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• (1530)

[English]

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Marty Morantz (Charleswood—St. James—Assiniboia—Headingley, CPC)): Welcome to meeting number 24 of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development. Pursuant to the motion adopted on July 15, the committee is meeting to study the export of Russian Gazprom turbines.

As always, interpretation is available through the globe icon at the bottom of your screen. I would like to take this opportunity to remind all participants in this meeting that screenshots or taking photos of your screen is not permitted.

Before speaking, please wait until I recognize you by name. When speaking, please speak slowly and clearly. When you're not speaking, your mike should be on mute.

I remind you that all comments by members and witnesses should be addressed through the chair. I'm Marty Morantz, vice-chair of the committee. I will also be asking questions and when I do I will be passing the chair to my colleague, Mr. Bergeron, the second vice-chair. That's how we will proceed.

I'd now like to welcome our witnesses. Our witnesses today are Melita Gabrič, ambassador of the European Union to Canada and head of the delegation; from the Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany, Ms. Sabine Sparwasser, ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany to Canada; and the ambassador of Ukraine to Canada, Yuliia Kovaliv.

Welcome, all of you. Thank you for being here. I'd like to ask each of you to make your opening statements. You each have five minutes. We'll start with the European Union ambassador.

Ms. Gabrič, please proceed. You have the floor.

Her Excellency Melita Gabrič (Ambassador and Head of the Delegation of the European Union to Canada): Good afternoon, honourable chair of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development, honourable committee members and excellencies Sparwasser and Kovaliv. It is my pleasure to be with you today to provide perspective on the matter at hand on behalf of the European Union.

Since the very first day of the unprovoked, illegal and egregiously unjustified military invasion of Ukraine by the Russian Federation, Europe has been helping Ukraine economically; financially; with humanitarian assistance; diplomatically; politically; and with

the provision of weapons through the European peace facility. We will continue to do so.

In order to restrict the Kremlin's means to finance this disastrous war, the EU and its member states have also adopted the largest sanctions package in European Union history. We are closely cooperating with our transatlantic and international allies, with Canada being one of our closest partners. We appreciate the timely and efficient exchange of information as well as the support that Canada has been providing to Ukraine. We appreciate Canada's investment in European security and its commitment to a rules-based international order.

To cut revenue sources for Russia from its energy exports, the EU is determined to wean itself off Russian energy altogether. To this end, a decision was made to ban 90% of oil imports from Russia by the end of this year. We have also adopted a ban on all imports of coal from Russia, the export of specific refining technologies, and new investments in the Russian energy sector. The EU sanctions regime, however, does not affect goods or technology linked to the industrial transport of natural gas into the European Union, and nor is Nord Stream 1 subject to any EU sanctions. In other words, nothing under the EU sanctions regime would have prevented the repatriation of the Nord Stream 1 turbine.

The European Commission welcomed the decision by Canada to return a natural gas pipeline turbine to Germany after its repair for use in the Nord Stream 1 pipeline, which has been transporting gas to a number of European countries. With the return of this part, one of the excuses being used by Russia for reduced gas flows was removed. Such flows in the short term help EU countries stock up on supplies for the winter, and are part of a strategy of phasing out our reliance on Russian energy.

Russia is continuously using energy supplies as a weapon against the EU and its member states. We have adopted a number of measures to prepare for possible further disruptions of gas supplies from Russia, ranging from diversifying supply sources, speeding up the development of renewables, becoming more energy efficient and reducing natural gas demand this winter. The EU and Canada have been working together to identify concrete and viable areas for co-operation on the key energy-related commodities for which the EU has a particular need—liquefied natural gas and hydrogen, but also uranium, critical raw materials, potash and biomass.

We are grateful to Canada for its support and commitment to helping with European energy security while deepening co-operation on our mutual net-zero energy transition.

Mr. Chair, thank you.

• (1535)

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Marty Morantz): Thank you, Ambassador.

Next we have the Ambassador of Germany to Canada.

Ms. Sparwasser, you have the floor for your opening statement. Please proceed.

Her Excellency Sabine Sparwasser (Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany to Canada): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Thank you very much for this opportunity to appear at this hearing.

The decision of the Canadian government to grant an exemption for the export of the Siemens gas turbine at the request of my country has given rise to much controversy and criticism. I want to give you the German perspective here.

Before I go into the arguments, allow me to place this question in a larger context. What we're having today is a very important debate, but it is a debate among very close partners and friends. We are all united and allied in our strategic goal. Russia must not win this war of aggression against Ukraine. It must not succeed in its attempt to redraw the map by force and it must not be allowed to destroy the post-war security order of Europe.

All governments called upon to witness today here in this room—Canadian, European and German—are actively and unambiguously supporting Ukraine against the Russian aggression. We do it politically, financially and militarily, including with heavy weapons.

Together with our partners in the G7, we have decided on unprecedented packages of far-reaching sanctions. I want to stress that we are in this for the long haul. As Chancellor Scholz just said, "We will support Ukraine for as long as it takes." We want Ukraine to be free and sovereign and able to become part of the European Union.

Our message today should be clear to anybody and it should certainly be clear to Russia. We are Ukraine's friends and firm allies. We will stay the course.

When we now debate the export of these turbines, we're debating a very important issue, but it's not a strategic one; it's a tactical one.

Both sides in this debate have valid and weighty arguments. No decision is perfect and none was easy. It was only after a lot of soul-searching that Germany asked Canada to allow a waiver of its national sanctions regime, and the Canadian government did grant it after difficult deliberations. We're very grateful for the decision.

The reasoning behind our request is simple. Our sanctions should impose an economic cost on Russia, but they must not harm us more than they harm Russian interests. As you well know, many countries in the EU, including Germany, are decreasingly dependent—but still dependent—on Russian gas for their energy supply. That's the reason why European sanctions—and U.S. sanctions, by the way—did not include sanctioning goods and services related to the delivery of Russian gas.

Canada has been a leader within the G7 on sanctions against Russia. Canadian legislation has imposed a broader sanctions regime nationally. It is geared to hurt Russia. It was certainly not designed to make it harder for the Europeans to fill their gas tanks, while quickly replacing Russian gas.

Mr. Chair, let me say that sanctions are a very blunt instrument. When states impose economic costs on another country, they often inflict unintended consequences on third parties. Waivers allow flexibility and they allow us to sharpen sanctions. All of our countries use them. The U.S. uses them. The EU just waived some sanctions on Russia to help open up Ukrainian food exports and to take away Russia's pretext that western sanctions are to blame for the global food crisis.

For a very similar reason, Germany asked Canada in June and July to allow the delivery of the turbines. We did not want to fall into Putin's trap. He pretended that the lacking turbine was the reason why Gazprom had to cut the delivery of gas to Germany and Europe. We did not believe him then and we do not believe him now. We're now seeing that Russia is finding more and more pretexts not to take the turbines back. That is really a case in point. We have called his bluff.

With the delivery of the turbine, the pretext is gone. Now it's clear for all to see that Russia is using energy to exert pressure on Europe. It's trying to pit one ally against the other, and it wants to divide us. We need to resist this.

• (1540)

We also need to get out of our dependency on Russian fossil fuels very fast. Germany has already taken a lot of bold steps, and the EU has too, as Melita explained. We have achieved good progress on coal; we're out of it. We're going to be out of oil very soon. On gas, well, on February 24, our dependency in Germany on Russian gas imports stood at 55%. In the last few weeks, it was down to 30%. I checked today; we're down to 26%. That's huge progress. Our goal is to completely phase out Russian energy as fast as we can.

Today, Germany as well as a considerable number of other European countries still need it in order to fill up for the coming winter, though. We're trying to fill up our gas storage as fast as we can to 80% to 90% as the backbone for the winter. It's very important for heating in Europe.

We're also preparing for the possibility that Russia will decide to cut off Europe completely or nearly completely. Nationally and on the EU level, we're coordinating a whole bundle of emergency measures. I will very quickly name just four.

We will bring back what we wanted to phase out, namely coal, and that is very painful in the face of our climate targets. We're in the process also of reassessing our nuclear phase-out. We may prolong the life cycle of our remaining nuclear reactors.

The second point is that we share and we save. The EU has just released its gas saving plan. Melita referred to it. Hopefully, all of the European countries will save energy at a rate of 15%, and Germany even more.

The third point is that we diversify. Our partners in Norway, Netherlands and the U.S. have increased their production in order to make up for at least some of the shortfalls in Russian gas. To receive liquefied gas, Germany will now be installing two LNG ports by the end of this year and probably two to four more by the end of next year.

Fourth—

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Marty Morantz): Ambassador, I'm sorry to interrupt.

Ms. Sabine Sparwasser: Did I go too long?

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Marty Morantz): Perhaps we could get you to wrap up. It's just that there are so many MPs who have questions.

Ms. Sabine Sparwasser: Yes, I'm so sorry.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Marty Morantz): Oh no, there's no need to apologize. It's my job to be the heavy. Please complete your remarks.

Ms. Sabine Sparwasser: I just want to say that we're speeding up our energy transition, and we've changed our legislation for that. It's just to say that we're preparing for very tough times, and we're trying to do it in a way that keeps Germany and Europe strong economically and keeps the consensus in our societies together. We need to do everything in order to keep us from being weakened. If the economy in Europe and Germany stutters, that would also entail very heavy repercussions for our joint ability to continue our support of Ukraine.

My last sentence returns to where I started: We're in this for the long haul. We need to be united. We need to be strong. We need to be there for the support of Ukraine and the rebuilding of Ukraine as a free and sovereign nation in Europe.

• (1545)

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Marty Morantz): Thank you very much, Ambassador.

Next we have Ambassador Kovaliv, Ukrainian ambassador to Canada.

You have the floor for your opening remarks.

Her Excellency Yuliia Kovaliv (Ambassador of Ukraine to Canada): Dear Mr. Chair and dear members of the committee, thank you for this opportunity to address you.

Since February 24, as Russia started its unjustified war against Ukraine, it has used a wide range of weapons: missiles, tanks, sexual violence, food and energy.

We value Canada's leadership and swift parliamentary reactions as one of the first countries to recognize Russian aggression and war crimes as the genocide of Ukrainian people. You stated the obvious and helped us build alliances around the whole world to recognize that Russia's goal is to destroy Ukraine as a sovereign country and Ukrainians as a nation.

We are also grateful to Canada for the steadfast support by providing unprecedented financial support, military and humanitarian aid, hosting Ukrainians who are fleeing the war, imposing sanctions and being the first to introduce a tool to seize Russian assets. Ukraine is grateful for these important actions of direct support.

Russia's ability to fuel the war is built mainly on its oil and gas revenues, which have already exceeded \$100 billion for the period of the war. The reason why Canada and other allies have imposed sanctions is to deprive Russia of the revenues that are funding the war.

We are united with our EU partners on the importance of reducing the dependency on Russian energy. This dependency has been built for decades, unfortunately with an ignorance of its true danger. People who stood at the origin of this irresponsible policy now visit Moscow for vacations.

The urgent steps to decrease consumption have been taken by the EU. We as a country had to take the serious steps in 2014 when Ukraine totally cut off Russian gas supply to Ukraine. Today, I'm addressing you not only from the position of the country that has been fighting for over five months for our sovereignty, but also from the country that has for a decade been resisting Russia's energy pressure.

Our position from the very beginning was that the decision to provide the permit for Siemens turbines was a dangerous precedent that violates international solidarity and goes against the principle of the rule of law. In fact, the waiver has already strengthened Moscow's sense of impunity.

We repeat what was stated before: It's clear that Russia's demand for turbines has no technical basis and was aimed only at putting on even more pressure. The more you concede, the more emboldened the Kremlin feels in pushing for further exemptions. Simply put, it's a slippery slope.

I would like to remind you of the key facts. First, Russia is able to continue full gas supply to Germany without the turbine that was shipped to Canada. This turbine is still in Germany and Gazprom announced just yesterday that it will not accept it.

Secondly, it's not true that Ukraine cannot deliver and substitute gas delivery to Germany. The Ukrainian gas transmission system is 40% larger in capacity than Nord Stream 1. Even today, the volume of gas that Ukraine delivers to Europe is bigger than Nord Stream 1 delivers. Ukraine has traditionally delivered gas to Germany, Italy, Austria and other countries of the region. This is the only pipeline where the Russian monopoly Gazprom has no stake. It delivers gas to Europe even during the war.

Delivery through the Ukrainian route would also provide additional security for 11 million Ukrainian households who are getting the gas from the same pipeline.

Dear members of the committee, this waiver is not a one-time decision. The maintenance of all six turbines in Canada will cement Russia's ability for years to come to weaponize energy and to derail the efforts to address climate change, and it will be done with Canada's blessing.

The waiver was issued with the claim for better energy security, but the latest weeks have evidenced that it only gave Russia grounds for further blackmailing.

Hostile Russian moves followed. They further cut gas flow, announced another turbine to be out of order, and fully stopped gas supply to Latvia, where Canadian forces are deployed.

Today, 12 European countries have been cut from Russian gas supply on political grounds. Russia is responsible for orchestrating the gas crisis in Europe. It's now obvious.

The reason for the waiver was not to allow Russia to blame sanctions for the disruption of gas supply and now it's more than clear that an additional five turbines that were allowed to be further maintained in Canada will be turned by Russia into tools of humiliation.

• (1550)

We urge you, do not take the bait. There was no need to waive the sanctions to call Putin's regime bluff and simply lie. You can just google the history. This logic of appeasement already failed to prevent the war in Ukraine.

Ukraine is eager to work with EU countries on the measures to decrease gas dependency. We are committed to help by providing a Ukrainian gas route and offering Ukrainian gas storage, and by supplying the EU with additional electricity that could substitute up to five billion cubic metres of gas. We are already on that way with the EU. We are also looking forward to co-operating with Canada on energy security for renewables, hydrogen and the supply of LNG.

Let's not forget that since the permit was issued, Russia committed a series of war crimes—at a shopping mall in Kremenchuk and Odessa seaport; over 50 prisoners of war of Azovstal were killed; and over 160 civilians were killed in only three weeks.

Ukraine needs further military support to resist the aggressor on the battlefield. We need sanctions to deprive Russia of the economic ability to continue the war. As stated, the permit was issued with high hopes for the Government of Canada to help strategic partners in Europe. Since this step has obviously failed to bring expected results, we ask you to revise this decision. The permit was stated to be revokable, and nobody wants five other turbines to repeat the sad story of the current one.

Dear Mr. Chair and members of the committee, the west has demonstrated unity and commitment to stand with Ukraine until Ukraine wins this war. Let's be tough. Let's be as brave as the Ukrainians who are protecting the rest of Europe from Russian barbarism. I have no doubt in your support for Ukraine and that your support to Ukraine will continue. On behalf of all Ukrainians, for that I want to thank you.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Marty Morantz): Thank you very much, Ambassador.

We will go to our first round of questions. First up is Mr. Genuis for six minutes.

Mr. Genuis, you have the floor.

Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Thank you, Chair.

My initial comments will be to the German ambassador.

Your Excellency, as a bit of a personal introduction, I'm very proud of my own German heritage. My grandmother's family were German Jews, and although they lived through very dark times, my grandmother survived the war because of the courage of many ordinary Germans who were willing to shelter her at great risk to themselves.

She lived in the Münster area of Germany, where Clemens von Galen spoke out boldly against injustice and inspired everyday German farmers to shelter my grandmother and to sacrifice in the pursuit of justice.

I have been carefully reviewing the arguments of your government on this issue of the turbines, and there seem to be lot of commonalities in talking points with the Canadian government, with the same words, the same turns of phrase, etc. I note that while you continually profess friendship with Ukraine and talk about unity, you seem to presume to know better than the Ukrainians what is in their interest.

It seems to me that saying you care but failing to listen is not how true friendship works.

As it pertains to the issue of energy, your government is first of all acknowledging the reality that the turbines are not needed and that, as far as this summer goes, the maintenance is routine. Your chancellor said explicitly of the turbines that “It would be good if they would be there, even though they are not necessary.”

The Russians did not need to cut production as a result of the absence of a turbine. The facts make this plain, and you have now acknowledged as much. Instead, as the Ukrainian Canadian Congress identified, the Russians were running a test. They were testing our resolve and, in particular, your government's resolve, to see whether we and you were ready to sustain support for Ukraine through arbitrary production cuts.

According to multiple media reports, your foreign minister, without claiming that the turbines were in any way necessary, told Canada that if the missing turbine led to a stoppage of natural gas from Russia, it would spark popular uprisings and force Berlin to halt support for Ukraine. In other words, your government's argument is not that turbines are needed, but rather that you do not believe that the German people can stomach the sacrifice that will be required if Russia continues to arbitrarily drive down its gas supply. Sadly, the implication of that argument is that you would do almost anything to get them to increase that supply.

Of course, now that Russia has seen your response and has heard your government say these things, they will push further and continue to use the threat of arbitrary energy withdrawal to get additional exemptions to sanctions and other concessions. Now that Russia has seen and been told that you do not believe the German people can sustain serious sanctions and that the withdrawal of energy will lead to popular uprisings, they will continue to exert further pressure, of course.

What really strikes me and bothers me about your government's argument isn't just that it regurgitates the failed talking points of appeasement, but that it seems to demonstrate a low opinion of the courage and propensity for sacrifice of your own people. We all know that sanctions involve sacrifice. Stopping mutually beneficial exchanges between people in different countries is going to have negative consequences for people on both sides. That is inevitable, but while Ukrainians are fighting and dying, not just for their freedom but for ours as well, I think the least that we can all do is be prepared to bear the sacrifice that sanctions require of us. We must be prepared to give until it hurts if we want to prevail, but your

government seems to believe that your own people would give in to the Russian pressure and that Germans would take to the streets if the turbines were not returned.

Now, personally, I have a much higher opinion of the German people. I believe that Germans have the potential for heroic sacrifice and, unlike these talking points about popular uprisings, I think my view has public opinion data behind it. It was reported by the European Council on Foreign Relations that more than half of Germans already want to maintain support to Ukraine in spite of high energy prices, even absent any leadership from the government on that point.

When it comes to a willingness to sustain the sacrifices that are required to prevail against Russia, the problem is not with the German people. The problem seems to be with the policy of the German government and now the Canadian government.

Now, of course, the challenges Germany faces are the result of a situation that came about because your country continued to take Russian gas between 2014 and 2021, even though Ukraine was already under Russian occupation. Your government, I think, should acknowledge the reality that Russia will constrain or cut off supply in a time and a way of their own choosing, and the only real alternative for Germany is to either completely acquiesce or to stand firm and prepare for all possibilities, policies that become more and not less likely with every concession.

Ambassador, those are my comments. I will say that I think you have maybe a minute and a half left, and I'll give you the balance of my time to respond to those comments as you wish.

• (1555)

Ms. Sabine Sparwasser: Mr. Chair, am I allowed to—

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Marty Morantz): Yes, Ambassador, you have the floor.

Ms. Sabine Sparwasser: Thank you, Mr. Genuis. There were so many points in there.

My first point, which I made at the beginning of my intervention, is that I can see both sides of the argument. It is a tactical decision. There is a tactical argument to be made. What is the stronger measure?

We—my government, and the Canadian government has also been convinced of that—believe that we have called Putin's bluff by honouring the part of the turbine delivery. We called his bluff, because it is now very clear to see that Russia has not been asking for the turbines in good faith and in order to reset the provision of gas. It has done it in order to blame us and our own sanctions for the fact that Europe will not receive any gas.

The second point is that, like you, I believe that the German population is very ready for sacrifice and is very ready to stand behind Ukraine. This is absolutely true. You may have seen in Berlin the welcome that Ukrainian families received when they came. We have about 900,000 Ukrainian refugees. People are very happy to welcome more of them.

You made a very good point when you said that we made a huge strategic mistake by creating such a dependency on Russia. It was a grievous mistake. It happened over many decades. It was also part of a policy to try to tie Russia into the European security system. It followed the fall of the wall, when we saw Russia as a member of the European security system—

• (1600)

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Marty Morantz): I'm sorry, Ambassador. I'm in the unenviable position of having to cut off an ambassador. I don't cherish it.

Mr. Zuberi's up next for six minutes. Perhaps he'll let you complete your thoughts. I'll leave that to him.

Mr. Zuberi, you have the floor.

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

I'd like to thank all of the ambassadors for being here. I recognize that we, each and every one of us, are all standing in solidarity with Ukraine, from Canada to Europe.

I would also like to thank the panel for acknowledging that Canadian sanctions against Russia, in its pursuit of this illegal war, are very robust.

I'd like to thank our German allies and all European allies in their steadfastness in confronting Russia and supporting the Ukrainian people.

This being said, I'd like to start off with the EU ambassador. Earlier, in the previous panel, our foreign affairs minister said that sanctions should aim, whenever possible, to pressure Russia firmly and clearly, but also to avoid unintended consequences upon our allies. Does the EU share this view?

Ms. Melita Gabrič: Thank you for this question, honourable MP Zuberi.

The short answer to your question is that the European Union is determined to minimize unintended consequences of our very serious sanctions for third countries, as well as for the European economy.

Mr. Sameer Zuberi: Thank you for that.

I know that we all say this together, while being very steadfast against what Russia is doing and supporting the Ukrainian people.

To both the EU ambassador and the German ambassador, Minister Wilkinson said that there were no other alternatives to his decision when it came to providing the turbine. Can you speak about the importance of this decision to Germany? In your view, were there alternative decisions that could have been made by Canada?

That's to both Ambassador Gabrič and Ambassador Sparwasser.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Marty Morantz): During the question period, you can assume you have the floor in response to a question, Ambassadors.

Ms. Sabine Sparwasser: Melita.

Ms. Melita Gabrič: Yes, thank you, Sabine.

I want to reiterate what I already said in my opening statement, which is that we do welcome Canada's decision to repatriate this turbine, both because it took away the pretext that Russia has been using for reducing the flow of gas, and also because, as you are all aware, Europe has found itself in this situation with energy security because of Russia's aggression against Ukraine and because the European Union and its member states decided to support Ukraine very firmly with different means, as I already explained, ranging from financial, military and political support to support for refugees and so forth.

We are determined to wean ourselves off Russian energy. In order to do so, we need to do that gradually. We already decided to ban 90% of imports of Russian crude oil. We already banned import of Russian coal, and we are determined to phase out our dependence on Russian gas. In the meantime, in the short term, we need to prepare for the winter, and whatever flow of gas can come to Europe is of course helping with filling up our storages. As Sabine already referred to, we decided to fill our storages up to 80% to 90% by the end of the year or by the beginning of November. Here I also want to emphasize that we already increased imports of natural gas from non-Russian sources by 75% compared with last year.

• (1605)

Mr. Sameer Zuberi: Thank you for that.

Ambassador Sparwasser, do you have anything to add to that?

Ms. Sabine Sparwasser: Just as Melita said, we're very grateful that Canada took the waiver in order to avoid unintended consequences of its sanctions. It was something that has been discussed amongst the G7 as well, and our U.S. partners also welcomed that decision. In the meantime, with other sanctions, we have been going ahead and we have been trying to find sanctions that really hurt Russian interests very effectively. It is a process that we do together.

Mr. Sameer Zuberi: Thank you.

I know hypotheticals are things that we generally don't want to engage in, but when it comes to Germany's concerns about what would have transpired if the Government of Canada had not granted this permit, can you please elaborate upon those, Ambassador Sparwasser?

Ms. Sabine Sparwasser: Well, it's a fifth dimension; it's speculation, but I do believe that the reduction of the flow of gas in Nord Stream 1 would have been entirely blamed on the sanctions of the G7 and the EU against Russia. We're fighting a hybrid war. It's a conventional war that Ukraine suffers and fights very, very bravely, but we're also in a war on energy, we're in a war on food supplies and we're in a disinformation war. I think our point of view was that we would have lost significantly in the disinformation war if that turbine had not been able to be delivered. Right now, this turbine sits in Germany and it is very clear that it was an excuse, a pretext, because Gazprom is not picking it up and they're inventing very strange excuses for not doing so.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Marty Morantz): I have to move on now to Mr. Bergeron, who has the floor for six minutes.

[Translation]

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron (Montarville, BQ): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I'd like to thank all three ambassadors for being with us today. We appreciate it very much.

My first question will be for Her Excellency Ms. Kovaliv, ambassador of Ukraine.

Your Excellency, since the beginning of these hearings, we've been hearing the argument that permission to return this turbine to Germany has exposed Vladimir Putin's bluff. Everyone also seems to agree that Vladimir Putin had set us up.

Don't you feel that we simply fell into the trap?

[English]

Ms. Yuliia Kovaliv: Thank you.

I think there is no need, as I've said, to waive the sanctions to call Putin's bluff. If we recall back to January this year, there was the statement by the Russian deputy foreign minister that "We will not attack, strike, invade, 'whatever' Ukraine." There is this and many other examples, including that 24 hours after Istanbul initiative was signed Putin was attacking the Odessa port, where the first vessel was preparing to leave for Istanbul and then for Lebanon, with missiles.

I think this is what we already understand. It's good to hear that both the German government and Canadian government, and the EU, understood once more the evidence that Putin bluffs. This turbine has already been in Germany for nearly three weeks and yesterday very clearly Gazprom said it would not accept it. The thing is, why should the other five turbines need to be sent to Germany and then to Russia? We also need to understand that this waiver is not a waiver to send the turbines to Germany. Everybody knows this waiver is directly to the Russian war machine and Gazprom. That is the evidence we all understand now.

I think this debate today needs to be focused on stopping and not allowing Putin to further blackmail our EU partners and fuel the energy war.

This is the only way to do it, to revoke—as it was stated, the permit is revokable—this permit.

• (1610)

[Translation]

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron: Thank you, Your Excellency.

We in the Bloc Québécois have made it clear that the least that could be done to allow this transfer would be for Germany and Canada to increase sanctions and, as much as possible, military aid to Ukraine.

I know that there have been a lot of announcements from Canada, both in terms of sanctions and in terms of military assistance. In terms of the sanctions, we've talked about this a number of times, that we're not quite sure the Government of Canada knows exactly what the effect of those sanctions is. As for military aid, I think you can tell us what the real effect of these promises of military aid is.

Is military aid being provided within the expected time frame?

[English]

Ms. Yuliia Kovaliv: Thank you.

First of all, let me thank you for the unprecedented financial support the Canadian government has already provided to Ukraine, which helps many Ukrainians have access to social support in the country in the war.

Since we are fighting for our sovereignty on the battlefield every day, the much-needed military support in Ukraine is the urgent issue. This was discussed with you when you invited me for the first time, and we have discussed it with you at many other meetings. It's really crucially important to not only announce this military support but also to get it on the battlefield. Each day we are losing the best Ukrainians to protect our country. We would much welcome that in three weeks, when we have the independence day of Ukraine, this announced military support would be a great present to Ukrainian soldiers on our independence day.

[Translation]

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron: Thank you, Your Excellency.

I'd now like to turn to the ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany, Her Excellency Ms. Sparwasser.

Your Excellency, I was a little surprised not to hear a few words in French in your opening remarks. Your accept is so lovely.

In any event, on July 12, on the CBC program *Power and Politics*, you said that Canada's decision to grant a permit to return the turbine to Germany helped the country free itself from dependence on Russian energy.

How did sending the turbine reduce Germany's dependence on Russian-produced energy?

H.E. Sabine Sparwasser: Thank you, Mr. Bergeron.

I'll try to answer a little in French, but it's a bit harder for me.

[English]

I'll do it in English.

The delivery of the turbine was initially supposed to be a measure that would allow more gas to flow. We were not sure that this would happen. We were testing what would happen, but we had our doubts from the beginning that the Russians would increase the flow of gas. It would have been, for Europeans' sake, for many states in the European Union and for us, very beneficial if that had happened in order to fill our reservoirs.

Right now we're at a 20% flow. I don't think we have very high expectations that this is going to increase. What it has done now is to make it very, very clear that the turbine was not the issue; it's the willingness of Russia to try to divide Europe, to cut Europe off. We are now preparing very actively for the emergency that may be coming this winter.

Melita has named the emergency plans that the EU is preparing. I have started to tell a little bit about all of the measures Germany is taking, very drastic measures, to get out of the dependency.

• (1615)

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Marty Morantz): Thank you, Ambassador.

Ms. McPherson, you have the floor for six minutes.

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

I do want to thank all of the ambassadors for being with us here today. I know this is very challenging. I want to say that I think the one thing we all agree on is the importance of supporting Ukraine. I know that we all want to see this horrific invasion, this horrific war, end. We all want to see a strong sovereign Ukraine.

Forgive me if my questions come across as harsh, but of course, as a member of the opposition, my role is to question some of the decisions the government has made and to make sure they are the right decisions. With that in mind, I think we all can celebrate the fact that there is a desire for Ukraine to triumph in this war. While there are discrepancies on what we think should happen next, this desire for Ukraine to triumph, I think, is very strong. I think it's important that the Russian Federation knows that and knows how together we are on that goal.

I am going to start with a few questions, if I could, to the German ambassador, Ambassador Sparwasser.

Obviously, the turbine was returned. Right now we have hindsight. Of course, hindsight is 20/20, but now we know that the Russian Federation, that Putin, has no intention of fulfilling promises. In fact, how has the decision to send the turbine back helped the German people? How has that not just undermined Canada's sanctions regime and our collective sanctions regime, and not helped Germany in any way?

Ms. Sabine Sparwasser: Thank you for that question.

I mentioned the disinformation war. We are all, in our societies, subject to Russian disinformation—in Canada as much as in Germany. To have had the pretext of Russia being able to say that the fact we didn't return the turbine was the reason that no more gas was flowing would have been a pretty difficult argument in the disinformation war. The way we have it now, the turbine is there. They can have it. It's not the turbine that's the issue on the energy supply. It makes it absolutely crystal clear to anybody that Russia has been lying about it and that this was not a necessary thing.

In that sense we called its bluff. I think that is a good thing and a good outcome of this very, very difficult procedure. I do want to—

Ms. Heather McPherson: Thank you, Ambassador. I'm sorry to interrupt, but knowing, then, that this is the reality we're in, that

we've now, in your words, called Putin's bluff and are in a situation where we know that it was never his intention to provide the gas that Germany requires, do you think we should be revoking this waiver?

Clearly, sending another five is just bad pennies after good. Why would we do this now? Why would we not revoke the waiver, as Ukraine is asking us to do? What is the value of that now? We've proven that Putin has no intention to live up to his obligations, and there is no benefit to the German people. I don't understand why we wouldn't revoke that waiver at this point.

• (1620)

Ms. Sabine Sparwasser: Well, I think that's something to decide. Obviously, with the turbine not being picked up, that question absolutely arises. I think we will discuss that in the near future. Right now I can't give an answer to that. Right now there is one turbine. Russia doesn't seem to want to pick it up, and has declared it won't pick it up. There are the next steps to consider.

Ms. Heather McPherson: Thank you.

Ambassador Gabrič, you spoke of the support of the European Union in this situation. Does that include all members of the European Union? Can you clarify whether there was support for this decision from countries like Poland, Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia?

Ms. Melita Gabrič: Thank you for this question. I would like to clarify that the European Union passed seven packages of sanctions against Russia. All sanctions are accepted in unanimity, meaning that all 27 member states have to agree, and all 27 member states agreed to all seven packages of sanctions.

Ms. Heather McPherson: Was there unanimous support for Canada to waive this particular sanction? Was there support from other countries to support Canada's decision to waive the sanction on the gas turbines?

Ms. Melita Gabrič: The executive branch of the European Union, the European Commission, welcomed the decision by Canada to repatriate the turbines, as I explained earlier, both in terms of taking away the pretext as well as potentially helping to fill up gas storage for the winter.

Ms. Heather McPherson: So it was the executive branch but perhaps not all of the members of the European Union. Is that accurate?

Ms. Melita Gabrič: This welcome was actually issued by the executive branch, the European Commission.

Ms. Heather McPherson: Okay. Thank you.

I'm going to go back and ask one more question, if I could, of Ambassador Sparwasser.

In July, Deputy Prime Minister Chrystia Freeland said that she understood Ukraine's response, but she defended the government's move. She said “Canada heard very clearly from our German allies that Germany's ability to sustain its support for Ukraine could be at risk”. She mentioned that the United States backed this, a position that Freeland described as very significant.

I'm wondering if you could share with us what support the German government was worried they would have to withhold if Canada did not return those turbines to Germany.

Ms. Sabine Sparwasser: There was not a discussion of withholding any kind of support to Ukraine. We stand solidly behind Ukraine. We have been amongst the strongest donors of every type of aid for Ukraine. What the remark is referring to is indeed what I've been saying. We're in it for the long haul. We need to be able to sustain it as an economy, as an economy that's a very important part of the European Union and the motor in it.

We need to sustain it also in the face of a lot of disinformation. We need to have the full support of our population. We have it now, but we need to also keep it up, because we need to keep up that support for the long haul. We need to help support Ukraine looking towards reconstruction as well. Again, we need a solid German and European economy.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Marty Morantz): Thank you, Ambassador.

Ms. Heather McPherson: Thank you very much for that.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Marty Morantz): Mr. Bezan, you have the floor for six minutes. Please proceed.

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

I want to thank all three ambassadors for joining us today. It's good to see you all.

First of all, I want to thank Ukraine. Having Ambassador Kovaliv here, I'd like to say that all of Ukraine is in our thoughts and prayers. We know that you're on the front line, standing up for western democracy, standing up for human rights and fighting against Putin's war machine.

I also want to say this. As Conservatives, if we had been in government, we would never have circumvented our own sanctions regime. We would not have approved the export of the turbines to Germany. In fact, we would have dived in and worked with Germany to provide more of our own natural gas. We would have been making sure that there were Canadian oil and other energy products available. Essentially, we would have wanted to work with our friends in Germany to make sure that they keep their nuclear power plants open to provide the energy they need to power their homes and their industries, especially during this time of transition away from the dependency on Russian energy products.

Ambassador Kovaliv, you've talked about this being appeasement. Often, we talk about important moments in time as a "Chamberlain moment" or a "Churchill moment". Do you believe that Canada and our allies, on this issue of the turbines, were appeasing in a Chamberlain moment, rather than standing up like Churchill?

• (1625)

Ms. Yuliia Kovaliv: One more time, I would like to thank this committee and Parliament for their united support of Ukraine. You've done a lot, including the motion on the genocide and the support of legislation to seize assets. Canada has been a leader in and an example for many sanctions, which Canada was the first to impose. We value it.

This is, as President Zelenskyy mentioned, a very dangerous precedent. None of us wants to be the negative precedent that others follow.

In terms of the decision, we heard the arguments today and we heard these arguments while we were discussing.... The Ukrainian government and Ukrainian ministers had some discussions with Canadian ministers and the German government on this. From the beginning, we were very blunt because we, as Ukraine, have gone through this Russian energy terrorism. I don't know if everybody knows, but Russia has switched off gas to Ukraine during the winter three times. It did it in 2006, 2009 and 2014.

When we said from the very first time that Russia was bluffing and there would be no renewal of gas supply—I don't want to say it bluntly—we were saying that we are where we are and even more so, because when the turbine arrived in Germany, Gazprom further decreased the gas flow. This is what we understand from both the history of dealing with Russia's energy terrorism, but also from dealing with the direct and very barbaric war in Ukraine.

Putin understands only power. Putin understands strength. In this particular situation, we see that Putin and his gas monopoly, Gazprom, are using the power of supply. All of our European allies, together with Ukraine, are ready to support or use the power of the consumer and not undermine this. That is why we proposed not only very pragmatic actions not to just cut the gas flow to Ukraine, but also alternatives that are on the table. By the way, they are delivering gas today to many European countries.

Thank you.

Mr. James Bezan: I appreciate that, Your Excellency. I have very limited time here.

I want to ask two very short yes-or-no questions.

One is to the ambassador from Ukraine. Does Ukraine need more military weapons, like sniper rifles and armoured ambulances?

I also have a question for Ambassador Sparwasser. Do you need more military support, especially in light of the sleight of hand of moving these turbines and putting more gas in Putin's war machine?

Also to our German ambassador friend, is there a moral obligation here by Germany—and the EU, for that matter—to make those sacrifices you talked about, so that we can stop the genocide and the war crimes that are being committed against Ukraine?

Please answer yes or no.

Ms. Sabine Sparwasser: I think we feel a strong moral obligation to support Ukraine in its battle against Russian aggression. Germany changed its policy 180° two days after the attack. Germany has by now delivered a lot of weapons. I can give you access to the full list, if you want. It is also in the process of delivering some very heavy multiple launch rocket systems, howitzers and Gepard tanks, which are anti-aircraft tanks. We're sending very serious heavy weapons to Ukraine to help it defend itself. We're also supporting Ukraine as one of its biggest donors financially and in every other way we can.

• (1630)

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Marty Morantz): Mr. Bezan, I have been fairly lenient with time in this particular meeting, but we are well over six minutes.

I'm going to move to Mr. Sorbara, who has the floor for six minutes.

Ms. Yuliia Kovaliv: Can I answer the question?

Mr. Francesco Sorbara (Vaughan—Woodbridge, Lib.): Thank you, Chair.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Marty Morantz): I'm sorry, who's asking?

Ms. Yuliia Kovaliv: Can I answer the question as well?

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Marty Morantz): Mr. Sorbara, how would you feel about the ambassador's answering this question under your time and then you can pick up?

Mr. Francesco Sorbara: Thank you, Chair. I would, definitely, if the ambassador wishes to take up some of my time, provide her the time at this moment to answer that question.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Marty Morantz): Thank you very much.

Mr. Francesco Sorbara: Please go ahead, Ambassador. It's great to see you today.

Ms. Yuliia Kovaliv: It's great to see you. Thank you.

My short answer would be yes, we do value the support of all our allies, Germany, Canada, the U.S., all of the European Union and other countries. Yes, we do need more military support.

Mr. Francesco Sorbara: Chair, I'll be in now.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Marty Morantz): Mr. Clerk, I just need to clarify if Mr. Sorbara's round is five or six minutes.

The Clerk of the Committee (Mr. Jean-François Pagé): It's five minutes.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Marty Morantz): It's five, okay. My apologies.

Mr. Sorbara, let's go with five minutes from now. You go ahead.

Mr. Francesco Sorbara: Thank you, Chair.

Good afternoon.

First I have to say this because I would be remiss if I didn't. I have three beautiful daughters at home. They are growing. I'm blessed to have them. I see three ambassadors who are female today. Kudos to that. I do want to point that out because, as much as we're talking about many issues in the world, women's rights and gender equality are things that are very, very important to our gov-

ernment and important to me as a father of three girls. I do wish to point that out.

I just want to say welcome to Ambassador Gabrič.

It's nice to see you again. I'm the chair of the Canada-Europe Parliamentary Association. We've had many great conversations. The recent trip to the Council of Europe was a very productive one for me. MP Bergeron was on the trip as well. I know we had a lot of great discussions with the delegation from Ukraine. We spent a lot of time with them. It was good. They were very, very fruitful discussions.

I'll go on to the matters at hand, because they are very serious. One thing I've learned in politics is that it's easy to get into Monday morning quarterbacking, looking back and laying blame or saying, "You made a mistake", because it's in the past. One can only move forward and make decisions going forward.

In governing, you have to make tough decisions and make tough choices. Obviously we made a decision to ship back the turbines to Germany, to mainland Europe, to be used for the pipeline. I fundamentally believe it was the right decision. I stated that to the ministers in our government. It was the right decision, and I think our allies have backed that.

There is a conversation going on about a strategic transition of Europe's energy flows. Energy security is so, so important for Europe. Yes, there's a dependence. This dependence is being reduced. It's so important to keep onside the European populace, the European population, the everyday European who is facing very high inflation rates and very, very high energy rates and to keep our allies united. I believe fundamentally that Putin—or whatever term you want to reference that person with—is only about dividing us, whether it's through disinformation or using food or energy as a weapon.

I do first want to turn to the German ambassador.

I read your comments. I want you to, if you could, reiterate the transition plans for reducing Germany's dependence on Russia as an energy source, please.

Ms. Sabine Sparwasser: Germany is trying to get out of Russian gas as fast as possible. We have reduced our dependence from 55% to 26% right now. We're making enormous efforts to save energy. We're making enormous efforts to diversify by getting more energy supplies from many of our partners and filling our reservoirs in view of a potentially very difficult winter, and we're speeding up the energy transition with every sort of drive we have. Germany has passed a number of laws so that we can build renewable energy much faster. It has been declared in the national interest and security interest to build up renewable energy fast, and we're also moving quickly to increase LNG capacity. We are looking towards trying to find long-term partners and we are also looking towards Canada for LNG as a transitional energy, but mostly also for green hydrogen as the energy of the future, and we're going to invest a lot of drive in that.

• (1635)

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Marty Morantz): Mr. Sorbara, are you still there?

Mr. Francesco Sorbara: Apologies, I got rusty on turning off the muting.

Just to clarify, Chair—

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Marty Morantz): You have 40 seconds.

Mr. Francesco Sorbara: —the Ukrainian ambassador left the meeting? I do not see her on the screen.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Marty Morantz): She's in the room.

Mr. Francesco Sorbara: She's in the room. Thank you.

Okay, I'll go quickly to Ambassador Gabrič, and then to the Ukrainian ambassador.

Ambassador Gabrič, you're here on the ground in Canada. Can you please tell us how the relationship is between you, the European Union, and Canada with respect to working on the many issues facing Ukraine and the need for energy security for Europe and doing the right thing for the longer term.

Then to the Ukrainian ambassador, I'll turn it over to you for the last 20 seconds if you have any closing comments on what I've stated.

Please, Ambassador Gabrič.

Ms. Melita Gabrič: Thank you, MP Sorbara.

Very quickly, we have had excellent co-operation with Canada. We have been working together to support Ukraine, and also to coordinate and inform each other about the sanctions against Russia, and we have been looking and analyzing how Canada can help Europe with energy security among other things. We now have this working group on energy security that was established in March and that is looking at all of these potential sources of energy that could be exported to Europe from Canada, including LNG and hydrogen. We're also enhancing our co-operation on critical raw materials. All of this is in the context of our joint commitment to a green transition and to a net-zero economy by 2050.

As I said in my opening statement, we very much appreciate Canada's proactive investment in European security and in support-

ing Ukraine, and also everything else that Canada is doing—all its efforts to find ways to help Europe also with energy—

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Marty Morantz): My apologies, but we are quite a bit over time on Mr. Sorbara's round. I'm going to have to move on to Mr. Bergeron for two and a half minutes.

You have the floor, Mr. Bergeron.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

My question is for the Ukrainian ambassador.

Your Excellency, considering the dead end we are now facing, should Europe consider the Ukrainian pipeline option again?

[*English*]

Ms. Yuliia Kovaliv: Thank you.

Today we've been discussing much about the decision that was made, but I think it is also important to realize one more time where we are now with this decision. Where we are now with this decision is that not only is the first turbine stuck in Germany; with the decisions of the other five that will be waived to be maintained in Canada, it will actually allow for another at least four or five years for Gazprom to manipulate and terrorize Europe on the energy market.

Also, we need to be aware that they will definitely use it to tackle our climate change goals, because for them it is also a huge challenge while they are the biggest energy producer. We know that. We see it in Ukraine; Russian missiles have already hit 90% of all of the wind farms. They have stolen and destroyed solar farms. They are precisely attacking—we see it in our territory—all of the renewable energy, because this is a threat.

For many decades, they have also been supplying Ukraine with cheap gas so that all of the Ukrainian production dropped down significantly. Only since 2014 has Ukraine cut off the gas supply from Russia directly and increased our own production a lot. So it is a very dangerous move to leave these other turbines, because we leave the door open for Putin to further blackmail Europe.

I do agree with Ambassador Sparwasser that right now we all need to sit down together and rethink this, because the first attempt to please Putin failed, as is obvious to us. Now is the right time to revoke the permit.

• (1640)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron: What about the Ukrainian pipeline as an alternative?

[English]

Ms. Yuliia Kovaliv: From the very first day, we proposed to use Ukrainian pipelines. Today Ukrainian pipelines are already supplying physically more gas to Europe than Nord Stream 1. The Ukrainian transmission system is the biggest in Europe. Ukraine has the biggest gas storage. Historically, with these pipelines, the flow of gas from Russia to Europe was done through the Ukrainian route.

It's also worse to know that Gazprom booked the capacity and paid for it, but are using even now 40% of what was booked. If today Gazprom wants to help Germany with the gas supply, Gazprom can do it, but we all realize, with all of the waivers, that Gazprom does not want it. But still we are ready to do it. We are also working with other partners, including Moldova, including our regional partners like Czech Republic, Poland and Hungary, to find new instruments of the infrastructure, new corridors, so that the LNG flow that is coming to the countries who now physically have the LNG terminals in Europe can move this gas to the other countries of the region. We were quite open with this.

In addition—

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Marty Morantz): I'm sorry, Ambassador. I have to move on.

Ms. Yuliia Kovaliv: Thank you.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Marty Morantz): Unfortunately, these rounds are very tight.

Ms. McPherson, you have the floor for two and a half minutes.

Ms. Heather McPherson: Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

Ambassadors, I want to thank you all again for being here. I know that this is a very difficult conversation. I appreciate your honesty and candour and your sharing with us.

I didn't get an opportunity to say this to you, Ambassador Sparwasser, and I want to make sure I get it on the record. I want to congratulate you and the German government for your reduction in reliance on Russian gas. I think it's very, very important that we note that. To be at 26% in such a short period of time is really, really remarkable. Thank you for the efforts that have been done by the government, by yourselves and by the German people.

The questions I have now are for Ambassador Kovaliv.

Ambassador, it's lovely to see you. I wish I could see you in person. That pin on your jacket looks beautiful.

What I'm worried about here is what it means when we have allowed Putin to blackmail us and when we've allowed him to act with impunity with regard to this turbine. I wonder if you could comment on whether or not you are worried, and on whether or not you think it is possible that other countries will take this waiver as an excuse for them to not live up to the sanctions they have put in place. Is that a risk that you have...particularly around energy but also around food? We do know as well that Russia is using food as a weapon of war.

Ms. Yuliia Kovaliv: Thank you for that question.

Yes, this was the very first argument—that Russia is testing our unity and testing and pushing for concessions. Each and every concession actually allows Russia to move further. Even with this particular case, there's other blackmail coming from Russia. If we look at their statements, one of which was issued yesterday, now they're blaming not only Canada's sanctions but also the EU's and U.K.'s sanctions. Does it mean that everybody will also follow the example of Canada and make their own waivers? That was a very dangerous precedent.

I think it's important now to realize that these concessions do not have any real impact, as we saw with this turbine. It is important to fix the situation, to revoke this permit and to show Putin that we are all united and strong. Show him that we will not make such further mistakes.

• (1645)

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Marty Morantz): Thank you, Ambassador.

I'm the next round, so I'm going to pass the chair to Mr. Bergeron. You have the chair, Mr. Bergeron.

[Translation]

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Stéphane Bergeron): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Go ahead, Mr. Morantz.

[English]

Mr. Marty Morantz: Thank you very much.

Ambassador Sparwasser, I just want to seek some clarity on how this came about. When you decided that you wanted the return of the turbine, you came to the Canadian government. As concisely as you can, what were the specific reasons you gave to Minister Joly and Minister Wilkinson and others in the Liberal government for the return of the turbines?

[Translation]

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Stéphane Bergeron): The floor is yours, Your Excellency.

H.E. Sabine Sparwasser: Thank you.

[English]

The government—and that means, in this case, mainly Minister Habeck—wrote a letter to Minister Wilkinson, in which he explained that the turbine was a contractual obligation of Siemens to provide service and maintenance to Nord Stream 1. This was a crucial part of maintaining Nord Stream 1's functioning, or at least the Russian government was saying that this was a crucial part and that the turbine was very important to continue to provide the functioning of Nord Stream 1 for European countries that wanted to fill their gas reservoirs.

We didn't say that we totally believed this to be the reason. We always were quite aware that this might be a pretext, but it was the reason given.

Mr. Marty Morantz: Thank you.

You never made the argument, then, that Canada should return the turbine to call Mr. Putin's bluff during those discussions. Is that correct?

Ms. Sabine Sparwasser: No, that's not true. That argument was made.

Mr. Marty Morantz: I guess what I'm struggling with is that when the news first broke that Canada was going to break the sanctions and return the turbine, that wasn't the explanation that was given—that Mr. Putin's bluff needed to be called. The explanation that was given by your government and our government was that national gas supplies needed to be restored to Germany.

If that's the case, if that argument was made, why weren't your government and our government transparent about the actual reasons, not just the flow of natural gas? You've made it clear in your statement that you didn't believe Mr. Putin then and you don't believe him now, so you never believed that Mr. Putin would increase the flow of natural gas. That leads me to believe that the real reason was that you wanted to call Mr. Putin's bluff, so why not, in early July, publicly say that? Why wait until Gazprom refused to accept delivery of the turbine to say it? It seems very odd to me.

Ms. Sabine Sparwasser: Mr. Morantz, what we didn't believe was that the delivery of the turbine was absolutely crucial to the technical ability of Nord Stream 1 to continue to function. We doubted from the very beginning that this was the case, but we thought, or we argued, that it was important to fulfill that obligation to make it quite clear that there is a political will to deliver the gas or not to deliver gas.

• (1650)

Mr. Marty Morantz: Very quickly, it really is a very simple answer. Why didn't you advise the public when the announcement was made that it was to call Putin's bluff? That's what you're saying now.

Why didn't you say it a month ago, when the Canadian government did it? Why didn't you give that information to your public?

Ms. Sabine Sparwasser: We thought that the turbine was a potential way of continuing more gas supplies and we wanted to test it. It doesn't—

Mr. Marty Morantz: You said in your opening statement, “We did not believe him then and we do not believe him now”, so you never believed that the gas flow would improve. It was always about the bluff, according to you today, so why not—

Ms. Sabine Sparwasser: No. It was always about insisting that the turbine was absolutely technically necessary. That was always the question we had, and we had it from the very beginning. We were very transparent about it.

I can't find it in a hurry right now. I could read you the interviews that Minister Habeck gave. It was very clear that this was the case.

[*Translation*]

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Stéphane Bergeron): Mr. Morantz, I'll have to stop you there and return the chair to you.

[*English*]

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Marty Morantz): Thank you very much. I accept the chair, Mr. Bergeron—

Ms. Rachel Bendayan (Outremont, Lib.): I believe I'm the next Liberal speaker, Mr. Chair.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Marty Morantz): The clerk has texted me to say that it's Mr. Sarai, but if it's okay with him, Ms. Bendayan, you have the floor.

Ms. Rachel Bendayan: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Thank you to our three ambassadors appearing before the committee today.

Your Excellency, Ambassador Sparwasser, I'll begin by asking you.... In light of comments I referenced earlier in a previous meeting today of your foreign minister, as well as several comments you made in your introduction a few moments ago.... You mentioned that the reduction of the flow of gas through Nord Stream 1 would have been entirely blamed on the sanctions. You also stated later in your introduction that there would have been heavy repercussions on your ability to continue your support of Ukraine.

I would like to hear you on the consequences if Canada had refused to grant Germany's request. How do you feel that would have affected the support of the alliance, Germany and other European partners for these sanctions, given the impact on your population?

Ms. Sabine Sparwasser: I believe I mentioned beforehand that this is a hybrid kind of war, and it's a disinformation war. To have given the argument to the Russians that we brought the lack of gas upon ourselves would have been a strong argument in the disinformation war that—

Ms. Rachel Bendayan: What would have been the consequence of that disinformation to your people?

Ms. Sabine Sparwasser: It could have eroded our support in the long term. As I say, right now support is strong, but we want to keep it that way.

Ms. Rachel Bendayan: The previous Conservative member asked quite a few questions about the importance—or not—of calling Mr. Putin's bluff and questioned the public communication around calling President Putin's bluff. As a poker player, I feel quite strongly that you don't announce that you're calling somebody's bluff when you're doing it.

I have a follow-up question to that line of thought. Now that we have called Russia's bluff, is it Germany's view that Canada could revoke the permit following the request of the Ukrainian ambassador today?

• (1655)

Ms. Sabine Sparwasser: I think we have to see what happens now with the turbine that's there. I would hesitate any to make kind of guess of what's going to follow. If Russia doesn't pick up the turbine that's sitting there ready and in perfect condition, it creates a different kind of situation.

Ms. Rachel Bendayan: And so if the turbine never does make it to Russia and continues to stay in Germany, would it be Germany's position that we could revoke the permit?

Ms. Sabine Sparwasser: I don't think we have a position. I think we now have a decision by the Canadian government to support us in this and we will see what happens. We have to see what happens.

Ms. Rachel Bendayan: Thank you, Ambassador.

Ambassador Kovaliv, I also wanted to thank you for your testimony today and for reiterating your gratitude for Canada's support.

At our last meeting you insisted on the importance of Canada's unprecedented financial and military support, and of course indicated that the history books would remember that Canada stood shoulder to shoulder with Ukraine. That obviously continues to be a priority of our government and I hope that it continues to be the way that your government and Ukraine view our steadfast support for Ukraine. I hope it is your view that this decision was taken in the context I just mentioned, the importance of ensuring that these sanctions remain in place and the continued unity of the alliance.

Ms. Yuliia Kovaliv: First of all, I would like also to thank you, as I've already mentioned, for the steadfast support of the Canadian government, the German government, the EU government and of many allies. We see in the Ramstein format, which has already met several times, that the number of countries sitting at the table and coordinating the support of Ukraine, first of all the military support for Ukraine, is increasing each day, because each day the world understands that the war in Ukraine is not only Russian barbarism on one country. The consequences of this war go far beyond Ukraine and even the EU's borders. The dimension of Russian aggression has us today discussing energy security, food security, and nuclear security on the European continent. There are many ways this war has challenged global peace and global order, and it's very clear from where we are on the opposite side.

If we look at what Russia is doing on energy, and terrorizing Europe, we on the contrary are trying our best to as much as possible deliver food and Ukrainian grain to the global markets. Under the threats, unfortunately, many Ukrainian farmers are dying in the fields because of the mines and shelling, but despite that we are planting. We are collecting the harvest with the great support of the Canadian government, which is helping Ukraine to buy grain storage, which is so needed, to allow the world to get Ukrainian grain. The first ship already went through, even after Russia missiles attacked the port. The next 16 are already waiting to come for grain. This is while Russia is doing the opposite, and the turbine is an exact, very blunt showcase of how they are threatening the continent.

I think we need to be clear on punishing Russia for that. And, yes, the consequences of sanctions will need to hurt everybody in the short term, but we need to consider what will happen if our policy of appeasing Putin will enable him to move further, and we need to understand what consequences of that will be.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Marty Morantz): Thank you, Ambassador. I'm sorry to interrupt.

Ms. Yuliia Kovaliv: Thank you.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Marty Morantz): Mr. Clerk, I realize we're at the hour.

I was wondering if there is committee support for another round of 15 minutes.

The Clerk: Sure.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Marty Morantz): Is everyone agreeable to that, ambassadors and members of Parliament? If that's the case, there are four rounds, correct? So maybe we'll do five, five, two and a half, two and a half.

Mr. Genuis is up next.

You have the floor for five minutes. Please proceed.

• (1700)

Mr. Garnett Genuis: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

It's clear to me, as we get to the end of the day of hearings, that there's a consensus that the delivery of the turbine has not and will not achieve anything practical in terms of access to gas. This was supposed to be, rather, about exposing the Russians and removing an excuse. One turbine has now been sent; the Russians have not restored the flow.

I do not believe that sending that turbine was the right decision, but if it had any purpose at all, the turbine has been sent, and it has exposed the point. At the very least, I think we should be able to agree that no more turbines should be sent. We on this side are strongly in support of the call from the Ukrainian ambassador to, at this point, revoke the permit. It should be obvious that, if the government's rationale holds, the objective they said they were trying to achieve has been achieved, and now no more turbines should be sent. I hope that, at some point, we're able to get support from the committee for that recommendation.

I want to conclude the time and use this round of questions to speak to the Ukrainian ambassador.

Thank you for your testimony today. All of us have been heartbroken to see the atrocities being committed against the Ukrainian people, and we've also inspired by the heroic courage of Ukrainians.

I want to mention and pay tribute to Émile-Antoine Roy-Sirois, a Canadian citizen who volunteered to go to fight alongside Ukrainians and who was killed in action. Of course, he joins many Ukrainian nationals and heroes who have died in this war, but I wanted to mention him as a Canadian citizen who volunteered to join that effort.

Ambassador, there's been a lot of discussion about the alliance and about the need to have unity within the alliance. What bothers me about that discourse, of course, is that the most important thing for the alliance's unity is being united behind Ukraine, and there's an emphasis that seems to be put on Canada and Germany's being united in their position, but that position is at odds with the most important ally in this equation, which is Ukraine.

I suspect as well that there are many other nations in central and eastern Europe that have the same concerns about this policy of turbine export as I do.

Ambassador, I wonder if you could speak to discussions you've had with other members of the broader alliance of democratic nations on how they perceive the energy security questions, what the position of other EU members, for example, other than Germany, might be with respect to turbine export, and how the alliance is divided in light of the fact that Ukraine has not been listened to in the case of the turbine issue.

Ms. Yuliia Kovaliv: Thank you.

It's due really....The issue of energy security in Europe is one that is not easy and is rather complicated, because of the big elephant in the room, which is Russia's Gazprom. Unfortunately, this elephant has been growing for decades. It has been hurting, buying and bargaining with a lot of countries in different ways..

Since the war started, we have seen several attempts by Russia to blackmail Europe. The first was the Russian decision to force countries to pay for Russian gas in rubles. We saw many countries, including many European countries, opposed to paying in rubles. This was the first move. Russia cut the gas to these countries, but they had already found a way to find alternatives. There was another big push. Unfortunately, the countries that accepted paying in rubles and followed Russia's blackmailing ended up in a situation where they now have almost zero gas flow.

These are the two lessons that are important for everybody to learn now. The first is that no appeasement of Putin's energy blackmailing can be successful. The second important thing is that Russia has already sanctioned, for example, a big Polish route that could be an alternative to Nord Stream 1.

Pipelines are the best examples of Putin's policy of using Russia to influence European policy. We had a story with another pipeline, the Nord Stream 2 pipeline. We, as Ukraine, and many eastern European countries have for years been advocating that this is a purely political project that has no grounds. A year ago, the sanctions on Nord Stream 2 were waived, but the sanctions were put back in February of this year.

We value and understand that after many lessons, we are all now on the same page that Nord Stream 2 was a political project, and now it is blocked. However, Russia is still raising this new question, so this is important. Once again, it is important that we not allow ourselves to make the same mistakes and appease Putin.

Many countries in Europe, especially those 12 that already faced the full cap cut of Russian gas, are finding alternatives. Everybody in Europe is finding alternatives. Since 2014, we, as Ukraine, have found ways to buy gas from other sources.

• (1705)

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Marty Morantz): I'm sorry, Ambassador. I have to move on to the next MP.

Mr. Garnett Genuis: Thank you, Ambassador.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Marty Morantz): I apologize.

Mr. Sidhu, you have the floor for five minutes.

Mr. Maninder Sidhu (Brampton East, Lib.): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

First off, I'd like to thank all the ambassadors for taking the time to join us today.

I also want to take the time to commend Germany and the EU for their transition to clean energy and for their solidarity in standing alongside so many allies with Ukraine as we continue to impose sanctions and stand alongside our allies to support Ukraine in this very difficult time.

Ambassador Gabrič, as you know from our previous conversations, we spoke about how Canada can help to deliver clean energy to the European Union and our allies. I want to hear more about the situation with coal-fired plants in Europe right now. We know it's going to be a tough winter ahead, and it's something that I know you're looking into.

I also want to ask if you can elaborate on the short- and medium-term issues facing the EU should Russia shut off its gas supplies.

Ms. Melita Gabrič: Indeed, the European Union is actually preparing for potential possible further disruptions of energy supplies from the Russian side. To this end, as I mentioned, we have a plan to phase out our dependency on Russian energy sources altogether. This plan is called REPowerEU. It actually envisages the diversification of our energy supplies and accelerating deployment of renewable energy sources, which we have been doing at great speed. We are also strengthening our energy efficiency. Energy-saving efforts are a big part of this plan, at this point, as a very immediate effect. We've decided to reduce 15% of our gas consumption demand in solidarity with one another within the European Union among member states but also in solidarity, of course, with Ukraine.

We are looking for alternatives and more secure supplies from reliable partners, such as Canada, while fast-forwarding the green transition. We've been working very closely and intensely on finding these avenues through which we can co-operate with Canada to find concrete and viable areas for our co-operation, to identify the needs of the EU or match the needs with the capacity of Canada, to identify the challenges, and to also come up with a plan on how to proceed along this line.

Of course, the conversation on energy co-operation is ongoing, including through the EU-Canada high-level energy dialogue. There are options for mid- to long-term energy co-operation on the table.

• (1710)

Mr. Maninder Sidhu: Thank you for that, Your Excellency.

Mr. Chair, how much time do I have left?

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Marty Morantz): I think you're down to your last 10 seconds.

Mr. Maninder Sidhu: That's fine. I'll wrap it up.

Thank you so much, Ambassador. I appreciate it.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Marty Morantz): Mr. Bergeron, you have two and a half minutes.

[Translation]

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

My question is for the EU ambassador, Ms. Gabrič.

Your Excellency, you were very careful in your opening statement to point out that the European Union had taken great care not to impose sanctions that could jeopardize the energy supply of EU countries.

When you saw the Government of Canada put in place its sanctions regime, did you caution it about what might happen, knowing that turbine maintenance was scheduled?

H.E. Melita Gabrič: Thank you for the question, Mr. Bergeron.

[English]

Actually, as I explained in my opening remarks that you referred to, the repatriation of turbines is not in contravention of the EU sanctions regime, because the goods and technology linked to the transport of natural gas are not affected by EU sanctions, and neither is Nord Stream 1 affected by these sanctions. Certainly, I think that answers your question.

[Translation]

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron: Yes, except I was more interested in whether, seeing that Canada's sanctions might affect the turbines, you had warned Canada about this situation so that we wouldn't have to deal with this unfortunate situation now.

[English]

Ms. Melita Gabrič: Not that I am aware of. I would also venture to say that this would not be something that would be a prerogative of the EU.

[Translation]

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron: Since we see that this was ultimately only a pretext on Putin's part and that the European Commission has said that the return of this turbine removes a pretext, why maintain this permit?

[English]

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Marty Morantz): Mr. Bergeron, I'm sorry; we're at two and a half minutes. Perhaps you could submit your question in writing to the clerk and get an answer that way.

Ms. McPherson, you have the floor for two and half minutes.

[Translation]

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron: Ms. Gabrič could indeed send her response to the committee members in writing.

[English]

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Marty Morantz): Yes. Is that acceptable? Thank you.

Ms. McPherson, you have the floor for two and a half minutes, and that will wrap up the witness portion of the meeting.

Ms. Heather McPherson: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Again, thank you to the ambassadors for being here.

I guess what I will end with today is to say that, ultimately, what has happened with the result of this waiver is that we still have no energy supply, which is necessary, going to Germany. We are still in the exact same situation, unfortunately, and we just have an undermined sanctions regime, but we do still want to ensure that Germany has the support it requires to get through the winter and to manage its energy crisis.

I would ask Ambassador Sparwasser if she could please comment on what Canada could do to help Germany more right now. Solutions to help in the short term, I think, are what we're looking for.

Ms. Sabine Sparwasser: Thank you so much, Ms. McPherson.

The Canadian side is helping by backfilling as much as possible into the U.S. effort to provide Germany with more LNG. We have been receiving from a lot of our allies—Norway, Netherlands, the U.S. and others—quite a bit more LNG. We've been importing it. We're building up LNG ports very fast.

In the medium term, in the long term, Canada can be a very important supplier for our energy security. Canada can be one of the countries that allows us to pursue our two goals: to become independent of Russian energy and fight climate change to become carbon neutral. We see Canada as a prime partner working on transitional energy, maybe on LNG, but mostly working on hydrogen. We are actively right now pursuing talks with the government, with provincial governments and with companies. This is a very big target for us to achieve as soon as possible.

• (1715)

Ms. Heather McPherson: Thank you very much, Ambassador.

I'd like to end with Ambassador Kovaliv.

Ambassador, what would you like to see Canada do? How can Canada support Ukraine more at this time? I'd like to give you the final word for this session.

Ms. Yuliia Kovaliv: Thank you.

Given this opportunity, I would like to thank everybody for devoting your time to this particular matter, for the Canadian government's steadfast support, for Canadians who are helping Ukraine, standing with Ukraine and helping those Ukrainians who fled the war and came to Canada. It's very important.

The war is going on. It's very important for all of us, the Government of Canada, the EU, the Government of Germany and other allies—to continue this support because we need to win this war, not only for us as a country but also for everybody, those of us who have democracies.

We do value the support of all our partners. We are fighting hard on the battlefield. We do count on further support and further standing with Ukraine until our victory. Thank you for standing with us.

Ms. Heather McPherson: Thank you.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Marty Morantz): Thank you, Ambassador.

I can say, in my brief time as a member of Parliament since 2019, that I've never seen Parliament as unified and steadfast on any issue as this. Our hearts and minds are certainly with you.

As one of the ambassadors said earlier—I'm sorry, I can't recall which one—this is a debate among very good friends. I think that's the spirit in which this meeting was conducted.

I want to thank you all very much for answering our questions and for your patience with our system in terms of how we time the allocation of rounds. I know it's a little annoying from time to time.

With that, I think we can release our witnesses.

Again, thank you very, very much for being here.

Now I see a hand up.

Go ahead, Mr. Genuis.

Mr. Garnett Genuis: Mr. Chair, I was going to suggest we have a quick conversation about when we're going to meet next, because we had talked about a number of different witness panels we wanted to hear on this subject. I think maybe rather than having a stand-alone meeting again to discuss committee business, it might be good to just have an exchange for five minutes to figure out where we want to go.

Mr. Francesco Sorbara: Chair, I have a point of order, if I can interject, please.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Marty Morantz): Sure, Mr. Sorbara.

Mr. Francesco Sorbara: Chair, we're now at 5:18. We've gone past the five o'clock time. We asked for 15 minutes of extra time, it was unanimous consent, and we went over the time. I move that we adjourn the meeting now, please.

Mr. Garnett Genuis: On that point of order, Mr. Chair, a member can't move a motion when they don't have the floor.

You're allowed to raise a point of order, but you can't move a motion on a point of order.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Marty Morantz): I guess—

Mr. Garnett Genuis: I'm not trying to move any motions or anything, colleagues. I just think it's a point of discussion here, as follows.

When do colleagues think we should meet next? I think we had committed to working to try to get to the bottom of this issue, and if members prefer, we can schedule another meeting for committee business, I suppose, but I think it makes sense for us to try to identify when we're going to meet next to proceed with this work.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Marty Morantz): I'm not sure that's a point of order, but I guess—

Mr. Garnett Genuis: It's not a point of order; I'm not raising a point of order. I put my hand up just to speak.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Marty Morantz): Is there an appetite right now for the committee to discuss scheduling our next meeting?

I see one head shaking in the negative. Let's take a little straw poll here.

Ali, you don't get to vote.

• (1720)

Mr. Garnett Genuis: Thumbs up for yes to a discussion right now about the schedule?

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Marty Morantz): No, we're not going to have it. It's something you probably need unanimous consent for.

Mr. Francesco Sorbara: Yes.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Marty Morantz): I guess we're going to have to adjourn.

Mr. Garnett Genuis: Mr. Chair, I don't know if that's the case. The committee can only adjourn based on majority consent is the principle, and I see that it seems that the Conservatives and the NDP want to have this discussion. I'm not sure where Mr. Bergeron is on that, as he would be the deciding vote, but—

Mr. Francesco Sorbara: Chair, did you not just adjourn the meeting?

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Marty Morantz): I said I guess we should adjourn, I didn't say we are adjourned.

Mr. Garnett Genuis: In practice, the principle is that consent of the majority of the committee is the standard for adjournment.

Mr. James Bezan: I have a point of order on that.

I want to say that having chaired a number of committees over the years, it requires unanimous consent to adjourn a meeting. So, as long as members want to talk, you can talk. I would also say that talking about the agenda of the committee, based upon what we just heard, is also in order because it is relevant to the business at hand.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Marty Morantz): Mr. Clerk, I'd like some clarification on this. What are the rules around adjourning?

The Clerk: We need a majority to adjourn the committee.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Marty Morantz): So it's not unanimous—

The Clerk: No.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Marty Morantz): —as Mr. Bezan said.

I have seen situations where someone moves adjournment, there's a vote and it's a dilatory motion. Is that correct?

Mr. Garnett Genuis: Mr. Chair—

Mr. Randeep Sarai (Surrey Centre, Lib.): Mr. Chair, may I make a motion to adjourn the meeting, please?

Mr. Garnett Genuis: Sorry, I had the floor, Mr. Chair, so maybe just to make this simple—

Mr. Randeep Sarai: No, you didn't. He didn't acknowledge.... I made a motion and that's dilatory, it should be voted on, thank you.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Marty Morantz): You didn't have the floor, Mr. Sarai.

Mr. Francesco Sorbara: You can't just make the rules up, Garnett.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Marty Morantz): Sorry, Mr. Sarai, you didn't have the floor.

Mr. Garnett Genuis: Chair, look, I'll just make this simple. It's up to the majority of the committee to decide how they will proceed. I will move a motion that we have now a 10-minute discussion about the foregoing business of the committee. I'll move that motion, and I suggest we vote on it, and if there's a desire to have that 10-minute discussion, we'll have the 10-minute discussion.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Marty Morantz): There is a motion on the floor. Is there any discussion or debate on the motion?

I don't see anyone's hand up, so I guess we'll go to a vote.

Mr. Clerk, could you call the vote, please?

The Clerk: Mr. Chair, it's a tight vote result. We have four yeas and four nays.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Marty Morantz): As I understand it, I have the deciding vote.

I'll vote "yea".

(Motion agreed to: yeas 5; nays 4)

The Chair: The meeting will now continue for 10 minutes. We will discuss [*Technical difficulty—Editor*].

Does anyone want to start?

Mr. Garnett Genuis: My hand is raised, Chair.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Marty Morantz): Mr. Genuis, you have the floor.

Mr. Garnett Genuis: Thank you, Chair.

I would just propose the following: That we schedule the Ukrainian Canadian Congress to provide an additional hour of testimony; that we gather witnesses from parties as per the original motion; that we schedule additional meetings on this issue next week and the week after in order to continue the work that has begun on this urgent issue; that the chair be asked to schedule witnesses that are proposed by the various parties in rough proportion to those parties and, if necessary, in consultation with the vice-chairs as per the standard practice; that we continue to hold hearings on this subject next week and the week after in order to get to the bottom of this; and that, as part of that, we hear from the Ukrainian Canadian Congress for an additional hour.

That's what I would propose, generally speaking.

• (1725)

The Clerk: Mr. Chair, Ms. Bendayan is on the list also.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Marty Morantz): Ms. Bendayan, you have the floor.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Rachel Bendayan: I'm sorry, Mr. Chair. I didn't mean to interrupt the speaking order.

Was anyone going to speak before me?

[*English*]

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Marty Morantz): I don't see any hands up.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Rachel Bendayan: Mr. Bergeron has his hand up.

[*English*]

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Marty Morantz): I'm sorry. My mistake. It's difficult doing this virtually.

Mr. Bergeron, you have your hand up. You have the floor.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

First, I must say that I find Mr. Genuis's motion extremely confusing, and so I would have no idea what I would be voting on.

However, there seems to be several elements in Mr. Genuis's motion, including, first of all, inviting back the representatives of the Ukrainian Canadian Congress.

We cannot do indirectly what we cannot do directly. I voted against this idea earlier, not because I'm against bringing back the representatives of the Ukrainian Canadian Congress, but because I maintain once again—this is not the first time I have made this intervention—that imposing a witness on the committee is not the way to go.

We have ways of doing things that go through the Subcommittee on Agenda and Procedure or through a formal committee meeting where we look at the various witnesses. We sent a list of witnesses to the clerk just to have that kind of discussion.

I would like to say right away that when we have this discussion, I will be voting to reconvene the representatives of the Ukrainian Canadian Congress. But I don't think today is the time to do that, because we need to discuss all the witnesses we want to hear from, and not make piecemeal choices.

So I will vote against the motion, even though I find it extremely confusing, for that reason alone.

[*English*]

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Marty Morantz): Before I get to Mr. Genuis, Ms. Bendayan, do you want the floor?

[*Translation*]

Ms. Rachel Bendayan: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I was pleased to hear what my colleague Mr. Bergeron had to say, because I completely agree with him. We could set up a process, as we usually do, to discuss this issue, but also set a deadline for committee members to submit proposals for additional witnesses.

I'm very open to calling back witnesses from the Ukrainian Canadian Congress, but we just heard from them today, and there are many other witnesses who will surely want to come and discuss this issue with our committee. I don't quite understand why there's an emphasis on just this one witness when, normally, our panels of witnesses are made up of several people.

As chair, you have given us 10 minutes for this discussion, and I see that half of the time is already up. So I don't know if we're going to get anywhere in the next few minutes, and maybe we should have another discussion at a later date.

I would like—

[*English*]

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Marty Morantz): So, if I may—

• (1730)

[*Translation*]

Ms. Rachel Bendayan: Mr. Chair, I don't think my time is up yet.

I'd like to close by moving that the meeting be adjourned now.

[*English*]

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Marty Morantz): Is that a motion?

Ms. Rachel Bendayan: Yes, it's a motion to adjourn.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Marty Morantz): Okay, it's a dilatory motion.

Mr. Clerk, will you please call the vote?

(Motion agreed to: yeas 6; nays 4)

The Vice-Chair: The motion passes. The meeting is adjourned.

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