walks around with one of these things is a pretty important guy. Once you fire, it's gone. You want to walk around with it, but you use it and it's gone. Going back to understanding the culture, you need to know how they view these things, and that can help mitigate some of that risk. It's a concern that we should all be cognizant of.

Mrs. Cheryl Gallant: How would you characterize the capabilities and threat level of the terrorist groups who are taking the fight to the UN forces in Mali?

MGen (Ret'd) David Fraser: It's a direct threat and everyone should be concerned about it. As soon you leave the ground and you're starting to fly around in either a rotary wing or fixed-wing aircraft, you have a MANPADS threat, and you have to take that into consideration.

Mrs. Cheryl Gallant: In Mali, we have a situation where various Islamist rebel groups not only oppose the presence of peacekeepers but go out of their way to attack them. How should this be addressed?

MGen (Ret'd) David Fraser: We should address it through diplomatic means and relationship building. Going out and having military operations and killing them is easy but that's not going to resolve anything. Every time you kill somebody, you create 10 new insurgents. You've disenfranchised a whole bunch of families and they come after you.

You have to talk to the locals and try to find out who these people are. Everybody knows who they are, and you need to build a relationship, create a dialogue, try to find the moderates within those groups and talk to them. We try to get them to come over and we give them legitimacy and a voice in the conversation. That's one way to address it. You don't want to address it directly through combat operations. You have to address it through diplomacy and through negotiations. That's the only way you're going to be able to resolve this.

You're always going to have the few out there who you're going to have to give a life choice. You make the first two choices for them because they just not will not come around. They're just bent on not liking us. This is why it's so important to build a relationship with the host nation and try find somebody you can work with. As T.E. Lawrence said back in 1914, 1918, whatever, it's better to let them figure it out for themselves, even imperfectly, than it is to try to do it for them.

We can't fix this problem. It's their problem. Let's help them.

Mrs. Cheryl Gallant: Our military witnesses told us that, essentially, our people would be staying inside the wire. It would be a separate encampment from the other countries that are involved in this mission. We'd have 250 people, roughly 200 people on the ground to support the helicopters that are doing the medevacs. How are we, being inside the wire and protected, as described, actually going to have these shura-like meetings with the people on the ground if they're encamped and not deployed to the forefront? How is this going to occur?

The Chair: If you can answer that, General, in 15 seconds or less, I would very much appreciate that.

MGen (Ret'd) David Fraser: We have great intelligence capabilities to mitigate the threat when the aircraft go up. Our aircraft are there for a specific task. Our task is not to negotiate. Our task is medevac transportation, etc. That's the mission we were given. You'll have to ask somebody else what the other mission did in negotiating.

● (1005)

The Chair: Mr. Fisher.

Mr. Darren Fisher (Dartmouth—Cole Harbour, Lib.): Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you, folks, for being here.

This has been excellent testimony. The main theme seems to be the drastically changing nature of peacekeeping as we see it today. David, you described the changes through the Cold War, the changes through the 1990s and today. I almost get the sense that peacekeeping today doesn't even really bear a resemblance to what peacekeeping looked like in the 1950s. However, in the Canadian mentality, and maybe even in the world mentality, it's almost the same. It's peacekeepers between two warring factions.

Ms. Novosseloff, in your opening statements you used the phrase “peacekeeping is constantly improving”. We've talked about the changes. We've talked about how, perhaps, it doesn't necessarily bear a resemblance today to what peacekeeping was in the 1950s, but you're the first, really, that I've heard say that peacekeeping is constantly improving. I'm interested in your thoughts on that. I also wouldn't mind the other panellists or witnesses giving me a quick, short thought on whether they feel that peacekeeping is or can be seen as improving.

Dr. Alexandra Novosseloff: First of all, peacekeeping cannot do everything. Counterterrorism is not a task for peacekeeping. This has to be taken by other stakeholders, regional organizations, bilaterals, coalitions of the willing. We have to put a limit to what peacekeeping is doing. MINUSMA, the UN peacekeeping in Mali, is testing that, and really, we have to put limits on that.

Peacekeeping has been improving in the way it conducts things, within those limits. There's a lot of discussion today, currently in New York, on how to improve performances of peacekeepers, how to improve command and control.

It's also member states that have to be willing to integrate. When I heard your colleague say that Canada will be in a separate camp from the rest of the mission, for me, that is not a good sign of integration. That's what is happening currently in Gao. Sweden and Germany are separated from the rest of the mission, from the rest of the contingents. That creates a two-tier mission, and it's not good for the integrated way we should conduct those missions, not only for the unity of command but also for the unity of messaging.

How can a SRSG use the military component to back up the political processes, the political dialogue, if you have separate components within the military component that will not follow what the SRSG says? We have to look at how we operate in those circumstances.

Mr. Darren Fisher: General, do you feel it's improving, or is it even fair to compare the beast it once was with what we see today?

MGen (Ret'd) David Fraser: What was and what is today are totally different. I don't think you can make a qualitative or quantitative comparison. They are completely different.

When I first went into Cyprus with a blue beret, when I went to Bosnia with a blue beret.... When I saw what I saw in Afghanistan and I saw peacekeepers, that wasn't a blue beret operation I recognized. Operations have changed.

The year 1995 was a paradigm shift for the world, and I think we have to recognize it.

Mr. Darren Fisher: That was the big change, 1995.

That's great. Thank you.

Do you folks want to chime in on that?

Ms. Dugal.

Ms. Zoé Dugal: I have just a very quick point. When we say that peacekeeping has completely changed.... I want to just say that with regard to the traditional means of peacekeeping, we still have those missions. There is still a mission in Cyprus that is a traditional, completely old-style, peacekeeping mission. There is still a UN mission in the Golan Heights. Those missions are still the traditional peacekeeping missions. We still have Canadians in those, and we've had Canadians in those. It's not that peacekeeping has changed and that we've forgotten the old ways. There are still those missions. The new missions are very different.

● (1010)

Mr. Darren Fisher: That's the important thing.

Thanks.

The Chair: Thank you.

MP Bezan.

Mr. James Bezan (Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman, CPC): Thank you.

First of all, I want to thank our witnesses for being here.

General Fraser, I want to thank you in particular for your leadership and to congratulate you on your amazing career. I'm looking forward to your book launch next week. I will be there to get my copy and a personal autograph from you.

I just want to follow up on what Madam Dugal just said about how there is traditional peacekeeping out there. We talk about Bosnia being a success for the UN, but are Cyprus and the Golan Heights? Here we are 30, 40, 50 years on, and we still have peacekeepers there. How can those be successes?

Ms. Zoé Dugal: That's exactly.... I think we can see them as successful because of what their mandates were. Their mandates were to stop the fighting. This has been achieved. In Cyprus, there is no fighting. There hasn't been any fighting for decades. Now the success is not that the country is reintegrated. That is not what the mission was meant to do. This is why when we talk about the success of peace operations and the new form that they've taken, we have to be very careful because the level of success that we're trying to measure is much higher than what we had for Cyprus or the Golan Heights. If you decide to place a few military observers to monitor a ceasefire, the measure of success is very easy: did they stop fighting? If they stopped fighting, then you are successful.

Now with regard to what we've been discussing in terms of state building, rebuilding institutions, transforming societies, and so on, this is the goal of new peace operations. These successes have to be measured in various fields. In my view—I've worked in Afghanistan also—Afghanistan is a failure. I will say it. I don't think Afghanistan is a functioning state at the moment.

Now in terms of other situations, I think you can have very different levels of success. You have more success in some areas and less success in others. It's very difficult to answer the question also from the previous MP about whether it is improving. It's becoming much more difficult and complex. It is improving, but the challenges are higher. The way that you measure success has to be also more refined, in a way. It's not just to stop the fighting. It's about what else are you building.

Mr. James Bezan: General Fraser, you made a comment that I want to get some clarification on. You said that Bosnia was a UN success, but I think all the reading I've ever done has said that the fighting stopped when NATO came in and ended the fight, that it wasn't the UN, that it was actually NATO. You started there in a blue beret, but weren't you part of the NATO operations as well?

MGen (Ret'd) David Fraser: I would say that we actually got the paradigm backwards. When I first went there, we should have had NATO in there because when I was there with the UN, we were dropping bombs from NATO airplanes. To talk about the ambassador's convoluted chain of command.... The UN didn't have intelligence, we didn't have bombs, and we were fighting a civil war at the same time. When NATO came in, it came in too late. The UN peace process kind of muddled its way through. General de la Presle, who was the UNPROFOR commander, said it best. He said that it was a flawed mission, but there was nothing else to replace it. Look where we are today. In fact, that flawed mission actually had some positive outcomes, but we needed both NATO and the UN. We couldn't do this without each other.

Mr. James Bezan: I know that when I talk to our veterans and current serving members who have experience in Bosnia, but also in Rwanda and Somalia, some of the apprehension that's out there about Mali is with regard to convoluted chains of command. Will they answer the phone when you call, like General Dallaire experienced in Rwanda? Are you confident—and keep in mind that blood and treasure could be spilled in Mali from Canada's standpoint—that the UN has evolved enough and learned from the lessons of these really terrible conflicts that we got ourselves into the middle of?

MGen (Ret'd) David Fraser: I am confident in the Canadian Forces and in what the Canadian package that goes over there will have: a clear chain of command, clear rules of engagement that come from the chief of the defence staff, and the support of our government. I'm confident of that. What they are going into within the UN construct, I don't have confidence in.

● (1015)

Mr. James Bezan: Still...?

MGen (Ret'd) David Fraser: Still.

Some of the comments here were about why nations are putting their troops in separate camps. It's because of risk-mitigating their troops from the threat. Also, in term of why they're not going to go into other camps, it's that they don't have the trust in the other camps, and we want to protect our most national asset, which is a person. I don't think the UN—still—has what it needs to in Mali.

Mr. James Bezan: Thank you.

The Chair: MP Alleslev.

Ms. Leona Alleslev (Aurora—Oak Ridges—Richmond Hill, Lib.): Thank you very much. This is an absolutely incredible panel.

If I may, I will sum up just a bit the testimony from today and what we've heard before. We're hearing a theme of how we are prepared at home, how we decide on operations and that decision-making process and the speed—or lack thereof—of that, and how we integrate civilians, military, and the whole of government not only before but during a mission, or when we're not on a mission.

With the continuum of peace operations fundamentally changing and being more complex, more broad, and having a requirement for prevention as well as addressing a conflict once it starts, I'm wondering if we should be looking at home at a different structure of how we decide and manage operations once they're there—with a training that includes civilian, military, and intelligence—and also how we influence the UN.

I know that's a long comment at the beginning, but could I ask you to characterize how we change that big structure so that we better prepare Canada—because it's part of who we are as global citizens—to participate in what in the future we will probably have to participate in more?

Ms. Peggy Mason: Thank you very much for that question, because I think it's fundamentally important that we develop a meaningful capacity for a whole-of-government approach in Canada. Also, bear in mind that this whole-of-government approach in Canada must take account of the broad strategic and operational framework that the UN has. In other words, what we're trying to do when we decide to go on a mission is to fit into that, not to reinvent or create our own structure.

It seems to me—and here I come back to harping on the training—that it's hard to do this in a vacuum if we don't have that kind of experience, which we don't have because we haven't had a formed unit in a UN peacekeeping operation since 2002. I think the place to start is a whole-of-government training centre, and a priority would be.... The old Pearson Peacekeeping Centre also had Foreign Affairs involved, so there was an attempt to have some key people from Foreign Affairs come for training, as well as—

Ms. Leona Alleslev: What I just asked, though, is that you've talked about doctrine. Having clear doctrine is what allows for effective training. Are we not in a position where we need to start with a whole-of-government doctrine in order to enable a multi-dimensional effective training?

Ms. Peggy Mason: I guess it's like the chicken and the egg. I'm not sure how you can do....

Ms. Leona Alleslev: Okay.

Ms. Peggy Mason: It's like the problem with the protection of civilians and not developing that doctrine, because it's extremely difficult without the lessons on the ground. The typical way of doing this is that you get the practical experience in what the challenges were on the ground, and you feed that back into your training process. I think it's hard to develop the doctrine until we start getting a little more experience, but there's a lot of training we can do at this stage to start things off.

Ms. Leona Alleslev: Thank you.

Zoé.

Ms. Zoé Dugal: Thank you very much. I would like to add to that.

Maybe not in Canada for those reasons, but I think that in terms of lessons learned—

Ms. Leona Alleslev: It's time.

Ms. Zoé Dugal: —the UN has become very much better at lessons learned. There's a whole section of their Department of Peacekeeping Operations that is exclusively working on lessons learned from past missions, so this is accessible. As a member state, Canada can access this, so there is no need to reinvent the wheel.

Maybe we don't exactly have it here at home, but we've had a lot of Canadians who have served on missions, and we have others. We have all our other member states and our neighbours that can also serve in this.

● (1020)

Ms. Leona Alleslev: Thank you.

General Fraser, you mentioned a super DM, so I was thinking that might be part of your answer?

MGen (Ret'd) David Fraser: I agree with the ambassador. We need a whole-of-government college. We already have a pseudo-college. It's the Canadian Forces College in Toronto, which is whole of government. There's a Canadian securities studies program going on for the next two weeks. There are civilians. There are government people. There are military. There are international students. This is a jewel in the crown, and the chicken and the egg.... We need a whole-of-government approach that the Canadian Forces College actually fits into. We don't need to worry about doctrine. We already have doctrine.

I wish Canadians would stop being so pessimistic about ourselves. We actually know how to do this stuff. All right? We've been doing it for longer than anyone else. Everyone else looks to us. The Chinese are looking to us for how to do operations. The United States look to us for how to do operations. We're good. We just have to start believing in ourselves and get on with it. So let's create a whole-of-government college.

Ms. Leona Alleslev: And the super DM you mentioned earlier...?

The Chair: I'm sorry. You're out of time, but there's more time and you'll get another opportunity.

For the last question in round two, we go to MP Garrison.

Mr. Randall Garrison: Thanks very much, Mr. Chair. This time I get three minutes, so I have to select something that's shorter here.

One of the things we've heard about from some of the other witnesses is a possible contribution by Canada to a rapidly deployable headquarters, and about helping to facilitate a speedy response to requests.

I just wonder if any of you, including Ms. Novosseloff in New York, would like to comment about the rapidness of deployment.

Dr. Alexandra Novosseloff: Yes, there are projects at the UN Secretariat on a small vanguard force. That's the name of it, and part of it is to have rapidly deployable headquarters to a mission. For the time being, it hasn't been tested because there's no new mission, but certainly Canada could contribute to such a force with staff officers.

I also want to point out the fact that there is the capstone doctrine at the UN, and that's the basis for all doctrine. There's a whole range of manuals on doctrine, and I think this should be the baseline of any training that Canada does, because what I witnessed in the field is that things go badly when people don't know what the procedures of the UN are, when they haven't been trained on how the UN is conducting its operation. This is an important point, I think.

Mr. Randall Garrison: General Fraser.

MGen (Ret'd) David Fraser: We actually have a high-readiness deployable headquarters. It's called the 1st Canadian Division Headquarters. I commanded it. I stood it up for the very reason of creating, from the lessons learned from Afghanistan.... It is defence-centric but it has ties in to Foreign Affairs, GAC. We have this capability, and it is on readiness 24-7.

Mr. Randall Garrison: Ambassador Mason.

Ms. Peggy Mason: Thank you. I just have to come back on the point. I agree and I'm very glad about the comment about the UN having lessons learned and having the capstone doctrine. We were reminded of that. I was just talking about a very narrow lacuna in the protection of civilians, the lack of doctrine there. But I have to respond with respect to the Canadian Forces College. It's military-led. The entire thrust of a multi-dimensional UN peacekeeping operation is that it's civilian-led.

The Chair: Thank you for that.

That ends the first two rounds of formal questioning. Given the time left and the people who have indicated to me that they would like a question.... I have MPs Spengemann, Bezan, Alleslev, Garrison, and Robillard. If we do four minutes each, that will take us to the end of the questioning. I'd like to start with MP Spengemann.

The floor is yours for four minutes, please.

Mr. Sven Spengemann: Mr. Chair, thank you very much.

I have two questions for Madam Dugal, and if I am under, I'd be happy to delegate the remainder of my time to my Liberal colleagues.

My first question is, could we ask you to give the committee a sense of the structural importance? I think you alluded to it in your previous questions or answers. What is the structural importance of the civilian components of peacekeeping operations, the civilian personnel? This is for the committee to grasp the importance of that part of the operation.

Ms. Zoé Dugal: As I think Ambassador Mason said, UN peace operations are led by civilians. The head of any peace operation in the UN system is the SRSG. This is a civilian who reports directly to the Security Council of the UN and who reports to the Secretary-General. Even in traditional peacekeeping, the head of the mission is still a civilian. Everything we've talked about during this session with regard to prevention, diplomacy, state-building, reforms, and so on is all led by civilians.

The military component, as I think the general has also alluded, is coming to reinforce what the civilians are trying to do. So in terms of stopping the fighting, yes, but then you need a peace accord and you need to move forward with rebuilding the society. This can only be done by civilians.

● (1025)

Mr. Sven Spengemann: Thank you very much for that.

The second question is a very short one, but the answer probably requires a very complex thought process. It's the question of exit criteria for military operations. When and how do we devolve into a nascent peace consolidation, peace-building process, questions of governance. Often they are run in parallel. They are sort of overlapping, sequencing, and then we see the political reflex to withdraw troops because of domestic political factors—the money being spent, the lives being lost, and the public saying enough, we need to pull out—but it may not all be congruent with the trajectory of that particular country at that time.

Ms. Zoé Dugal: The HIPPO report I presented addresses the fact that peace operations are a long-term commitment. It's not cheap, and you cannot go for six months and then leave.

The UN has developed doctrine on how to reduce military involvement in peace operations as the peace process and the rebuilding of the state are progressing. It doesn't mean you go for a year and then withdraw all military components. You can reduce them, and you can give them different tasks.

As the situation is evolving and hopefully progressing, you reduce the military component, the police component, and actually the civilian component as well. The UN reduces all these components when it sees progress. Then after a while you give them different tasks. Instead of monitoring a ceasefire, for example, they might help secure the borders. This is the evolution. Sometimes you have progress, and then you have regress. In that case, you might have to bring back more military.

The Chair: Before we delegate Mr. Spengemann's remaining time, Ms. Novosseloff wanted to weigh in. I would appreciate 60 seconds or less, please.

Dr. Alexandra Novosseloff: In this debate I haven't heard the word “governance”, which is key to the stabilization of the crisis and the conflicts we have. If the Malian government is a party to the conflict, which is the case, you also have to talk to the Malian government in terms of governance, because what triggered the conflict in the first place is the lack of respect for minority rights in the north, in the Azawad. The origin of the conflict is in the fact that you have a very centralized state that does not respect local grievances.

This is the key to the exit, but we have to put more pressure in terms of governance, because if you're involved in the trafficking that is fuelling the conflict, then you have to stop that. This is key to stabilizing conflict.

Of course, it's always up to the parties to the conflict to reach a solution. There is still a mission in Cyprus because the parties to the conflict haven't found a way to reach a solution despite numerous peace processes. It's not the fault of the UN. It's the fault of the parties to the conflict.

Thank you.

The Chair: MP Bezan.

Mr. James Bezan: Thank you, Chair.

I just want to say that everyone around the table here believes that capacity building and the whole-of-government approach are the right way to go. Some of the concerns revolve around how the military operation is taking place. I take General Fraser's comments to heart that we have the best of the best and we know how to get the job done.

In the Mali mission in particular, we have a UN mission, we have the G5 Sahel anti-terrorism operations—which Canada may be supporting in terms of medevac and the logistical movement of troops—and then we have the French. There are three different groups working there, all somewhat connected but with different missions.

In terms of lessons learned, should we be looking more at the success of Bosnia? I know it was backwards, but should we consider a NATO-led or other group leading the anti-terrorism operations, and then stabilize the region so peace can be made?

● (1030)

MGen (Ret'd) David Fraser: I agree. What's missing from Mali is a governance structure that actually pulls all those pieces together.

We had a similar structure in Afghanistan, and you could argue about it, but it was State Department-led. The United States military ran most of it, but there was a counter-drug operation within that. We still had huge problems on the ground trying to rectify it when, in fact, UN people could be going out doing something, and you had a counterterrorist operation going on at the same time.

First of all, I'm worried about fratricide, then I'm worried about unintended consequences. This is the weakness of the Mali construct right now. You have at least three separate operations going on without anyone coordinating at the top. This may be something Canada can contribute to a dialogue, asking what we could do to bring this so-called coherence to the overall mission for better effects on the ground.

Mr. James Bezan: Thanks.

General Fraser, you mentioned in one of your comments about the failure states we have today—Afghanistan, Iraq, and others—and it being the international players that created the environment. I can probably throw Rwanda and Somalia in there, and Sudan. Don't we lay blame also on the terrorists, on the Taliban, on ISIS? For the creation of the environment in Afghanistan, you can probably go back to the Soviets, and even before that the British, if you want to go back historically. Unfortunately, we get to a point where we have all these bad guys, whether they're terrorists or insurgents or otherwise. We have to deal with them.

MGen (Ret'd) David Fraser: This actually goes into your realm. You're the politicians. I would say that Osama bin Laden was a bona fide threat that attacked us on 9/11. We went into Afghanistan to go after that threat that attacked us on our home territory and killed Canadians. At some stage somebody made a decision to get rid of the Taliban regime, and Colin Powell said, “you break it, you own it”. Saddam Hussein, we supported that guy for how many years when he was fighting against Iran? Moammar Gadhafi, we supported him for how many years until we got rid of him? These are political decisions and not for a military guy to talk to you about. When you break it, you're in it for the haul. For the men and women on the ground—civilian, military, everyone else—it's really complicated, and there's no solution that's going to happen in two or three years.

Mr. James Bezan: Thank you.

The Chair: Ms. Alleslev.

Ms. Leona Alleslev: I'd like to go back a bit to maybe understand why Canada took so long to decide on this mission, and if, in your opinion, we have a whole-of-government approach currently that includes all of our civilians who are doing things that may not have a military component to them, from how we decide on where to go, from what's in our budget in terms of aid or whatever, in terms of prevention. Do we currently have a whole-of-government approach, from decision-making to in-country, to prevention, to an operation? If not, what should it look like?

Zoé.

Ms. Zoé Dugal: Again, it's a tall question. I'm not going to speak on the military side. I think the general can address that if he has some points to make.

No, I don't think we have a whole-of-government approach. I don't think Canada has a coherent policy on where to send civilians. The civilians who are serving with the UN at the moment are mostly in their own capacity. We do have a small contribution to the OSCE peacekeeping mission in Ukraine. Canada is managing this for Global Affairs Canada, so the funding and the decision came from Global Affairs.

In terms of other missions, it's not there. To echo what Ambassador Mason was saying, training is hugely important. There are also other aspects. Normally when you deploy civilians, the military, and police, you deploy them, you train them, you prepare them, you send them, and then you bring them back. You reintegrate them, you retrain them, and then you send them again. This is the continuum that the UN has been putting forward. The in-mission support is also touching on something that we didn't discuss today, which is called duty of care. This is when a government decides to send civilians, the miliary, and police to any kind of situation abroad. There is a duty of care on whoever is sending them. This is an aspect where you can provide in-mission support to Canadians who are serving abroad.

● (1035)

Ms. Leona Alleslev: Thank you.

Ms. Novosseloff, do you have a comment?

Dr. Alexandra Novosseloff: First of all, when looking at the situation in Mali, we could have envisaged the type of operation that was done in Afghanistan in terms of a multinational force. For the time being it's not a path that has been taken by the international community, so the UN is there to do what it can to stabilize a number of centres in Mali, in the north. But certainly there's a limit to what it can do, and that is peacekeeping.

Ms. Leona Alleslev: Thank you.

General.

MGen (Ret'd) David Fraser: I agree with the comments about what we have, as Canada.

I think we lost something when.... David Mulroney was a super DM. We got that. I thought when that capability came in, what I was seeing and feeling in Afghanistan got 100% better. It was good. It got 100% better. I think the Manley report....

We need something that pulls all the departments together to break down the silos and actually then facilitates and enables. For anything we do internationally, we need somebody back home who can actually harness that energy and bring Team Canada to bear.

Ms. Leona Alleslev: Outstanding. Thank you very much.

The Chair: We have four minutes for MP Garrison, and then a short one for MP Robillard.

The floor is yours.

Mr. Randall Garrison: Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

The government has talked about a series of what I call niche contributions. It likes to call them “smart pledges”, and only a one-year commitment in Mali.

In my question I'm just going to get a go-around of our witnesses today. Do you think this kind of approach will give us the knowledge we need to resume a leadership role in peacekeeping? Whatever the value of those are, does this actually get us back to the traditional leadership role in peacekeeping?

I'll start with Ms. Dugal, and we'll just go around.

Ms. Zoé Dugal: One year is nothing in terms of.... It will be something for the men and women serving there, of course, so in terms of individual experiences I think this is valuable. In terms of how Canada is learning from this experience and in terms of how we contribute to the UN in general, I don't think one year is.... It's not going to look very credible, either, within the UN system.

Mr. Randall Garrison: Professor Mason.

Ms. Peggy Mason: Yes, just to echo that point, both the Netherlands and Germany have three-year commitments and this is really what the UN has been urging, to have some kind of continuity. We'll basically be preparing to leave when we go in, so it's not sufficient.

If I may, though, I would like to come quickly back to this discussion of UN command and control. The UN has made huge progress in this regard, and independent studies going all the way back to 2009 demonstrate that the decentralized command and control, down to the head of mission at the operational level, the SRSG, who also has a quasi-strategic function, was far superior to NATO command and control.

The new issue that's arisen is the one that was raised with respect to when you have two other missions operating, as in Mali. How do you do that kind of coordination? The answer is not for an individual member state to say, we're going to do it. The answer is to support the UN Security Council and the UN headquarters in coming to grips with the kind of mechanism that they can develop to assert that kind of strategic-level coordination over the three missions.

Mr. Randall Garrison: General Fraser, do you think the contributions we're doing now are enough to get us back into the peacekeeping leadership role?

MGen (Ret'd) David Fraser: In short, no. It's piecemeal. There is no coherence to it. There is no Team Canada approach that gives mass concentration to meet the aspiration that our Prime Minister stated. I think the pieces are there, but it's not packaged properly.

● (1040)

Mr. Randall Garrison: Ms. Novosseloff, what does Canada actually bring to the table that would be valuable now?

Dr. Alexandra Novosseloff: I think it has to be a more comprehensive contribution. It's certainly rather easy, like sending a number of staff officers, not only in Mali but in a number of other peacekeeping operations, so that you go again into this process of learning what UN peacekeeping is about, how the UN is functioning on the ground, and also put a number of civilians, maybe not the SRSG but DSRSGs, chiefs of staff, which are very key positions, in the system. That's how you will again build that knowledge that is crucial to any contribution.

Thank you.

Mr. Randall Garrison: Great.

Thank you.

The Chair: The last question is to MP Robillard.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Yves Robillard: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

My question is for all the witnesses.

While a number of previous witnesses have talked about the importance of women in peacekeeping missions, what measures should the United Nations take so that women's participation in conflict resolution would be considered a priority and an essential part of international peacekeeping and security?

Ms. Zoé Dugal: I will go first.

Women must be involved at all levels. Is not enough to send a few women in some contingents. As soon as peace negotiations begin, in the peace agreement, women from the country in question must be involved in all aspects of the negotiations. But that hasn't really been done. The few times that has been done were very successful.

It has been proven that peace negotiations that involved local women brought a sustainable peace in those countries because women have a different position and see things differently. Often, they are not fighters. They come from communities and are local leaders. They provide a perspective and think of including things in the peace agreement that men would not include.

It is crucial for women to be involved at all levels, from the very beginning. It must also be determined how they can be integrated into the UN. There are women on the civilian side. In fact, there are more women than men within the UN. However, women must be encouraged to take on leadership positions. There are women at lower levels and some in the middle, but we need women to be special representatives of the secretary general and be involved at high levels in UN missions. In addition, there must be women at the UN headquarters, In New York, and not only on the ground.

In terms of military and police services, every member state must ensure to increase the number of women in those organizations. It must begin with having more women in police services and in the army. Those women will then be deployed on the ground. If there are no women in police services, they cannot be sent abroad.

That is basically my answer.

Mr. Yves Robillard: Thank you.

[*English*]

Ms. Peggy Mason: Thank you very much.

Yes, it's absolutely important to champion women in the peace process, but that means that you have to have a good peace process. It's part of the bigger picture. It's not just saying that we support women. It's getting behind the peace process tangibly. It is similar with peacekeepers. Canada has an initiative to help promote more women peacekeepers. Let's lead by example and have more peacekeepers, including more women peacekeepers.

Thank you.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Yves Robillard: Thank you.

[*English*]

The Chair: Thank you very much.

Whether we call it—I wrote down some new ones—peace operations, peace support operations, peacekeeping, or UN operations, it's really the substantive nature of the conversation that is going to move the yardsticks.

I very much appreciate all four of you participating in this conversation. It added value to what we're trying to do here. We appreciate your time.

Thank you very much.

The meeting is adjourned.