

Canadian NATO  
Parliamentary Association



Association parlementaire  
canadienne de l'OTAN

**Report of the Canadian Parliamentary Delegation respecting  
its participation to the 58th Annual Session  
of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly**

**Canadian NATO Parliamentary Association  
(NATO PA)**

**Prague, Czech Republic**

**November 9-12, 2012**

# Report

## INTRODUCTION

The Canadian NATO Parliamentary Association has the honour to present its report on its participation in the NATO Parliamentary Assembly's (NATO PA) 58<sup>th</sup> Annual Session in Prague, Czech Republic, 9 – 12 November 2012. The delegation was led by Association chair Mrs. Cheryl Gallant, M.P., and included from the Senate the Hon. Raynell Andreychuk, Chair of the NATO PA Political Committee, the Hon. Joseph Day, Chair of the NATO PA Defence and Security Committee, the Hon. Pierre-Claude Nolin, Treasurer of the NATO PA and Special Rapporteur for the Science and Technology Committee, the Hon. George Furey, and from the House of Commons Mr. Leon Benoit, M.P. and Chair of the NATO PA Economics and Security Committee's Subcommittee on Transatlantic Economic Relations, Mr. Terrence Young, M.P., Mrs. Susan Truppe, M.P., Mr. Jack Harris, M.P., Mr. Paul Dewar, M.P., and Ms. Christine Moore, M.P. The delegation was accompanied by Melissa Radford, the association's advisor, and association secretary Jean-Marie David.

The 58<sup>th</sup> Annual Session was hosted by the Czech parliament and chaired by Parliamentary Assembly President, Dr. Karl Lamers, Member of Parliament from Germany. More than 300 parliamentarians from NATO member countries, North Africa, the Middle East and Central Asia participated in the session.

## THE NATO PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY

The NATO Parliamentary Assembly is an inter-parliamentary organization of legislators from the national parliaments of member countries of the North Atlantic Alliance, as well as 14 associate members. It is completely independent of the official NATO structure.<sup>1</sup> As the Assembly's website notes, "Its principal objective is to foster mutual understanding among Alliance parliamentarians of the key security and defence challenges facing the transatlantic partnership."<sup>2</sup>

Canadian parliamentarians draw significant benefit from their participation in NATO PA events. In addition to gaining a better understanding of strategic issues facing the Alliance and Canada, they are presented with the opportunity to promote Canadian values and interests in the course of discussions in the Assembly, its committees and during informal meetings with their counterparts from NATO member and associate member countries.

## MAIN ISSUES

The agenda of the 58<sup>th</sup> Annual Session of the NATO PA included a number of topics that have been of interest to the NATO PA for some time and that are of importance to Canada, such as:

1. NATO operations, particularly the Afghanistan mission and counter-piracy operations off the coast of Somalia;

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<sup>1</sup> See the NATO PA, "[About the NATO Parliamentary Assembly.](#)"

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

2. Ongoing developments in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region and their implications for international security;
3. The role of women in peace and security;
4. NATO partnerships – with other states and international organizations;
5. The impact of the Euro crisis on the resources available for defence operations and procurement;
6. NATO-Russia relations;
7. The human rights situation in Ukraine;
8. Iran's nuclear program;
9. NATO enlargement; and,
10. Security issues in regions such as the South Caucasus (particularly Georgia), the Western Balkans and the Arctic.

## **NATO PA BUSINESS**

The first meeting of each Annual Session, the Standing Committee Meeting, is attended by Heads of Delegation, NATO PA Bureau members (President, Vice Presidents and Treasurer), Chairpersons of Committees and Subcommittees, and Rapporteurs only. Due to the key positions held by Canadian parliamentarians within the NATO PA, half of Canada's delegates were in attendance. The purpose of the meeting was to review the NATO PA's 2012 programme and plan for the upcoming activities in 2013. In addition, Senator Nolin, Treasurer of the NATO PA, presented his proposed budget for the NATO PA in 2013. The report was approved by the Standing Committee after a period of discussion.

## **CANADIAN DELEGATION ACTIVITIES**

Members of the Canadian delegation had the opportunity to meet with Canada's representatives in the Czech Republic, Mr. Matthew Loken, Chargé d'Affair at the Canadian Embassy and Ms. Suzanne Drisdelle-Guven, Counsellor for Commercial Affairs with the Trade Commissioner Service. They gave delegates an overview of current Canada-Czech diplomatic and trade relations as well as an update on the Czech Republic's current political and economic climate.

For Remembrance Day on November 11, the Canadian Delegation was invited by the United Kingdom Delegation to attend a Remembrance Day ceremony at the UK Embassy in Prague. Some members of the Canadian Delegation attended the ceremony while others remained at the NATO PA meetings. Those who attended the ceremony appreciated the opportunity to honour and remember Canadian veterans and all those who made the ultimate sacrifice in serving Canada in war, armed conflict and peace. It was particularly meaningful to share this time with one of Canada's closest and oldest allies.

## **COMMITTEE BUSINESS**

Before the Committee meetings began, delegates had the opportunity to meet with their counterparts from their respective political groups from across the Alliance: Conservative, Christian Democrat and Associates; Alliance of Liberals and Democrats; and, Socialist. This allowed Assembly members from similar political parties to discuss issues of mutual interest to their own parties and constituents, further solidifying the

nature of the democratic debate and parliamentary diplomacy that takes place within the NATO PA.

NATO PA Committees then met simultaneously for the next two days. During these meetings, Committees debated reports and resolutions drafted by their respective Rapporteurs and first presented at the Spring Session in Tallinn, Estonia in May 2012. These reports and resolutions were open for final amendments before being put to a vote in their respective Committees. In addition, these meetings were an opportunity for delegates to hear from academic experts as well as senior military and government officials from NATO member and partner states, from NATO headquarters and from the private sector with respect to issues of interest to the Alliance.

As Chair of the Defence and Security Committee, Senator Day presided over the Committee's discussions. The Committee heard from six speakers. The first speaker was Dr. Alexandr Vondra, the Czech Republic's Minister of Defence. He gave an overview of the principles behind Czech defence policy, European cuts to defence spending, NATO enlargement, Afghanistan and what NATO's future priorities should be. The Committee also heard from Lieutenant-General Petr Pavel, Chief of the General Staff of the Czech Republic's Armed Forces. He gave members an overview of the armed forces' implementation of the Defence White Paper, National Security Strategy and National Defence Strategy, which were all released within the last year. The Czech armed forces, which consist of the land and air forces, also underwent a major reorganisation in response to the government's fiscal austerity measures. As a result of these changes, the Czech Republic is focussing on greater multinational cooperation. Lieutenant-General Pavel noted that the country is participating in one quarter of the Smart Defence projects launched at the Chicago Summit. Next, the Committee participated in a panel discussion on NATO's role in maritime security and counter-piracy with Vice-Admiral Christian Canova, Deputy Commander of NATO Maritime Command and Mr. Patrick van Eeerten, Director of Operations at Jumbo Shipping in Rotterdam. Vice-Admiral Canova gave members an overview of recent and ongoing NATO maritime and counter-piracy operations as well as the ongoing challenges facing these efforts. Mr. Van Eeeten spoke about the piracy challenge from the business perspective particularly with respect to the decisions companies must make to ensure the safety of their personnel while abiding to international and national maritime laws. Concerns with respect to private security firms, decreasing military budgets, the rise of piracy in Yemeni waters and the lack of success in prosecuting pirates were debated in the discussion period. The Committee then heard from Dr. Alexander Cooley, Professor of Political Science at Columbia University, on Afghanistan. Dr. Cooley focussed his discussion on the country's relationship with its neighbouring states, noting China's significant economic influence in Afghanistan, India and Russia's reaction to this influence and the ongoing disputes among the Central Asian states which hinder regional political and economic cooperation. The last speaker, Dr. Benjamin Schreer, Deputy Head and Senior Lecturer at the Strategic and Defence Studies Centre at the Australian National University, gave members an overview of NATO's partnerships in the Asia-Pacific and how these relationships could be enhanced.<sup>3</sup> Three draft reports<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> For a more detailed account of the meeting and presentations, please see "[Summary of the meeting of the Defence and Security Committee.](#)"

and one draft resolution on Afghanistan were presented by their respective rapporteurs and after a period of discussion, they were adopted by Committee members with agreed upon amendments. The Committee also discussed its studies and activities for 2013 and elected Committee and Sub-Committee officers. The Canadian delegates who participated in these discussions were Mrs. Gallant, Mr. Benoit, Mr. Harris, Ms. Moore, Mrs. Truppe and Mr. Young.

As Chair of the Political Committee, Senator Andreychuk presided over the Committee's discussions. The Committee heard from three speakers. Mr. Jiri Schneider, the Czech Republic's First Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, gave an overview of the country's foreign policy and NATO priorities namely: crisis management, Smart Defence initiatives, energy security and cyber-security. He particularly emphasized the cooperation and integration among the Visegrad Group, or Visegrad 4 (V4), which consists of the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia on defence and security issues. The Committee then heard from Dr. Karl Heinz Kamp, Director of the Research Division of the NATO Defence College on the subject of NATO post-Afghanistan. He elaborated on the following challenges that NATO will have to face: decreased budgets, the US pivot towards the Asia-Pacific, a more "adversarial" Russia and instability in the MENA region. The Committee also heard from Dr. Jan Sir, Research Fellow at Charles University in Prague, who presented on "Central Asia and Transition in Afghanistan." The speaker highlighted the importance of the Central Asian states in relation to Afghanistan's future and the fact that the region has long been neglected by Western policy planners. He expressed concern that the five Central Asian states seem to be moving in five different directions when many of the challenges they face, such as the trafficking of drugs, people and weapons as well as organized crime, are transnational in nature. While Russian influence in the region is diminishing, China has been the most successful partner in terms of energy, transportation and communications. Some Middle Eastern countries are also seeking to exercise cultural influence in the region by funding a revival in Islamism.<sup>5</sup> Three draft reports<sup>6</sup> and one draft resolution were presented by their respective rapporteurs and the floor was open to final amendments from Committee members. After a period of discussion the reports and the resolution were adopted. A draft report and a draft resolution on Syria were presented by the rapporteur of the Mediterranean and Middle East Special Group, Senator Andreychuk.<sup>7</sup> Final amendments were considered and the report and the resolution were subsequently adopted. Congressman Mike Turner, Head of the US Delegation, addressed the Committee to express his concern over draft amendments to defence legislation currently before the House of Representatives which calls for a decrease in American

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<sup>4</sup> The reports are: "[Matching Capabilities to Ambitions: NATO Towards 2020](#)," "[Afghanistan: Towards 2014 and Beyond](#)," and "[The Challenge of Piracy: International Response and NATO's Role](#)." The Resolutions are available on the NATO PA website: "[2012 – Policy Recommendations](#)."

<sup>5</sup> For a more detailed account of the meeting and presentations, please see "[Summary of the meeting of the Political Committee](#)."

<sup>6</sup> The reports are: "[The Arab Spring: Implications for Euro-Atlantic Security](#)," "[Afghanistan and Southwest Asian Security](#)," and "[Budget Constraints: A challenge to Alliance Cohesion?](#)" The Resolutions are available on the NATO PA website: "[2012 – Policy Recommendations](#)."

<sup>7</sup> The report is: "[Developments in Syria: Security Implications for the Region and Beyond](#)." The Resolutions are available on the NATO PA website: "[2012 – Policy Recommendations](#)."

troops levels in Europe. He urged NATO parliamentarians to reach out to members of Congress on this issue. Finally, the Committee discussed its studies and activities for 2013 and elected Committee and Sub-Committee officers. The Canadian delegate participating in these discussions was Mr. Paul Dewar.

During the meeting of the Committee on the Civil Dimensions of Security, delegates participated in five presentations. The first was by Mr. Hamed Abdel-Samad, a German-Egyptian Political Scientist, Author and Member of the German Islam Conference. He emphasized that the Arab Spring did not automatically lead to the victory of democracy in the region but has in fact exposed the internal struggle within Arab society, both generational and ideological. Those pushing for democracy and those pushing against it are using modern means of communication to vie for power. In terms of security implications for the Euro-Atlantic community, challenges include a rise in fundamentalism as extremists take advantage of disenfranchised youth and the current political instability in the region. In addition, the Middle East Peace Process has also returned to the forefront of Arab Politics and these new governments may choose to renegotiate their peace treaties with Israel to reflect public opinion. The second presentation was entitled "Women and the Arab Spring" and was given by Mrs. Bochra Bel Haj Hmida, Co-founder and former President of the Tunisian Association of Democratic Women. She expressed concern that since the Arab Spring, women have been confronted with new challenges and risk losing their rights, which in some cases were improving even under some undemocratic regimes in the region. She told the Committee that women in the region continue to organize and defend their rights while challenging groups who are using grassroots activism in an attempt to influence public opinion and erode women's rights. Next, the Committee heard from Ms. Mari Skaare, NATO's first Special Representative for Women, Peace and Security, on the topic of "NATO's Implementation of UNSCR 1325 and Related Resolutions." She gave the Committee an overview of her role and emphasized two main messages from the UNSC Resolutions: that women are particularly vulnerable in conflict and that women play an important role in conflict resolution. Within NATO, gender advisors and experts have been retained at headquarters and in theatre (Afghanistan and Kosovo). She urged member-states to redouble their efforts to recruit and retain women in their armed forces and improve the way in which they report on gender issues. The next presenter, Mr. Ondrej Soukup, a journalist for Czech publication *Hospodarske Noviny*, spoke about Russian politics and foreign policy. He argued that the Kremlin may be worried about potentially losing control domestically due to recent erratic actions and increased measures to quell opposition. The Kremlin has also been investing heavily in its military industrial base with the goal of securing jobs for an important electoral base. In terms of foreign policy, the speaker noted the Kremlin will likely continue to rally support from the population by portraying Russia as a besieged fortress which impacts the way in which the regime engages internationally. He argued that the ultimate goal of Russian foreign policy is to prevent outside interference in the country's internal affairs. The last speaker was Dr. Rolf Schwarz, Political Officer in the Middle East and North Africa Section in NATO. He gave the Committee an overview of the increased engagement between NATO and countries in the MENA region through the Mediterranean Dialogue Work Programme and the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative's Menu of Practical Cooperation. He emphasized the need for the Alliance to be cautious as it engages with the region to

avoid being misperceived as intrusive or opportunistic in this period of change and instability.<sup>8</sup> The Committee's rapporteurs presented their respective draft reports<sup>9</sup> and resolutions and opened the floor to final amendments from other members. All were subsequently adopted. Finally, the Committee discussed its studies and activities for 2013 and elected Committee and Sub-Committee officers. The Canadian delegates who participated in the discussions were Mrs. Gallant, Senator Day, and Mr. Benoit.

During the meeting of the Science and Technology Committee, delegates heard from two speakers. The first speaker was Colonel Vratislav Osvald, Director of the Training, Exercises and Education Department at the NATO Joint Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN) Defence Centre of Excellence located in the Czech Republic. He gave the Committee an overview of the mission, priorities and projects of the Centre of Excellence, which was stood up in 2007. He discussed some challenges facing the Alliance which include information collection and sharing among allies and partners as well as the need for civilian and military organizations to increase cooperation on mitigating CBRN incidents. Next, the Committee heard from Mr. Achim Maas from the Institute for Advanced Sustainability Studies in Potsdam, Germany. He gave the Committee a stark reminder of how climate change has multiple effects on security – global warming, rising sea levels and an increase in the frequency and intensity of natural disasters have the potential to impact food, environmental and even territorial security – and gave concrete examples where regional security challenges are currently being triggered by climate change, namely in the Arctic, Central Asia, the MENA region and in Africa. As environmental issues could enflame conflicts, adequate political responses to climate change must therefore be in place to resolve them. The speaker expressed frustration at the lack of political will internationally to deal with climate change.<sup>10</sup> The Committee's rapporteurs, including Senator Nolin, presented their respective draft reports<sup>11</sup> and draft resolution which were adopted after the Committee considered final amendments. Finally, the Committee discussed its studies and activities for 2013 and elected Committee and Sub-Committee officers. Senator Furey was elected as an alternate member of the Ukraine-NATO Interparliamentary Council. Canadian delegates participating in the Science and Technology Committee's meetings included Senator Nolin, Senator Day, Senator Furey, Mr. Dewar, Mrs. Truppe and Mr. Young.

During the meeting of the Economics and Security Committee, the Committee heard from three speakers. The first speaker was Mr. Pavel Kohout, the Director of Strategy at a company called Partners; he is also a member of the National Economic Council of

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<sup>8</sup> For a more detailed account of the meeting and presentations, please see "[Summary of the meeting of the Committee on the Civil Dimension of Security.](#)"

<sup>9</sup> The reports are: "[Consolidating the Revolutions in North Africa](#)," "[The Forces of Change and Continuity in Russia: Domestic and International Implications](#)," and "[The Movement of People Across the Mediterranean: New Trends and Challenges](#)." The Resolutions are available on the NATO PA website: "[2012 – Policy Recommendations](#)."

<sup>10</sup> For a more detailed account of the meeting and presentations, please see "[Summary of the meeting of the Science and Technology Committee.](#)"

<sup>11</sup> The reports are: "[Nuclear Energy after Fukushima](#)," "[The Iranian Nuclear Programme: Gauging Iran's Intentions](#)," and "[Unmanned Aerial Vehicles: Opportunities and Challenges for the Alliance](#)." The Resolutions are available on the NATO PA website: "[2012 – Policy Recommendations](#)."

the Government of the Czech Republic. He discussed some of the root causes behind the Euro crisis and proposed several policies he thought were integral to Europe's economic recovery. The second presentation was by Mr. Mats Karlsson, Director of the Center for Mediterranean Integration. He spoke about what the MENA region and Europe could do to facilitate the economic integration of the MENA region into the European and global economies. He emphasised that, particularly at this time of political transition, bottom-up approaches, the development of civil society structures including professional communities, and the need for Europe to address its trade barriers are all crucial to the region's economic development. The last speaker was Dr. Benjamin Schreer, Deputy Head and Senior Lecturer at the Strategic and Defence Studies Centre at the Australian National University, on the topic of Afghanistan. He touched on governance and economic issues as well as the progress made with the Afghan National Army and the support the Allies will have to continue to provide for them post-2014.<sup>12</sup> The Committee's Rapporteurs presented two reports and two resolutions.<sup>13</sup> After considering final amendments, the reports and the resolutions were adopted. Congressman Mike Turner, Head of the US Delegation to the NATO PA, addressed the Committee to express his concern over draft amendments to defence legislation currently before the House of Representatives which calls for a decrease in American troops levels in Europe. He urged NATO parliamentarians to reach out to members of Congress on this issue. Finally, the Committee discussed its studies and activities for 2013. Mr. Benoit, Chair of the Committee's Subcommittee on Transatlantic Economic Relations, provided a summary of the future activities of the Subcommittee. One member stressed how interesting the Subcommittee's visit to Alberta and British Columbia in July 2011 had been. The Committee then elected Committee and Subcommittee officers. Canadian delegates participating in these discussions included Mr. Benoit and Senator Furey.

## PLENARY SITTING

The plenary sitting took place on the final day of meetings. Dr. Karl Lamers, President of the NATO PA, opened the sitting and gave his final speech as NATO PA president. He congratulated the Czech Parliament for hosting a successful Annual Session – held in the very same conference centre where Prague hosted the NATO Summit ten years ago in 2002. He gave an overview of the highlights of his tenure as NATO PA President, noting that he was the first president to visit Kirghizstan, that he enhanced the Assembly's ties with Russian parliamentarians and that he improved communication between the Assembly and NATO itself. He also spoke of challenges ahead namely Afghanistan, Syria, Ukraine and future NATO enlargement. He thanked his colleagues for their unwavering support throughout his presidency, particularly Senator Nolin, Treasurer of the NATO PA, who he described as a great friend and confidant.

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<sup>12</sup> For a more detailed account of the meeting and presentations, please see "[Summary of the meeting of the Economics and Security Committee.](#)"

<sup>13</sup> The titles of these draft reports are: "[Arctic Economic Opportunities, Environmental Obligations and Security Stakes](#)," "[The Arab spring: Economic Dimensions and Challenges](#)," and "[The Sources and Implications of the Euro crisis](#)." The Resolutions are available on the NATO PA website: "[2012 – Policy Recommendations](#)."



Delegates had the opportunity to hear from the President of the Czech Senate, the Speaker of the Czech Chamber of Deputies, and the Prime Minister of the Czech Republic. Mr. Milan Stech, President of the Czech Senate, spoke about the mutually beneficial relationship of NATO and the EU and addressed issues pertaining to the country's decrease in defence spending. Mrs. Miroslava Nemcova, Speaker of the Czech Chamber of Deputies, also addressed the issue of the country's decreased defence spending noting that at this point in time, defence and security are not priorities for the Czech people. Instead, her citizens are focussed on social policy, pensions and economic policy at this time of crisis. She acknowledged the important role the NATO PA plays as a forum to discuss all these issues of importance to the Alliance. Prime Minister Petr Necas noted that as an MP, before becoming Prime Minister, he was a member of the NATO PA and was therefore delighted to host his colleagues in Prague. He focussed his comments on how Allies could work together with respect to defence procurement, logistics and exercises. He emphasized the importance of including defence industries when moving forward on multinational defence cooperation. Afghanistan will remain the Czech Republic's operational priority. Once the Czech military transfers responsibility of its Provincial Reconstruction Team over to Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) in 2013, it will focus on training the ANSF and providing helicopter support.

Next, NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen addressed the Assembly. He reflected on the 2002 NATO Summit in Prague which he attended as Prime Minister of Denmark and recalled that it was a landmark Summit as it marked the biggest intake of new NATO members into the Alliance to date. He expressed concern about the decline in defence spending across the Alliance and identified three serious gaps: a decrease in defence capabilities means a decrease in the ability of the Alliance to act; an increase in the transatlantic gap with respect to defence spending puts the Alliance at risk as it causes the US to question its commitment to NATO; and, an increase in defence expenditures by other powers lessens the influence NATO has on the world stage. He urged parliamentarians to explain to their constituents the reality of security: that freedom does not come for free.

In the spirit of NATO enlargement and the Alliance's open door policy which marked the 2002 NATO Summit in Prague, delegates had the opportunity to hear from Mr. Filip Vujanovic, President of the Republic of Montenegro, Mr. Bozo Ljubic, Speaker of the House of Representatives of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Mr. Nikola Gruevski, President of the Government of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, and Mr. Mikheil Saakashvili, President of the Republic of Georgia. Each statesman gave an overview of the progress his country has made in meeting the Alliance's requirements for accession and also addressed challenges that remain.

The Assembly then elected a new President, Mr. Hugh Bailey, from the United Kingdom. After he addressed the Assembly, delegates elected five Vice-Presidents, including Mrs. Gallant, Chair of the Canadian delegation.

Senator Nolin, Treasurer of the NATO PA, presented the draft Budget of the Assembly for 2013. He noted in his presentation that he has taken a number of measures to save money, namely, reducing Assembly Sessions by one day and encouraging Committees to conduct visits jointly. The 2013 Budget was adopted by the Assembly.

Resolutions that were adopted in Committee were then brought forward for adoption by the Assembly as a whole.<sup>14</sup> Senator Andreychuk, rapporteur for Mediterranean and Middle East Special Group, presented her resolution on *Developments in Syria: Security Implications for the Region and Beyond*. After a period of discussion, the resolution was adopted by the Assembly.

In closing, Dr. Lamers thanked the Czech Delegation, its staff, the staff of the two Chambers of the Czech Parliament, the International Secretariat, and all others who were instrumental in the Session's success.<sup>15</sup>

## SUMMARY

The NATO PA provides Canadian parliamentarians with an opportunity to learn about the broader strategic issues facing the Alliance, which have an impact on Canada's national security and defence. It also gives them an attentive international forum in which to promote Canadian values and interests in the course of discussions and debates about future Alliance policy and strategy. As this report indicates, the 2012 Annual Session was no exception, offering Canadian delegates many opportunities to shape the outcome of discussions, convey a Canadian perspective on key issues of concern, and gain a better understanding of strategic issues facing Canada, the Alliance and Canada's partner countries.

First and foremost, NATO PA members had the opportunity to learn more about the Czech Republic's commitment to international peace and security. As was noted throughout the session, it was quite significant for Prague to host the Annual Session of the NATO PA in the same location where it hosted a landmark NATO Summit 10 years ago. Czech parliamentarians and high-level government officials who addressed the Assembly noted that the country's defence spending has decreased significantly, from 2% of GDP to just above 1%. This, unfortunately, was necessary as a result of the current economic climate. The Czech Republic, however, is committed to maintaining its core capabilities which include transport helicopters, CBRN expertise and its special forces. The Canadian delegation invited the Czech Delegation to a bilateral meeting where parliamentarians discussed issues of mutual interest including Afghanistan, defence procurement and the role of Parliament in defence decision-making. As a result of these meeting, the Canadian delegates gained a greater appreciation for its Central European ally.

Overall, the NATO PA appreciates the opportunity to participate in the process of monitoring the implementation of the new strategic concept by NATO, particularly with respect to Smart Defence and multinational cooperation where necessary and appropriate. All members of the NATO PA continue to be concerned about how the economic crisis is affecting their countries' economies and what this ultimately means for the ability of NATO to fulfill its mandate as well as its current and future responsibilities. The political uprisings in the Middle East and North Africa continue to be priorities for the NATO PA as it explores how it can engage with their respective

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<sup>14</sup> The Resolutions adopted by the Assembly are available on the NATO PA website: "[2012 – Policy Recommendations.](#)"

<sup>15</sup> For the complete minutes of the Plenary Session, please see "[Summary - Plenary Sitting.](#)"

transitional governments on democratic development. Afghanistan, particularly NATO's current transition mission and the dynamics in the region that impact on the country's future stability, continues to be a primary focus. Delegates also had the opportunity to learn more about how NATO is implementing United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 and other related Resolutions on Women, Peace and Security.

Canada continues to have important interests in all these issues.

Respectfully submitted,

Cheryl Gallant, M.P., Chair  
Canadian NATO Parliamentary Association (NATO PA)

## Travel Costs

<b>ASSOCIATION</b>	Canadian NATO Parliamentary Association (NATO PA)
<b>ACTIVITY</b>	The 58th Annual Session of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly
<b>DESTINATION</b>	Prague, Czech Republic
<b>DATES</b>	November 9-12, 2012S
<b>DELEGATION</b>	
<b>SENATE</b>	The Honourable Pierre Claude Nolin, Senator The Honourable Raynell Andreychuk, Senator The Honourable George Furey, Senator The Honourable Joseph A. Day, Senator
<b>HOUSE OF COMMONS</b>	Mrs. Cheryl Gallant, M.P. Mrs. Susan Truppe, M.P. Mr. Leon Benoit, M.P. Mr. Terrence Young, M.P. Ms. Christine Moore, M.P. Mr. Jack Harris, M.P. Mr. Paul Dewar, M.P. Hon. John McKay, M.P.
<b>STAFF</b>	Ms. Melissa Radford, Analyst Mr. Jean-Marie David, Executive Secretary
<b>TRANSPORTATION</b>	<b>\$58,377.27</b>
<b>ACCOMMODATION</b>	<b>\$11,781.78</b>

<b>HOSPITALITY</b>	<b>\$343.18</b>
<b>PER DIEMS</b>	<b>\$7,076.81</b>
<b>OFFICIAL GIFTS</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>
<b>MISCELLANEOUS / REGISTRATION FEES</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$77,579.04</b>