

Report of the Canadian Parliamentary Delegation respecting its participation at the 2017 Spring Session

Canadian NATO Parliamentary Association (NATO PA)

Tbilisi, Georgia May 26-29, 2017

REPORT

INTRODUCTION

The Canadian Delegation to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization Parliamentary Assembly (NATO PA) has the honour to present its report on the NATO PA Spring Session, held in Tbilisi, Georgia on 26–29 May 2017. The Parliament of Canada was represented by Ms. Leona Alleslev, M.P., Head of the Canadian Delegation; Ms. Cheryl Gallant, M.P.; Mr. David McGuinty, M.P.; Ms. Rachelle Blaney, M.P., and the Honourable Senators Raynell Andreychuk, Joseph A. Day, Jane Cordy, and Pierre-Hugues Boivenu. The Delegation was accompanied by Mr. Jean-François Pagé, Association Secretary, and Ms. Holly Porteous, Association Advisor.

The Spring Session was hosted by the Parliament of Georgia and chaired by the NATO PA President, Mr. Paolo Ailli, a member of Italy's Chamber of Deputies. The session brought together over 200 parliamentarians from NATO member countries and partner nations.

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSIONS

A. Joint Meeting of the Georgia-NATO Interparliamentary Council and the Standing Committee

The NATO PA President provided an overview of some of the highlights from the 25 May 2017 NATO Heads of State and Government summit in Brussels, noting that this is the first such meeting in which the NATO PA has participated.

Delegates then considered a draft declaration on Georgia's Euro-Atlantic integration. Acknowledging Georgia's "continuous and significant contribution to the common Euro-Atlantic security and its sizeable participation in the NATO Resolute Support Mission in Afghanistan and NATO Response Force aspiration to join NATO," the declaration urged member governments and parliaments of the Alliance to continue rendering strong political and practical support to Georgia in the process of NATO integration.

As well, the NATO PA discussed how the issue of burden sharing should be addressed in a future study. In this connection, Ms. Gallant intervened to suggest that, since Alliance members had already committed to meeting targets of 2% expenditure of their respective Gross Domestic Products, the only thing left to study is how each member plans to meet this target. President Ailli responded that this was a good suggestion but that the challenge for member States is to come to a consensus on how military expenditure will be measured.

The Standing Committee also debated and voted in favour of allocating additional seats to the Turkish NATO PA delegation, at the latter's request. Turkey now has 18 seats on its delegation.

In the portion of the meeting devoted to the Joint Georgia-NATO Interparliamentary Council, President Ailli told members of the Georgian delegation that the NATO PA recognizes the great progress that Georgia has made in reforming civil and military

institutions. Georgia's contribution to stability in the region, he said, is of strategic importance. President Ailli conveyed the Assembly's strong support for the territorial integrity of Georgia and expressed his certainty that Georgia will eventually become a full NATO member, with the next step being the offer of a Membership Action Plan (MAP).

During the discussion that followed, Ms. Alleslev thanked the Georgian delegation for hosting the Spring Session and asked if the Georgians could identify their top focus of effort in their quest to join NATO. Ms. Alleslev also wanted to know if, apart from encouraging Canadians to come visit Georgia, there was anything specific Canada could do to help Georgia in its efforts to join NATO.

In their response, members of the Georgian delegation noted that the 39% increase in tourism Georgia experienced in 2016 provided an important boost to the economy and, thus, to that country's various reform efforts. In a subsequent private meeting with the Georgian Minister of Foreign Affairs, held after the NATO PA plenary, the Canadian delegation received a more fulsome answer to its question about support for Georgia's NATO bid. Details of this meeting are provided in another section below.

B. Defence and Security Committee

1. Joint Georgian-NATO Interparliamentary Council

Georgia's Minister of Defence, Levan Izoria, and the Chief of the General Staff of the Georgian Armed Forces, General Vladimir Chachibaia, provided an update on their country's progress towards meeting NATO readiness requirements. Both described some of the difficult decisions that have been made to enable the restructuring of Georgia's military, including having to cut over 2000 military and civilian personnel.

According to Minister Izoria, Georgia's main goal is to achieve military readiness and an ability to resist potential aggressors. To this end, Georgia maintains close relations with Finland, Sweden, and Estonia.

Minister Izoria said Georgia is doing its best to conform to NATO standards for personnel training and equipping. The NATO-Georgia Joint Training and Evaluation Center (JTEC) is an important aspect of this effort to build Georgia's capacity and interoperability as well as to enhance regional security.

Regarding NATO's goal of allocating 2% of GDP for defence spending, he indicated that Georgia will likely need to spend more than this amount to replace all of the Soviet-era equipment and infrastructure it inherited after the break-up of the Soviet Union. With respect to NATO's goal of committing 20% of defence budgets to capital equipment acquisition, Minister Izoria confirmed that Georgia has increased its investment from 2% to 6%. However, Georgia's strategic plan is to come closer to NATO's 20% goal in the next three years.

An important component of Georgia's integration policy is participation in international organizations, such as the European Union (EU), the United Nations and NATO. Georgia currently has 871 military personnel serving in Afghanistan, the Central African

Republic and Mali. According to Minister Izoria, if needed, the country is ready to contribute more troops to Afghanistan.

Noting that Georgia's military also inherited a Soviet mentality along with old equipment, Chief of the General Staff General Chachibaia said that, thanks to its Western partners, Georgia's military academy is one of the best in the region and Georgia now has a strong sergeant pool to draw upon.

General Chachibaia commented that some 200 positions in the Georgian Air Force had to be temporarily terminated due to the threat posed by Russian Buk air defence systems. Essentially, he said, "we are not able to resist these systems and, therefore, not able to operate in the air."

Faced with an overwhelming Russian military threat, Georgia has changed its military doctrine, adopting an asymmetrical warfare approach.

With 70% already achieved, General Chachibaia said reforms to Georgia's military are expected to be complete by 2020.

Resuming conscription will be an important aspect of this reform, he confirmed, as it will enable Georgia to achieve its new reserve force concept.

Asked whether the Georgian government has support from the opposition parties for its reform efforts, Minister Izoria said there is strong support for NATO integration and that his government is actively engaging opposition parties on plans to achieve this goal. On 11 April 2017, opposition parties met with the government to discuss the defence program.

According to the deputy speaker for the opposition in Georgia's parliament, some 60%-70% of Georgians support integration into NATO. The Georgian delegation urged that the issue of Russia's occupation of Georgian territory in Southern Ossetia and Abkhazia not be permitted to slip off NATO's agenda and that the Alliance's messaging about Georgian integration into NATO include reference to this occupied territory. In this connection, it was noted that the NATO PA's 2009 resolution on the importance of Georgia's territorial integrity in the face of Russian occupation which also referred to "ethnic cleansing" in Georgia marked the first time that an international body had described the problem in these terms. Georgia reiterated how it greatly appreciated this support.

Lithuania's head of delegation, Rasa Jukneviciene, congratulated Georgia on having recently obtained visa-free travel status to the European Union, an accomplishment they felt showed that its reform work is paying off.

2. Ballistic Missile Defence and NATO: Consideration of the draft General Report by Joseph A. DAY (Canada), General Rapporteur

Senator Joseph Day, General Rapporteur for the Science and Defence Committee, summarized and invited comments on the findings of the committee's draft report on ballistic missile defence and NATO.

A discussion ensued about the relationship between ballistic missile defence and NATO's nuclear deterrent posture, with France and Britain agreeing that the former must complement, not undermine the latter.

Burden sharing was also raised as an issue, with the Dutch delegation noting that Norway, Denmark, Germany and the Netherlands have all equipped their destroyers and frigates with ballistic missile sensor capabilities but that going a step farther and acquiring Standard missiles to shoot down incoming ballistic missiles will pose significant expenses. In this connection, it was suggested that the four countries could acquire these missiles together so as to reduce costs.

The Dutch went on to point out potential interoperability problems if Turkey decides to buy the Russian-made S-400 air and missile defence system. To obtain meaningful situational awareness they noted, Turkey would need to plug into Russia's missile warning system. In other words, to extend its understanding of the airspace beyond the 700-km view offered by the S-400's target acquisition radar, Turkey may become reliant on Russia and, thereby, create a gap in NATO's own situational awareness.

Finally, the Dutch highlighted Project Apollo as a model that NATO could adopt when developing operational capabilities. Project Apollo is a joint German-Dutch air and missile defence effort in which the two countries share Germany's Surface to Air Missile Operations Centre. Project Apollo forms part of a broader cooperation framework that is leading to increasingly close integration between the two nations' ground and naval forces.

Senator Day agreed to consider these inputs in drafting the final version of the report for presentation at the Fall Session in Bucharest, Romania.

3. Draft Special Report on Afghanistan

The Defence and Security Committee also considered the draft of a special report on Resolute Support, NATO's mission in Afghanistan.

Saying Afghanistan's security forces are "locked in a stalemate" with insurgents, Special Rapporteur Wolfgang Hellmich of Germany, highlighted the many ongoing challenges facing Afghanistan and its allies. Among these challenges are: deteriorating relations between Pakistan and Afghanistan; the presence of 750 Daesh fighters in the region; the so-called "ghost soldier" issue that has prompted an agreement with the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR) to use biometric collection to determine the true number of serving Afghan National Security Force; chronic corruption and infighting in the Afghan military and public sector; declining economic growth; the Taliban's illegal mining operations; and the potential for NATO to be outmanoeuvred by regional actors such as China, which is more willing to take risks and invest in Afghanistan.

With respect to investment activities by regional actors, the United Kingdom highlighted the strategic significance of China's Silk Road project and called for reference to it in the final report.

4. Dr. Myriam Benraad, presentation on "The Islamic State: Metamorphoses and Consequences for NATO Member States"

A French expert on the Middle East and the author of a forthcoming book on Daesh's use of propaganda, Dr. Benraad urged NATO member states to study how Daesh uses violence to communicate so that Alliance countries can tailor their response.

Daesh's strategy, she said is to spread civil war throughout the Middle East and Europe so as to create instability and take power. Propaganda plays an important role in spreading strife. Daesh's propaganda, Dr. Benraad noted, never refers to the loss of children in attacks like that which took place after the Adriana Grande concert in Manchester. Rather, they refer to victims as "crusaders, infidels and apostates;" language that dehumanizes.

She dislikes the "lone-wolf label," saying individual followers of Daesh have a sophisticated world outlook obtained and nurtured through the interne. She argued that NATO needs new ways to counter this online threat.

Right now, Dr. Benraad said, "we don't have the tools to counter Daesh's narrative." In her view, its use of social media networks to spread its propaganda is of particular concern and must be opposed.

In Europe, she suggested, not enough air-time is being given to Muslim voices speaking against the jihadist narrative. This silence, she stated, feeds into Daesh's strategy.

5. The Space Domain and Allied Defence

Substituting for Rapporteur Madeleine Moon, Gilbert Le Bris of France presented the draft Report of the Sub-Committee on Future Security and Defence Capabilities, entitled The Space Domain and Allied Defence. The report explores the risks and opportunities presented by this unregulated domain.

Representative Michael Turner of the United States expressed concern about the report's tone, taking exception to its depiction of the George W. Bush administration having militarized space and to the suggestion that it modified a Standard Missile-3 (SM-3) in 2008 to perform an anti-satellite function in response to China's deliberate destruction of a Chinese weather satellite using a ballistic missile the previous year. According to Mr. Turner, the United States used the SM-3 as a means to destroy one of its own satellites, th USA 193, which was in the process of deorbiting and which posed a re-entry risk.

Mr. Turner noted that China and Russia also have active programs using non-kinetic means, such as cyber attacks, to destroy satellites. He went on to say the report did not reflect that the United States chose not to sign the Space Code of Conduct because it did not acknowledge the problems posed by Russia and China's anti-satellite programs.

Representative Rick Larsen of the United States said the report needed to say more about space debris mitigation methods, such as satellites that are designed to be either remotely de-orbited or which can deorbit autonomously. The report, he said, should also note that the United States Air Force conducts most space debris monitoring, which raises questions about the potential transfer of this function to a civilian agency.

Mr. Le Bris welcomed the inputs and said any factual errors would be corrected in the final report. He shared that there is a need to discuss the precise role of international law, and therefore the United Nations, in addressing governance issues in space.

6. NATO-EU Cooperation after Warsaw

On behalf of the Rapporteur for the Sub Committee on Transatlantic Defence and Security Cooperation, Attila Mesterhazy, Angelien Eijsink of The Netherlands presented a draft report on NATO-EU Cooperation after Warsaw. The report highlights that hybrid warfare, cyber, terrorism threats and response strategies are now all key areas of cooperation between the European Union and NATO.

Cooperation on cyber defence is a particularly significant area of cooperation and the report advocates that more can be done through the establishment of joint computer emergency response teams. Similarly, the report notes that NATO and the EU have an extensive history of cooperation in counter-terrorism but that more can be done, such as looking at closer cooperation among NATO, EUROPOL and FRONTEX (the EU's border agency).

Information and intelligence sharing in both the cyber and counter-terrorism context should both be increased, the report suggests, as should coordination between NATO and the EU with respect to their activities in the Middle East and North Africa.

Noting that this session marked the first time a European Parliament delegation has been allowed to provide inputs into a NATO PA report, a member of this delegation acknowledged that both organizations have shortcomings with respect to intelligence collection and analysis. The member suggested that these shortcomings should be examined more closely in the future.

C. Economics and Security Committee

Committee members heard the following presentations:

- Kakha Gogolashvili, Director of EU Studies at the Georgian Foundation for Strategic and International Studies provided an assessment of the Georgian economic reform agenda;
- Marshall Burke, Assistant Professor, Department of Earth System Science, and Fellow, Center on Food Security and the Environment, Stanford University, spoke on the potential economic consequences of climate change and climate change mitigation; and,
- Dick Zandee, Senior Research Fellow, Netherlands Institute of International Relations, Clingendael, discussed how Europe's defence industrial base could be put on a stronger footing and the implications of this for burden sharing.

The Economics and Security Committee then considered three draft reports. The first was the Report of the Sub-Committee on Transition and Development Economic Transition in the Western Balkans: An Assessment. The report was drafted by the Sub-

Committee's Rapporteur, Richard Benyon (United Kingdom), and presented his behalf by Menno Knip (Netherlands), the Sub-Committee's Chairperson.

The second draft report to be considered was the Report of the Sub-Committee on Transatlantic Economic Relations Assessing and Mitigating the Cost of Climate Change, which was presented by Lilja Alfredsdottir (Iceland), Rapporteur ad interim.

Finally, the committee gave consideration to the draft general report entitled The State of Europe's Defence Industrial Base, presented by Jean-Marie BOCKEL (France), General Rapporteur.

D. Science and Technology Committee

The Committee heard the following presentations:

- Dick Zandee, Senior Research Fellow, Netherlands Institute of International Relations 'Clingendael', The Hague, who presented a paper on the future of European defence research and development and implications for burdensharing;
- Irakli Menagharishvili, Director of the Strategic Research Centre, Georgia, who discussed Russian military modernisation and the Black Sea Region; and,
- Marshall Burke, Assistant Professor, Department of Earth System Science, and Fellow, Center on Food Security and the Environment, Stanford University, who presented a paper on the potential economic consequences of climate change.

The Committee considered the following draft reports:

- Draft General Report: Maintaining NATO's Technology Edge: Strategic Adaptation and Defence Research & Development, written by Thomas Marino (United States), General Rapporteur and presented on his behalf by Maria Martens (Netherlands); and,
- Special Report Food and Water Security in the Middle East and North Africa, presented by Osman Askin BAK (Turkey), Special Rapporteur.

E. Committee on the Civil Dimension of Security

7. Strategies Toward Occupied Georgian Regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia

Ms. Ketevan Tsikhelashvili, Georgia's State Minister for Reconciliation and Civil Equality, and Ambassador Kestutis Jankauskas, Head of the EU Monitoring Mission in Georgia, discussed the 25-year "frozen conflict" in Abkhazia and South Ossetia.

According to Ms. Tsikhelashvili, Russia's efforts to annex Abkhazia and South Ossetia, which together represent 20% of Georgia's territory, have created some 300,000 internally displaced persons, which represents 8% of Georgia's population. Russia's so-called "Administrative Border Line" (ABL), has seen the placement of some 100 km of razor and barbed wire fencing. Overnight, she said, the ABL is being shifted, cutting off

farmers from their own crops and livestock, children from local schools and parishioners from their churches.

Unable to speak Russian, cut off from schooling and lacking a passport, those 35,000 to 40,000 Georgians who remain behind in these territories face severe discrimination, described Ms. Tskihelashvili. When Russia decided to hold elections in Abkhazia in March 2017, she stated, only 600 Georgians were permitted to vote.

Georgia's strategy is to seek a peaceful resolution, in part through demonstrating the benefits of being part of a strong and economically independent Georgia to citizens living in these annexed territories. The goal is to engage in dialogue with Abkhazia and South Ossetia, seeking pragmatic solutions to the issues they face regarding healthcare, the environment and trade. Essentially, the goal is to build trust in the services that Georgia can provide to these two regions. Georgia wants to improve the lives of the Ossetian and Abkhazian people by easing their access to the same services that Georgians enjoy, Ms. Tskihelahvili emphasized.

From its EU and NATO partners, Georgia seeks support in the form of ongoing commitment to the non-recognition of Abkhazia and South Ossetia as well as support for Georgia's reconciliation policy and confidence-building measures.

For his part, Ambassador Jankauskas spoke of the many challenges his mission faces in monitoring the implementation of the EU's Six-Point Agreement. The objective of this mission is to contribute to long-term stability throughout the entire territory of Georgia. However, members of the mission are currently being denied access to South Ossetia and Abkhazia. As a result, the mission has established three field offices along the ABL in an effort to reduce tensions and to monitor agreement compliance using a combination of open source research and deployed personnel.

According to Ambassador Jankauskas, EU compliance teams are otherwise deployed throughout Georgia and have access to that country's defence and foreign ministries as well as its State Security Service. Russia, on the other hand, has not shown the same willingness to comply with transparency measures, he said. According to Ambassador Jankauskas, Russia is engaged in continual efforts to bring the military and law enforcement structures of South Ossetia and Abkhazia under its control.

Overall, said Ambassador Jankauskas, the situation on the ground indicates that a peaceful, long-term solution remains a remote prospect and that the best the mission can do is simply manage the situation and keep incidents that regularly happen at the ABL from escalating into all-out war. By way of example, he highlighted the 19 May 2016 fatal shooting of an unarmed Georgian by an Abkhazian border guard who crossed the ABL to commit the act.

Mr. David McGuinty indicated that Canada supports Georgian territorial integrity and highlighted the economic and political sanctions it has imposed on Russia. He went on to ask what other forms of support Georgia seeks.

Responding to this question, Ms. Tsikhelashvili put forward that any programs that facilitate contacts across the ABL would be helpful. What Georgia needs, she said, is not so much ideas about how to build contacts and trade – citizens at the local level are

already eager to engage in cross-border cooperation – but, rather, reconciliation funding that would bring these ideas to life.

Beyond this targeted support, Ms. Tsikhelashvili noted that any funding for confidence-building measures, counter-narrative efforts, and trade and investment that help Georgia demonstrate the success of its democracy would be appreciated.

8. Ana NATSVLISHVILI, Chairperson, Georgian Young Lawyers' Association (GYLA) presentation on: "The Consolidation of Georgian Democracy and the Rule of Law"

Ms. Natsvlishvili focused on the challenges Georgia faces in achieving rule of law. She noted that most policy watchdogs recognize the important progress Georgia has made in this regard. However, according to Ms. Natsvlishvili, a number of important steps must be undertaken before the Georgian judicial system can be said to meet international standards. She indicated that the three key challenges that remain are: achievement of full independence, depoliticization, and professionalization.

According to Ms. Natsvlishvili, the current draft of the Georgian constitution does not provide elements necessary to overcome these three challenges. For example, she said, the constitution retains the existing opaque appointment process for judges and does not provide for a probationary period for newly appointed judges. In her view, prosecutors wield too much power and the training provided to judges falls far short of international standards.

Responding to a question posed by Mr. McGuinty about how well prepared Georgia's legal community is to navigate the legal issues surrounding foreign investment deals and free trade agreements, Ms. Natsvlishvili indicated that Georgia must create the basis for rule of law before it can achieve sustainable and equal growth.

9. Advancing Stability in the Black Sea Region: Consideration of the draft Special Report by Ulla SCHMIDT (Germany), Special Rapporteur

Emphasizing the cultural and geopolitical significance of the Black Sea region, Ms. Schmidt of Germany expressed concern that it appears to be entering a period of increased instability and confrontation. Even before Russia's 2014 annexation of Crimea, she said, there was a significant military build-up in the region. Democracy and human rights in some parts of the region have deteriorated in the face of so many frozen and unresolved conflicts.

Ms. Schmidt expressed concern that discussions on Black Sea region stability have focused exclusively on military measures. A more comprehensive approach that incorporates civilian elements such as good governance, rule of law, and promotion of human rights would be preferable, she argued. Littoral states in the Black Sea region should be encouraged to maintain a dialogue on shared issues of concern such as corruption, environmental stewardship, migration flows, and economic issues.

Senator Jane Cordy expressed concern about the loss of freedom of the press in certain member states in the Black Sea region as well as the erosion of democratic principles. She asked what role NATO has in promoting these values in this region.

10. Consideration of the Draft General Report: "The War in Syria and Iraq: Humanitarian Aspects," by Joëlle Garriaud-Maylam (France), General Rapporteur

Ms. Garriaud-Maylam of France described the harms that have been inflicted on Iraqi and Syrian civilians by conflict. The humanitarian situation in Syria is of particular concern. Seven million Syrian citizens have either become internally displaced persons or fled the country to become refugees.

Providing humanitarian aid, both within Syria and in neighbouring countries that have taken in Syrian refugees, has been challenging, she said. Funding is inadequate and an uncooperative Assad regime that has repeatedly flouted international laws has only increased the suffering.

Among other things, Ms. Garriaud-Maylam recommended that the Euro-Atlantic community honour its funding pledges and continue to exert pressure on regional actors to ensure respect of humanitarian law.

F. VIII. Panel Discussion on the Weaponisation of Social Media

11. Consideration of the draft Report of the Sub-Committee on Democratic Governance, "The Social Media Revolution: Political and Security Implications," by Senator Jane Cordy, Rapporteur

Describing her report as an introduction to the subject, Senator Cordy discussed the pervasiveness of social media in global discourse today. On the one hand, social media has enabled human and civil rights activists to bring greater attention to issues of concern. On the other hand, social media has also created the conditions for polarization and ideological segregation, she said, noting that the same algorithmic technologies that are being used to personalize news feeds are also being used to propagate fake news and to radicalize individuals to violence.

Senator Cordy urged continued study of the weaponization of social media and its malign impact on democracies.

12. Presentation by Thomas Elkjer NISSEN, Special Consultant, Royal Danish Defence College

Mr. Nissen noted how traditional and social media amplify each other, with information that arises from obscure corners of the internet, being disseminated by key online influencers, cited by traditional media outlets in stories that end up being picked up once more by social media. Very quickly, he said, it becomes difficult to achieve reliable attribution of a story's source. Recognizing the utility of this source-laundering and amplification effect, State and non-state actors have been quick to use social media to spread disinformation and propaganda.

Building resilience in the face of influence operations is essential, argued Mr. Nissen. Education in critical thinking and source examination are key elements in building this resilience, he urged, adding that a public-private partnership will be necessary to achieving progress on this issue.

Finally, the Canadian delegation had a bilateral meeting with Georgia's Foreign Minister, Mikheil Janelidze, and the ambassador designate to Canada, Konstantine Kavtaradze. The meeting provided an opportunity for the Canadian delegations to hear more about Georgia's concerns and for both sides to discuss the current and future state of Canada-Georgia relations.

Respectfully submitted,

Ms. Leona Alleslev, M.P. Chair of the Canadian NATO Parliamentary Association

Travel Costs

ASSOCIATION Canadian NATO Parliamentary Association (NATO PA)

ACTIVITY 2017 Spring Session

DESTINATION Tbilisi, Georgia

DATES May 26-29, 2017

DELEGATION

SENATE Hon. Raynell Andreychuk, Hon. Joseph A. Day, Hon. Jane

Cordy, Hon. Pierre-Hugues Boisvenu

HOUSE OF Leona Alleslev, Cheryl Gallant, David McGuinty, Rachelle

COMMONS Blaney

STAFF Jean-François Pagé, Holly Porteous

TRANSPORTATION \$ 76,148.74

ACCOMMODATION \$ 22,238.61

HOSPITALITY \$ 32.91

PER DIEMS \$ 5,934.92

OFFICIAL GIFTS \$ 0

MISCELLANEOUS \$ 161.88

TOTAL \$ 104,517.06