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Chair: Mrs. Karen Vecchio



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• (1530)

[English]

The Chair (Mrs. Karen Vecchio (Elgin—Middlesex—London, CPC)): Good afternoon, everyone.

I'd like to welcome you to meeting number 58 of the House of Commons Standing Committee on the Status of Women.

Today's meeting is taking place in a hybrid format pursuant to the House order on June 23, 2022. Members are attending in person in the room and remotely using the Zoom application.

I would like to make a few comments for the benefit of the witnesses and members. Please wait until I recognize you by name before speaking. For those participating by video conference, click on the microphone icon to activate your mike and please mute yourself when you are not speaking.

Regarding interpretation for those on Zoom, you have the choice at the bottom of your screen of floor, English or French. For those in the room, you can use the earpiece and desired channel.

I'd like to remind you that all comments should be addressed through the chair.

For members in the room, if you wish to speak, please raise your hand, and for members on Zoom, please use the “raise hand” function. The clerk and I will manage the speaking order.

In accordance with the committee's routine motion concerning connection tests, I'm informing the committee that all witnesses appearing virtually have completed the required connection test.

Pursuant to Standing Order 108(2) and the motion adopted on Tuesday, February 1, 2022, the committee will resume its study on human trafficking of women and girls and gender-diverse people.

Before we welcome our witnesses, I would like to provide this trigger warning. This will be a difficult study and we will be discussing experiences related to abuse. This may be triggering to viewers, members or staff with similar experiences. If you're feeling distress, please advise the clerk or signal us.

I would now like to welcome our guests.

From the Association of New Canadians, online we have Monica Abdelkader, director of resettlement and settlement services. From the FCJ Refugee Centre, we have Chiara Rossi, coordinator of anti-human trafficking — women; and Jovana Blagovcanin, who is manager of anti-human trafficking. From Indus Community Services, we have Raman Hansra, who is the project manager for fami-

ly services; and Jakki Buckeridge, who is the manager for family services. And here in the room, from Ka Ni Kanichihk, we have Ieasha Sankar, who is the director of program and services.

As you can see, today we have four organizations. We will be listening to our panels for one hour and 15 minutes and we will be doing committee business for the last 45 minutes.

I'm going to turn the floor over to Monica to begin.

Monica, you have the floor for five minutes.

Ms. Monica Abdelkader (Director, Resettlement and Settlement Services, Association for New Canadians): Thank you very much.

Hello, *bonjour*, honourable members of the House of Commons. Thank you for inviting me here today.

My name is Monica Abdelkader, and I use the pronouns “she” and “her”. I am the director of the resettlement and settlement services at the Association for New Canadians in Newfoundland and Labrador.

I would like to acknowledge that the offices of the association are located on the traditional lands of the Beothuk, Mi'kmaq, Innu and Inuit people. We commit to the collective healing, true reconciliation and land honouring required as part of our responsibilities toward indigenous people.

The Association for New Canadians was established in 1979 and is the leading provider of resettlement, settlement, language and employment services for newcomers to Newfoundland and Labrador. Our mission is to settle and integrate immigrants, empowering them with the skills, knowledge and information necessary to become independent, contributing members of our community and our country.

In order to help shed light on the human trafficking of newcomers to Canada, I wish to share my experience working for a legal aid clinic for refugees and asylum seekers in Cairo, Egypt, from 2011 to 2012.

In the course of seeking safety from countries neighbouring Egypt, many fled conditions unfathomable to those of us lucky enough to be born in Canada. Time and again, we heard how migrants and asylum seekers would become entrapped and exploited.

I bore witness to the scores of physical and mental scars of human trafficking, including sexual exploitation, labour and organ trafficking. I met victims being actively trafficked, those who had survived and some who didn't. The stories are harrowing.

In countries like Eritrea, Ethiopia, Somalia, South Sudan and Sudan, ethnic conflict, successive regimes of oppressive governments and mandatory conscription, along with rampant corruption, have resulted in the displacement of millions. To get to Egypt, most cross the desert on foot for days. Some succumb to the Sahara Desert or the shoot-to-stop policies of border control, but it is the gangs that are the most dangerous. Bedouin militia groups are known to kidnap asylum seekers and migrants who cross the desert for ransom and trafficking.

We had cases of mothers coming to our office, begging \$2,000-\$5,000 U.S. ransom for their children, who were under direct threat of organ trafficking. When they failed to come up with the money, we would listen live to these calls. We had fathers who would sob as they recounted tales of their daughters who had disappeared after being sold into sexual slavery. Others spoke of being held in prisons, forced to commit sexual acts and pay thousands to avoid torture and trafficking at the hands of local police.

Those who made it to our office in Cairo were the lucky ones, but even with temporary or permanent refugee protection in hand, traffickers lurked at every turn. Our clients shared stories of employers taking away their documents, charging fees and docking wages illegally, at times physically restraining their movement in order to exploit and coerce them into submission.

In Canada, when Yazidi survivors of Daesh arrived in 2017 and 2018, the settlement sector again bore witness to the stories of Yazidi women whose resilience is at times impossible to understand.

The genocide of Sinjar in 2014 and losing children to sexual slavery and as child soldiers are included among some of the worst atrocities of humanity. I am happy to share that many of our Yazidi friends and neighbours are now getting Canadian citizenship. I have heard from many who have shared how proud they are to be Canadian.

It is the pride we have for our work at the ANC, including our recent work on human trafficking in Newfoundland and Labrador, that I would also like to share with you.

In 2017, resulting from the commitment of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada to resettle women and girls at risk, we saw the increase in the arrival of government-assisted refugees with lived experience of human trafficking. With funding from Women and Gender Equality Canada, we embarked on a three-year project led by refugee women, many of whom survived the very same trafficking I previously described.

As we worked at the ANC to heighten awareness with newcomers, settlement staff, and members of community and government

organizations, we gathered their experiences, best practices and suggestions for system and service improvements. One of the key challenges this project seeks to address in its iterative learning design is that people experience or know situations of exploitation, but they don't actually know that they are human trafficking.

The results have been absolutely beyond our expectations. We saw an almost immediate increase in the identification and reporting of cases of migrants actively or at immediate risk of human trafficking. We have cases of migrants, both temporary and permanent residents, being labour trafficked by employers who, like in Egypt, have taken away their documents, charged fees and docked wages illegally. We have cases of newcomer spouses of Canadian citizens whose documents have been taken, and they have been locked in their homes. We have others who have been approached for sex or marriage in exchange for permanent residence. Cases include people from Eritrea, Mexico, the Philippines, Somalia and Ukraine.

● (1535)

We have also received an outpouring of support from the wonderful and generous people of our beautiful province. On February 22 of this year, on the national day of awareness, we hosted the first ever summit in the province on human trafficking, with community and government leaders in attendance. We are humbled to be entrusted by newcomer women and survivors to lead this very important work, and we're thankful to our communities for their never-ending support.

With this, I want to thank you once again for your time today and for the honour of giving voice to the refugees and migrants who have made it possible for me to share these observations and experiences. They truly have made me who I am today.

Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you very much.

We're now going to the FCJ Refugee Centre.

Jovana, you have the floor for five minutes.

Ms. Jovana Blagovcanin (Manager, Anti-Human Trafficking, FCJ Refugee Centre): Thank you to the members of the committee for having us here today. My name is Jovana Blagovcanin, and I am the anti-human trafficking manager at FCJ Refugee Centre. I'm joined here today by my colleague, Chiara Rossi, who is the anti-human trafficking women's coordinator.

FCJ Refugee Centre is a grassroots community organization based in Toronto, Ontario. For over 30 years, FCJ Refugee Centre has supported hundreds of individuals and families, many in precarious situations, in accessing services and regularizing immigration status. With an open-door and holistic approach, we offer a unique integrated model of providing supports and services, such as housing, shelter and integration to migrants. These include migrants who may be at risk or are victims of human trafficking for labour and sexual exploitation.

Through our work supporting survivors of labour trafficking, we have recognized that women are highly represented in cases of labour trafficking. This is not a male-dominated issue. Within our cases in the past year, 40% of these have been of migrant women. Migrant women are highly vulnerable to exploitation due to their gender, precarious immigration status, language barriers and limited knowledge of their rights or available resources, which in turn results in limited access to their rights.

Women are exploited in all sectors. We see women trafficked in sex work, and in domestic servitude, factories, restaurants, hotels, farms and cleaning services. These women have limited options to exit their situation and are often threatened with violence or deportation. In fact, traffickers often use their victims' precarious immigration status against them as a form of control and coercion. In addition to these barriers, we often see how women have difficulties securing safety due to an inadequate integration of gender perspectives and analysis in relevant law enforcement services.

For these women with precarious immigration status, there are limited remedies to secure stability. First of all, even though IRCC's policy does not require victims to collaborate with law enforcement agencies, or to testify against their traffickers in order to receive a temporary resident permit, TRP, as a victim of human trafficking, in our daily practice we have observed that many such TRP applications are denied when a case against the trafficker is not pending, whether this is because no investigation was initiated by law enforcement or has been concluded in court. This is particularly true for both initial and subsequent TRPs for victims of labour trafficking, which are refused at a higher rate than sex trafficking victims. As a result, if there is no criminal investigation ongoing or the case has been concluded, she is left with no status, no justice and very few options to safely remain in Canada.

Furthermore, while some victims may be granted a temporary resident permit, there are almost no permanent immigration remedies. Current options are exceptional in nature, making it difficult for victims to be successful in obtaining permanent residency. In turn, this creates uncertainty in the lives of victims and their families, whose future depends on the unpredictable outcomes of their immigration and criminal proceedings.

Finally, if granted a TRP, the victim will have barriers to accessing essential services, such as housing subsidies available to do-

mestic victims of trafficking or other vulnerable women, and provincial financial assistance—here in Ontario it would be Ontario Works—and, most importantly, she will have no right to family reunification. As a result, mothers are unable to reunite with their children in Canada and have difficulties visiting them in their countries of origin without losing their status.

We therefore recommend that a gender perspective be better integrated in law enforcement and other services; that temporary status be granted to victims regardless of the existence of an investigation or criminal proceedings against their traffickers, as established in the relevant IRCC policies; and that clear and consistent options for permanent residency be developed to respond to the needs of survivors. Finally, we recommend that adequate trauma-informed and victim-centered services be offered to all victims regardless of their immigration status.

We are grateful and honoured to be here to be able to bring this perspective forward, including labour trafficking as an issue that does impact women, especially migrant women. We are grateful to be able to bring forward the perspective of all migrant women today.

● (1540)

Thank you for having us.

The Chair: Thank you very much. I appreciate that.

We're now going to pass it over to Indus Community Services.

Raman and Jakki, you have five minutes to share.

Raman, please go ahead.

● (1545)

Ms. Raman Hansra (Project Director, Family Services, Indus Community Services): Good afternoon. Thank you for having me here today.

My name is Raman Hansra, and I am the project director of family services at Indus Community Services.

With the generous funding support from Women and Gender Equality Canada, our anti-human-trafficking project is testing best practices to support survivors of human trafficking and at-risk populations. As we started this project, we realized that minimal evidence-based research exists on the needs of victims of human trafficking. Because incidents often go unreported, often we don't know the true scope of human trafficking. What we do know is that human trafficking is flourishing around us, demanding our attention and action.

Working with other community partners and settlement-service providers, we also recognize that, while there are effective services available, there are still aspects of these services that need to be improved. For example, there need to be cultural considerations regarding referrals to counselling, as victims come from many different cultures and we cannot assume that individuals from all cultures will respond to the same approach.

Involving the family in helping victims post-trafficking can be a great support system for many survivors. However, many family members may not have a full understanding of human trafficking, and this can cause the family to place a stigma on the victim. It is critical for us, as service providers, to have a solid understanding of their unique needs and to train and support our settlement counselors and other service providers to better equip them to support survivors of human trafficking and at-risk individuals.

As most newcomers and international students often access these settlement services, there is a huge opportunity for us, as service providers, to identify the signs of trafficking in order to connect them with appropriate services.

We have recently launched our tool kit for service providers to better support the survivors and at-risk populations. We are hopeful that this will help them identify who is at risk, who the traffickers are, and effective responses, while also providing a detailed list of local resources.

Going forward, Indus Community Services and our partners hope to be able to build on current momentum to bring an end to human trafficking in all its forms.

Thank you for the opportunity to address the committee.

The Chair: Jakki, please go ahead.

Ms. Jakki Buckeridge (Manager, Family Services, Indus Community Services): Good afternoon.

My name is Jakki Buckeridge. My pronouns are she and her.

To piggyback on what my colleague, Raman, was saying, Indus' commitment to anti-human trafficking has spanned over a decade. We've been involved at all levels of government in developing a Peel-centred care pathway for survivors of human trafficking. We're active members of the Peel Human Trafficking Service Providers Committee, which collaborates across the region on the elimination of human trafficking through education, advocacy, empowerment, and the restoration of victims' and survivors' rights.

Ontario attracts nearly 50% of all international students coming to study in Canada. Of the international students who choose Canada as their place of study, more than 50% are from India and China.

There were two main reasons that international students reported for choosing Canada particularly. Number one, they felt that this was a non-discriminatory country; that was about 78% of those students. Number two, they felt that it was safe; that was 78% of those students.

At Sheridan College alone, international students represent over 30% of the student population. Sheridan has over 22,000 students, 6,800 of whom are international. Campuses for Sheridan are located in Brampton, Mississauga and our sister region, Halton.

Of all human trafficking in Canada, 60% happens in the GTA in every town, bus stand and retail store—even in our own backyards. One in three cases of human trafficking involves another crime. In the last six years, police-reported cases of human trafficking increased by 200%.

In addition to supporting the needs of sex-trafficked individuals, we at Indus recognize and aim for the elimination of all forms of human trafficking, including forced labour, sex trafficking, domestic servitude, organ removal, debt bondage, forced begging, child soldiers and forced marriage.

It was in 2020 that Indus expanded this commitment by leveraging our experience in supporting newcomers and international students with the generous funding support from WAGE. We have developed this survivor-informed tool kit for service providers to identify and respond, from a cultural lens, to foreign-born individuals' being labour-trafficked. On February 28, we launched our prototype tool kit to over 80 service providers in the region to further inform the tool kit, to raise awareness on the issue and on gaps in service, and to build collaborative support for survivors.

I'm very happy to be here today to lend our perspective.

● (1550)

The Chair: Thank you very much.

I'm now going to turn it over to Ieesha.

Ieesha, you have five minutes.

Ms. Ieesha Sankar (Director, Program and Services, Ka Ni Kanichihk Inc.): Thank you. I'm very happy to be here today to talk about this very important topic.

Hello. My name is Ieesha Sankar. I'm from Wuskwi Sipihk First Nation and I live in Winnipeg, Manitoba. I'm here today to represent the organization I work for, which is Ka Ni Kanichihk.

Ka Ni Kanichihk means “those who lead” in Cree and was established in 2001, when a community of indigenous women recognized it was time to reclaim women's roles as experts and leaders in their own social and community development. We have expanded our community programming since then, based on what people need to continue their journeys. As an indigenous-led and -delivered organization that helps urban, indigenous people—primarily women—who want to change their lives or become more educated, strengthen their families, come to a safe space, rise from poverty or gain employment, Ka Ni Kanichihk delivers tailored programs and mentorships that help individuals get to where they want to be.

Ka Ni Kanichihk is in the community of Winnipeg's core area. We are dedicated to delivering holistic programs and services that respond to community needs. We provide indigenous-identified programs and services that focus on wellness and build on the strength and resilience of indigenous peoples. We have multiple grassroots programs that support individual and collective growth and development in adult education, youth job readiness and skills development mentorship programming, building cultural awareness and wellness support services.

The Mushkowzee Ikek program, which is an empowerment project, is a three-year, community-based project geared to 14- to 29-year-old indigenous female and non-binary people at risk of sexual exploitation, being trafficked, becoming involved with the justice system or living in poverty. Grounded in a strength-based empowerment framework and an organizational philosophy of culture as prevention, the project works with a minimum of 20 participants per year, for a total of 60 participants over the project time frame. Due to more participation and return to the project after periods of being away.... This will increase the capacity of the project, with the potential to work with up to 100-plus participants over the course of the project.

The project has four pillars: life skills, cultural reclamation, empowerment, and healing and pre-employment training. Implementation incorporates individualized learning in combination with online programming, small group work, land-based cultural connectivity and customized wraparound mentorship. Using a continuous intake model, the project has an intensive engagement, knowledge transfer and service delivery approach, combined with positive mentorship relationships that will strengthen those protective factors, increasing resilience and reducing negative influences, such as gang involvement and sexual exploitation.

The Mushkowzee Ikek program is delivered using a community resource approach. It seeks to build on individual strengths, uses knowledge-based programming, belonging and empowerment. Cultural programming takes place throughout the project and focuses on participation in activities related to establishing, or re-establishing, traditional knowledge and practices, such as traditional teachings, drum-making, beading, medicine-picking and participation in a variety of traditional ceremonies. Each participant has a mentor who will provide coaching and mentorship in the areas of life skills, budgeting, counselling, treatment, medical and legal advocacy, community service referral and employment supports.

This project works in partnership with community and youth corrections, female offender unit, Manitoba Justice to receive project

referrals, and with the Manitoba Harm Reduction Network in supporting harm reduction supplies and practices.

The Mushkowzee Ikek program objectives are preventing and combatting human sex trafficking. It works to prevent revictimization through building support networks and safety planning. It supports recovery and healing for victims and survivors, while empowering participants to regain independence and community reintegration. Grounded in indigenous cultural histories and traditions, the project programming and ways of being provide a strong base to uniquely empower indigenous people to heal through the victimization and trauma they have experienced.

Human trafficking knows no borders. It is crucial that we raise awareness about this issue and work together to combat it. Governments and law enforcement agencies have an important role to play in addressing human trafficking. They can strengthen laws and policies to prevent human trafficking, investigate and prosecute perpetrators, and provide support and protection to victims.

In conclusion, human trafficking is a grave violation of human rights that affects millions of people around the world. It is a complex and multi-faceted problem that requires a comprehensive response. We must work together to prevent human trafficking to protect victims and fund more programs like Mushkowzee Ikek, which provides assistance to victims and works towards the prevention of human trafficking.

● (1555)

By doing so, we can help to ensure that all people can live free from exploitation.

Meegwetch for listening.

The Chair: Thank you so much, Ieesha.

I'm just going to make a comment to Raman. We're noticing that your background is blurred, which causes some issues for our technology here. Would you be able to unblur that as we start our lines of questioning?

We'll start with a six-minute round, beginning with the CPC and Michelle Ferreri.

You've got the first six minutes.

Ms. Michelle Ferreri (Peterborough—Kawartha, CPC): Thanks, Madam Chair, and thank you to everyone for being here. That was great testimony to hear from all of you with the experience and ideas you bring to the table.

It's interesting because I think it was Jakki—if I can call you Jakki, first of all—who I know has been in the industry for 23 years. You gave a lot of stats, which I think is great, but in the same breath, when we hear from Raman and have heard from some of the bureaucrats, the stats and the data just aren't reflective of the real crisis, and it's a really tough thing to solve when you don't even have the real numbers to solve this issue.

We have a tent city in my community of Peterborough—Kawartha. Housing really seems to be the crux of a lot of what we're seeing with a lot of these issues. It's a recipe for disaster. If there's no housing, if there are no supports, I would assume your risk would go up significantly when I think of some of the young women I've met who are living homeless in my community.

If I could go to Monica, do you think supportive housing for victims would be beneficial to managing this crisis, and having supportive housing especially when we heard about immigrants? There was just so much testimony here, I don't want to single one person out, so if there's somebody who wants to put their hand up to answer this question first, please do, as there's just so much here, because immigrants are also an issue when we're looking at housing.

I see Monica, you're nodding a lot, so I'll turn it over to you, if you don't mind. I'll get you to answer where housing fits in this.

Ms. Monica Abdelkader: To your comment, a lot of us actually were talking about how we work together, so to any of my peers on the call, please feel free to also jump in.

I'll answer the question in two parts.

When I was working in Cairo, a lot of our cases were cases of human trafficking. What I saw pre-arrival to Canada of newcomers is that a lot of the times, these issues are linked back to your original question and issues of abject poverty. When people lose everything in the process and they're desperate to rebuild their lives, those who don't have the means to navigate those systems tend to end up falling victim to exploitation. This is something that in my career—and I have been lucky to work in this field for quite a while—I see time and time again. When I come back now to Canadian soil and our work in Newfoundland and Labrador, I do see a lot of the same parallels. In fact one of the things the Association for New Canadians has done is feasibility studies specifically around shelter services for newcomer women in our community, which are next to non-existent. When we have victims of trafficking, survivors of trafficking, in our programs what becomes extra challenging is how to support them when we're trying to get them out of these situations.

Whether it's labour trafficking in the remote communities of Labrador or trafficking right here in the city of St. John's, the response is much more difficult to provide when there isn't that housing. But so too are the conditions that lead to that exploitation to begin with, so much like in my talk where I drew the parallel between my experience in Egypt and my experience here in Newfoundland, these parallels exist here in Canada as well. A lot of the cases we are seeing are at heightened risk for trafficking or become victims of trafficking because they end up turning to people who offer what seems like genuine help to get them out of this abject poverty.

Therefore, housing underpins a lot of the work we do, and housing first is often what we find as a trauma-informed approach to the same issue. A lot of this boils down to exactly that.

I see that my colleague Chiara wants to add, so I'm going to leave her some space.

• (1600)

Ms. Michelle Ferreri: Okay, I'm going to give you space too. Sorry, I only have so much time. I have two more questions.

Chiara, if I can come back to you in one second, I just want to get to two other questions first

I think shelters are important, but I think permanent housing is really the crux of this issue, right? It's really affordable housing.

Raman, you had talked about minimal evidence-based research. How do you suggest we get it? What would be the best way for the government or for organizations to obtain this research?

Ms. Raman Hansra: While we were working on this project, we realized that there is minimal evidence-based research, because incidents often go unreported. What are the reasons that these survivors or at-risk individuals don't report trafficking? We need to dig deeply. Only then will we be able to get some sort of evidence-based data on human trafficking.

I also feel that immigration status is a big thing. As Jakki mentioned, in the Peel region, we have thousands of international students. Because of their status and the barriers that exist, systemic barriers as well as individual barriers, they often do not feel safe to go out and talk about their situation.

Ms. Michelle Ferreri: Thank you so much, Raman. I'm sorry; I only have 20 seconds left.

The Chair: You're done, I'm sorry.

I see hands up. We will continue with the rounds, and I'm sure that your voice will get heard.

I'm going to pass it over to Sonia Sidhu.

Sonia, you have six minutes.

Ms. Sonia Sidhu (Brampton South, Lib.): Thank you, Madame Chair.

Thank you to all the witnesses for being with us.

My question is to Indus, because you're from Brampton. I'm a Brampton MP. Thank you for the work you are doing on the ground.

Raman, you were talking about international students, that they don't know their rights and that there are barriers.

What kinds of barriers have you heard about on the ground?

Ms. Raman Hansra: The biggest barrier, I would say, is lack of affordable housing. It's a huge issue. The living conditions—I can't even imagine. There are 10 or 15 students living together in a basement. It's really dangerous, not just for their physical safety but also for their emotional well-being. They become easy targets of these traffickers who sometimes give false promises like “If you need any help, we can help you. All you need to do is whatever we say.” Sometimes, because of their financial situations, living conditions, lack of affordable housing.... Language barriers are another thing. For new immigrants, that's a huge barrier.

All these barriers lead them to some dangerous situations. Because of their status and because they don't know how to navigate the system, it becomes really difficult for them to go out and seek support.

Thank you.

Ms. Sonia Sidhu: Thank you.

My next question is to Jakki Buckeridge.

In Peel we have some strong models for integrated services like Indus Community Services, Zonta Club and Sukhmani Haven. There are many other organizations there to help.

How can we improve the coordination of services for newcomers who are the victims of human trafficking?

Ms. Jakki Buckeridge: I want to also point out that we have the Encourage Hub that is part of the Safe Centre of Peel, where we are co-located as individual partner agencies to support efforts around housing, mental health and addictions. They are all one-stop shops.

I think for us one of the challenges, to piggyback on what Raman was saying, is that often our clients have housing, but the landlord is also their employer. They're stuck in this, “If I quit my job, then I lose my housing. If I move, I lose my job.” We saw this so much during the pandemic, when folks were being underpaid, working under the table and really being debt bonded. Because they were international students and they had no way to earn during the pandemic for the next year, they would often do things that were most certainly illegal and exploitive. They can't tell their families that they've been giving their landlord and boss sexual favours, because the stigma associated around that when they return home would be just too great.

We are doing great things here in the region. I don't have the answer. Honestly, I don't know how to take care of the exorbitant tuition costs that international students have, but I know that it has to happen on a legislative level, because it's not enforceable if somebody says, “My landlord is taking advantage of me”. They'll just be told to move. That's the closet answer.

The one thing that we did find from our research and our work with service providers when we launched our tool kit was that we didn't have the answers. We went through three life scenarios at the symposium, and people could identify the issues quite easily. They could identify strategies, but there were very limited resources to support folks who were being labour trafficked.

I don't know if that answers your question. I hope it does.

• (1605)

Ms. Sonia Sidhu: Thank you.

The Association of New Canadians or anybody can answer that. What are the most effective prevention strategies so that we can work together? For awareness, we've heard about a survivor tool kit. Is there anything that is effective so that they can know their rights?

We also heard that one in three cases is in Peel, which is a lot, and that there's a 200% increase in cases, so we definitely need some effective prevention strategies.

We've also heard of the WAGE grant. How is this grant effective so that other organizations can work at preventive strategies?

Ms. Monica Abdelkader: There is a lot there to unpack, probably more than I have time to do today. I'll start with the WAGE funding.

The funding from Women and Gender Equality Canada has been absolutely instrumental in the work we are doing. I think it's worth noting that their fund for sexual reproductive health is up for being ended in 2024, and there is a call from a number of service providers to the government to see that extended in order for them to be able to continue some of this really important work. It can be seen from me, and from all of the speakers today, that in all of our work, it is survivor led.

The Chair: You have 10 seconds to wrap up.

Ms. Monica Abdelkader: That funding allowed us to amplify the voices of our survivors to help them be part of the decisions. As an organization, we work with many of the partners at the table today, but also others, and we actually train people on human trafficking and provide systems of support.

I will wrap up there.

The Chair: That's excellent. Thanks so much, Monica.

We're now going to pass it over to Andréanne.

Andréanne, you have six minutes.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Andréanne Larouche (Shefford, BQ): Thank you, Madam Chair.

I thank all of the witnesses for being with us today for this study.

When we look into the trafficking of girls and women, we find out a bit more every day. We peel back one layer and uncover another. What lies beneath is not always pretty. We discover that there are many sides to this problem.

Just this morning, I met with a representative from a CALACS, in Quebec. She was reminding me of the different projects in place in Quebec, which are currently focusing on the issue of human trafficking. A number of groups are working with victims of sexual assault, but they are also working on the issue of sex trafficking. I also met with an assault survivor. In her case, the assault took place in a sports environment. She pointed out that, even today, there is still the issue of education. Schools are sources of recruitment for sex trafficking. So you can see that this touches on many issues.

I will try to put questions to all the witnesses, but I will address Ms. Hansra first.

You brought up the language aspect concerning victims from abroad. I don't know if you are interested in that issue here within Canada's borders, but it is important here, as well. There is reportedly a trafficking network between Quebec and Alberta. Franco-phone victims from Montreal are taken to northern Alberta where, in an anglophone community, they cannot find any services in their language. What you say about victims from abroad is very true, and it happens even within Canada's borders. The issue of language is crucial if we are to help victims.

Can you comment on the importance of being able to provide services that are tailored to victims' culture and language?

[English]

The Chair: Raman, do you want to start?

• (1610)

Ms. Raman Hansra: Yes.

I think the need for culturally and linguistically appropriate services and resources is critical, especially in this kind of work, where individuals don't feel comfortable, for various reasons, talking about their situations. If they are willing to finally go out and get support but can't express themselves in the language they prefer, that's a big barrier. The trauma-informed approach and culturally and linguistically appropriate services are the key to supporting these survivors or victims.

Thank you.

[Translation]

Ms. Monica Abdelkader: I would like to add that I think it's very important to work closely with francophone communities. In Newfoundland and Labrador, one of the big problems is that not many services are available in French. Many people who have come through Roxham Road or from Haiti or other francophone countries have difficulty receiving services in French. We are working with the Fédération des francophones de Terre-Neuve et du Labrador, FFTNL.

You have raised an important point: it is not only important for newcomers, it is also important for francophones in Canada.

Ms. Andréanne Larouche: Thank you very much, Ms. Abdelkader.

Ms. Buckeridge, in your opening remarks, you mentioned that you were working with all levels of government to create a response plan for survivors of trafficking. Can you tell us more about that?

As I mentioned, this is a complex and multidimensional challenge. So working collaboratively is paramount. Since the beginning of our study, we have heard different sides of the story. As we have seen, this cuts across multiple departments and multiple levels of government.

What could the committee do to improve collaboration across departments and levels of government? You've already told us a little bit about this, but I'd like to know if you have any other potential solutions to suggest.

[English]

Ms. Jakki Buckeridge: Certainly.

The Peel human trafficking service providers committee comprises a variety of different folks who are service providers across the region. We follow strategies that stem from the federal government strategy on human trafficking, the province's, and then of course the region, which has its own. Because Peel is a very unique community, and we recognize that it's incredibly diverse, we felt that we needed a Peel approach to a care pathway for folks who were being trafficked.

To go back to the one piece around French inclusion and francophone women, Oasis Centre des Femmes is one of our members that sits at that particular planning table that helps develop that pathway.

We are really grateful that as a settlement agency—that was our primary role when we started 37 years ago—we're bringing that newcomer voice to it. Our WAGE-funded project is specific to develop a tool kit and test innovative practices for foreign-born individuals. However, we do our collective efforts around supporting individuals right here, because we know it happens right in our own backyard. We've been making those efforts for over a decade.

I recommend strongly.... I have my WAGE funder and MPPs and different levels of government at every single one of my meetings so that we can continue to have them spread the word and really work together, because the levels are defragmented, in all honesty.

The Chair: Thank you so much for that, Jakki.

We're going to move on. We'll go now to Leah Gazan.

Leah.

Ms. Leah Gazan (Winnipeg Centre, NDP): Thank you so much, Chair, and thank you to all the panellists today.

My first question is for Ieesha Sankar. I don't think it's any secret that I'm a huge fan of Ka Ni Kanichihk. This is a short brag—Ka Ni Kanichihk is in my riding and provides life-saving services.

I wanted to speak specifically to what you were talking about, strength-based frameworks. You use strength-based frameworks and you use strengths from within your nations, culture, which is foundational to that.

We've spoken about the importance of having a clear sense of culture and identity as prevention.

You spoke a little bit about having land-based programs as a support for prevention. Can you share a little bit more about that, please?

• (1615)

Ms. Ieesha Sankar: Yes. It's being able to get any of our participants back onto the land and reclaiming their culture, as culture has been lost with lots of our participants. This brings them back to their own self-awareness of things that are going on around them, whether they're being sex-trafficked, whether they're getting involved in the justice system—like I said, with the Mushkowzee Ikew program. It brings them that self-connection their culture, and then with relatives and people who are around them as well. It gives them that wellness and self-worth, and it empowers them to make the right decisions for themselves that will get them on their journey to be able to grow.

Ms. Leah Gazan: Building on that, there's no secret that we're doing a study on sex trafficking. We know groups that are most impacted—indigenous women, particularly, and gender-diverse folks are in that category, along with many migrant sex workers, and BIPOC communities.

We know that one reason why this is occurring is because of ongoing violent colonialism that's being perpetrated against indigenous women and girls and gender-diverse folks. We know that from the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls. We have the same sorts of occurrences that happen even in the House of Commons, as an indigenous woman in the House of Commons.

How does that place a lack of awareness, a lack of real response to that? How does that make young women and girls and gender-diverse folks more vulnerable to becoming sex trafficked?

Ms. Ieesha Sankar: It definitely does.

We can bring it back to the first comment there. It's housing, as well. A lot of the folks we work with in Winnipeg's core area are homeless. A lot of them don't have anywhere to go. If they don't have anywhere to go, they look for people who are going to help them that they are going to help, when realistically they are not trying to help them. They are trying to do whatever they are needing to do with them that way.

Ms. Leah Gazan: Moving beyond that, I've spoken a lot about the importance of differentiating between sex trafficking, sex work, and child sexual exploitation. One of the things I've been talking about is that when you make people illegal for whatever reason—you know we've heard in the panel today about citizenship, immigration status, and making people illegal—you place them at risk. Is that one of the reasons that any sorts of activities that people participate in for whatever reasons they end up doing them...? Is that why they're hesitant to go forward to police: for fear of persecution should, for example, they participate in something like sex work, which is illegal?

If something happens—for example, a sexual assault—do you think that's impacting people's ability to go forward to police?

Ms. Ieesha Sankar: Definitely.

Any repercussions if they do go forward with it... If they are on the street and that person is the person who's helping them on the

street to live and just get by, then there are going to be repercussions that they don't want to face for going forward to the police.

Ms. Leah Gazan: We also know that indigenous women and girls have been hypersexualized and demeaned in terms of labels. We see that at Halloween it's the worst: the sexy squaw, the Pocahottie. They are more likely to be targets for sexual violence.

Would you agree that this continues to be perpetuated?

Ms. Ieesha Sankar: It still is, yes, for sure.

Ms. Leah Gazan: Would you agree that there continues to be a lack of response with regard to the severity of ongoing violence against indigenous women and girls in terms of any sort of sexual exploitation—a lack of response to address it?

• (1620)

Ms. Ieesha Sankar: I would agree with that, definitely.

Ms. Leah Gazan: We just had a federal budget come out. I looked at the allocations for murdered and missing indigenous women and girls. It was very disappointing. I know that the federal government has put in funding for call for justice 1.7 for oversight.

However, when I looked at the funding in terms of supporting prevention and programs like your.... Why is it important to do major investment in prevention if we're going to deal with the crisis of violence against indigenous women and girls in this country?

The Chair: You have about 15 seconds.

Ms. Ieesha Sankar: It's very important for prevention.

I'll try to wrap it up really quickly.

More programs that can be out on the ground in the community for the community.... You'll even get statistics that way, as well, being on the ground with the people who are the ones needing any of the help, needing resources or access to resources. Through communities like Ka Ni Kanichihk, they are able to help mend and go through all those resources that they need and that they may not know of.

The Chair: Excellent.

Thank you so much.

We're now going to go to our next round.

It starts with five minutes, and I'll pass it over to Anna Roberts.

Anna.

Mrs. Anna Roberts (King—Vaughan, CPC): Thank you, Madam Chair.

Thank you, all, for the efforts that are put into helping the situation.

I'm going to address my question to Monica. This is probably going to trigger something, so I'm just warning everybody upfront, please.

Monica, I met with Yazidi individuals, the people who came into my office and my constituency, and one of the stories really touched me. I'm going to go back to what my colleague, Michelle, said about housing.

Two sisters managed to get to Canada. After the older sister witnessed the murder of her husband and children, they were then thrown in jail and continuously raped, and the food that they ate was the remains of their family. I say this because it really impacted me.

However, they were very happy that they were able to come to Canada. Here's the problem. They came to Canada. There was no housing, no medication, no mental health services to help them emotionally get through what they had witnessed. We're promoting this, and you're a champion at this. You obviously care. However, how can we help these people, help the Yazidi people, come here? How can we make these promises? They have nowhere to live, no medication, no help, no counselling. When I think about, we're taking them out of the fire and putting them back into the frying pan. How do we change that?

Ms. Monica Abdelkader: There were a lot of services that the Yazidi community members were provided with when they were resettled to Canada. There were about 1,100 Yazidis who were resettled to four communities across Canada: London, Ontario; Toronto region; Calgary; and Winnipeg.

These communities receive funding from Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada as part of the resettlement assistance program. Through those programs—the Association for New Canadians in St. John's, Newfoundland provides the service here—we are mandated to provide housing assistance and linkage to the provincial health system.

When the Yazidis arrived, the trauma that the Yazidis had experienced—I was part of one of those teams that responded in one of those communities—was unlike trauma I have ever seen. I have been working overseas and in Canada for almost 20 years now, and I will be honest, when they came, it was very traumatizing, even for those of us with experience in the sector, to hear their stories and to respond to their needs.

As you said, there was definitely a bit of a lag in our response at the outset. We, as a system of settlement service providers, both understood and came to understand the severity and the complexity of their traumas, but we also developed the appropriate mental health response.

In delivering mental health services to newcomers, we did a very rigorous research project and we introduced mental health screening at multiple milestones and touchpoints throughout their journey. Consistently, we find that newcomers who are resettled under the resettlement assistance program are really only ready for mental health services at the eighth month—

• (1625)

Mrs. Anna Roberts: Monica, I want to get to my point, because I will be hosting another meeting with the Yazidi families who I've met.

The government is going to open up immigration to half a million people. We don't have housing. How can we make these false promises to individuals? I think, as Canadians, we want to help people. It breaks my heart to know that they're coming here and they'll be in shelters or some of them will have to live on the streets. They don't have the support, the housing, the medication or the treatment. How do we change that when we make these promises to them and we don't have anywhere to house them?

The Chair: You have 20 seconds to reply.

Ms. Monica Abdelkader: Under the resettlement assistance program for government-assisted refugees, we are mandated to provide that housing, and IRCC does fund temporary housing in those communities.

When we're resettling refugees, we tend to be really good. Where we're not really great is with refugee claimants.

My colleagues at FCJ can tell you for days—and now, too, in Newfoundland with our experience with the recent arrivals from Roxham Road—that those are some of the groups most at risk for lack of affordable housing.

Mrs. Anna Roberts: Do we have stats on that?

The Chair: Thanks very much. We have to move on to the next round of questioning.

I am now going to pass it over to Jenna Sudds.

Jenna, you have five minutes.

Ms. Jenna Sudds (Kanata—Carleton, Lib.): Thank you very much, Chair.

Thank you to all of our witnesses for being here with us today but, more importantly, for the incredible work you are all doing in your communities and across the country.

I will start with Monica.

First, I just want to share some good news, Monica. You had commented on the sexual and reproductive health fund. I am happy to share that it was in the budget yesterday for 2024, so you will see it there, which of course is critical funding and great news.

In preparing, I had done a bit of research about your organization. I saw on your website that you opened a number of satellite locations in order to accommodate the increase in immigration and refugee entry that you've seen.

I wonder if you can elaborate for us on some of the changes or the trends that you are seeing on the ground there.

Ms. Monica Abdelkader: This is a really great question. It's something that is a really special part of our work at the Association for New Canadians.

As you mentioned, we are located in nine communities, including eight communities that are outside of the urban core. Those offices are sometimes in really remote communities, like Forteau, Labrador, Labrador City, which are part of mainland Canada as opposed to the island of Newfoundland. Among all of our offices we more or less cover the entire geography of the province.

As you mentioned, what we are actually seeing in those offices, particularly for this study, is that the farther and more remote the newcomers travel, the greater the immediate risk they are at for human trafficking. In fact, of the cases that have come forward since we started the WAGE project, only one is located in the urban centre of St. John's. We really found that the current phase of our project is going to these remote rural communities.

We've seen this quite a lot with the Ukrainian folks who have arrived in our community, where they get offers, both from overseas as well as from inside the country, and then they travel to these communities. Then when they get there, the offer wasn't as expected or the behaviour of the employer isn't as expected. In fact, sometimes we even struggle as an organization to get employers to come forward with the details of the employment offered to newcomers.

Some of the more significant cases, even the non-Ukrainian cases, are happening in places like Labrador. Some of the information that is being shared with us includes concerns from newcomers of involvement greater than the just the employer, from people like police and from local people in power. These cases are extra disheartening because of how remote they are. They are so removed.

Some of the colleagues have mentioned, and MP Gazan mentioned quite briefly, the status issue. In a lot of the cases we're seeing they're terrified of coming forward but also are missing information about status and how to regularize those pathways.

Like Jovana from FCJ mentioned, the issue is not so simple as getting a TRP from IRCC when there's no clear pathway to how you reach permanent residency, or how you share your story and get that permanency without having to file criminal charges. That is in fact the most common thing we're hearing, the fear people have even when we have incredible colleagues here from the RCMP, from IRCC, telling them they're going to be safe. It doesn't matter. They're still not coming forward with these cases. Ultimately, the pathway doesn't really exist in practice, even though it's there in theory.

• (1630)

The Chair: You have one minute.

Ms. Jenna Sudds: Incredible. Thank you very much for that answer and those insights. It's very helpful for our study here.

I have a minute left. I'd like to go to Raman from Indus Community Services, who referred to the need to ensure cultural considerations in referrals to service providers for victims.

I would love if you could take my last 30 seconds here to expand upon what that needs to look like.

Ms. Raman Hansra: Thank you.

As I mentioned earlier, cultural considerations are the key. For example, sometimes we feel that one approach can fit all, one-size-fits-all, but I think that when we are working with survivors it's im-

portant for us to remember that these people are coming from different backgrounds, they belong to different cultures. What can we do, as policy-makers and as service providers, to actually make them feel safe and heard?

Thank you.

The Chair: Perfect, thank you so much.

We're now going to pass it over for two and a half minutes to Andréanne Larouche.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Andréanne Larouche: Thank you, Madam Chair.

I will follow up with Ms. Abdelkader.

Ms. Abdelkader, you were addressing the topic of Roxham Road. We started talking about the issue of status regularization and how to be humane when someone comes here. I was talking about language earlier. From what we hear in relation to Roxham Road, it is important and critical to provide health and housing services.

The other concern is about people who are not welcomed in a regular way and whose status is not regularized. It is easier to lose track of them and then it becomes impossible to track them down to provide appropriate services. This is when they find themselves vulnerable in society.

On the one hand, what consequences might this have in terms of human trafficking?

On the other hand, how do these people end up in an inhumane situation where they are received, sometimes in handcuffs?

[*English*]

Ms. Monica Abdelkader: I'm sorry. I'm going to say this in English.

I would like to give my time to Jovana and Chiara. Jovana and Chiara, with the FCJ Refugee Centre, are the experts on the question of claimants. They advise us at the association on our human trafficking project.

At the Association for New Canadians, we've just started working with claimants, whereas FCJ has more experience.

Ms. Jovana Blagovcanin: Thank you, Monica.

Without status, traffickers, employers, abusers or anyone can exploit the victims in ways...because they know they can't access any services. They can say, "If you don't do this for me or if you don't work under these conditions, we will report you to immigration and you'll be deported." People become dependent on their jobs. They become dependent on their traffickers, and they are usually also dependent on them for housing, as mentioned several times.

Many services and supports aren't available to people without status. Even if they gain some status, there are still limited services that they can access, such as financial assistance. A lot of housing subsidies are not available to people with temporary status. That leaves them in a situation where, again, they may be vulnerable to exploitation, and traffickers are using the housing crisis to their advantage.

The Chair: Thank you very much.

We're now going to pass it over to Leah Gazan for two and a half minutes.

Ms. Leah Gazan: Thank you so much, Chair.

I have another quick question for Ieesha.

I put forward a bill for a guaranteed livable basic income. It's Bill C-223.

We're talking about sex trafficking and protecting women, girls and gender-diverse folks from being sex trafficked. Give me a yes or no. Would a guaranteed livable basic income be a tool of prevention?

• (1635)

Ms. Ieesha Sankar: Definitely.

Ms. Leah Gazan: Thank you so much.

I want to move over to Indus.

I'm a former post-secondary educator. I know many international students. First of all, they're paying high fees and they get no support. It was on the news just yesterday.

I have put forward a bill for a guaranteed livable basic income. Would a guaranteed livable basic income protect women, girls and gender-diverse folks against being sex trafficked?

My bill includes temporary foreign migrant workers, refugee claimants—it's very inclusive—and anybody over the age of 18. Give me a yes or no.

Ms. Raman Hansra: Yes, for sure.

Ms. Leah Gazan: Because I don't have a lot of time, I want to ask a question of the refugee centre.

I know that your organization advocates for open work permits for migrant workers in Canada. I mentioned the dangers of making people illegal, and I think we've had several examples today of why making people illegal...why I support #StatusForAll. It's a necessity to keep people safe.

Why are open work permits important?

Ms. Jovana Blagovanin: Open work permits are important because the alternative is an employer-specific work permit that locks someone in and ties them to one employer, with one role. That em-

ployer can use that power advantage to exploit the worker. They know that the worker can work only for them and that they're relying on that job for status in Canada. They can then say that they need to work under very abusive conditions, which no domestic worker would ever work under, and that worker has very little means to change their employment. It's a challenging process and a very lengthy process.

Many workers will continue to work for the abusive employer simply because they don't have any other choices. If they had an open work permit—

The Chair: Thanks so much, Jovana.

Michelle, I'm passing it to you for three minutes.

Ms. Michelle Ferreri: Thanks, Madam Chair.

Thank you, all. It's great information that's coming out.

Jakki, it says in your bio that you've been working in this—not necessarily in human trafficking—for 23 years. What I would love to know—and if anybody wants to jump in again—is how you have seen human trafficking change in that time.

What's different now from how it was before? I'm 43 years old, but I don't remember hearing of human trafficking the way that we hear of it today.

Ms. Jakki Buckeridge: I've been in this for 26 years, but I've been in anti-violence prevention for longer than that, not to age myself. All forms of violence, for me, need to be eliminated.

I will tell you that language has changed, for sure. Legislation has clearly changed to a certain degree. I know that women, 20 years ago, would not come forward, because they knew that they would be arrested and charged. Now, we're holding the actual traffickers and johns accountable, and a woman cannot be charged if she is selling sex. You can only be charged if you buy sex, so that has changed significantly.

I think there's more of a collaborative effort. We as service providers are more willing to support individuals with very complex needs. I think we were very structured in the way that we provided support 15 or 20 years ago. I'm hoping that we are more collaborative in the way that we do things, that we do have more funding and continue to get funded for programs, and that we continue to change systemic barriers for folks who are being trafficked.

Ms. Michelle Ferreri: Thanks so much for that.

Chiara, you had your hand up in that last round of questioning I had. I just want to give you an opportunity to share your thoughts.

• (1640)

Ms. Chiara Rossi (Coordinator, Anti-Human Trafficking Women's, FCJ Refugee Centre): Thank you.

I just want to endorse what Monica was saying in terms of housing and services.

From FCJ's perspective, we work for a lot of people who don't have status or have temporary status, and this is a huge, added challenge to accessing services like housing. Even when some of the services are available for domestic victims of sex and trafficking, these same services are not available to people with temporary status, even when we get a TRP.

This access to service is essential, and it would help if this was granted to victims regardless of their status.

The Chair: Thanks so much, Chiara.

I'm now going to pass it over to Emmanuella online.

You have three minutes.

Ms. Emmanuella Lambropoulos (Saint-Laurent, Lib.): Thank you, Madame Chair.

I'd like to begin by thanking all of our witnesses for the incredible testimony that we've heard today. It's been very informative, and it's definitely going to help shape the study.

I'll start with Jovana.

You spoke you earlier about the VTIP TRP, and you said that many of the victims are refused a VTIP TRP. Meanwhile, we heard earlier this week from IRCC that this was a pretty good avenue that people can take if ever they are being trafficked or it's found out that someone without status is being trafficked.

Can you speak a little bit to that point and explain in what kinds of circumstances these people are being refused? Also, do you have any stats or can you access any stats on how many victims have been refused? Even though one is too many, I think it would help us to know more specifically how many people this is happening to.

Ms. Jovana Blagovcanin: The temporary resident permit is available to someone who is out of status who is a victim of trafficking. At first, if approved, you would be approved for six months, so it's a short-term TRP, and then you apply for a subsequent one, which is normally granted for a year.

The IRCC's policies state that they don't need to speak to law enforcement or testify in court to be approved, but what we're finding is that—we're not just making it up, because it states this in the re-

fusal letter—the case has been concluded, there are no court proceedings, and they're not needed to be in Canada anymore, so they are refused the temporary resident permit on that basis, which is confusing for the applicant, and it is confusing for us as well when we're submitting these applications.

I don't have the statistics in front of me to state how many people are being refused, but, from our cases, I can say that we do have large cases that see 40-plus victims who might have all been approved for the short-term TRPs because there was an investigation, but now the subsequent ones are all starting to be refused because the case has been concluded or the court proceedings are no longer ongoing.

The Chair: You have 30 seconds.

Ms. Emmanuella Lambropoulos: Thank you. That's good to know.

I have another question, but I don't know whether you'll be able to answer it in 30 seconds.

You mentioned that people cannot reunite with their families. Of course, that's only offered to PRs. What would you suggest be done, in a straightforward recommendation, for victims of trafficking?

Ms. Jovana Blagovcanin: Allow applicants of temporary resident permits to include family members, or allow a quicker and much more accessible pathway to permanent residency for victims of trafficking, so they can bring their families. Right now, they need to have a TRP for five consecutive years. This is very difficult and challenging. It almost never happens, at least from our perspective and in our experience.

Ms. Emmanuella Lambropoulos: Thank you very much.

The Chair: That will wrap up our first panel for today. I would like to thank all the witnesses.

You have brought so much to us. If there is additional information you wish to send in, or statistics you've received and want to share, please feel free to send them in.

We're going to suspend and go in camera.

The meeting is suspended.

[Proceedings continue in camera]

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