



NEWS RELEASE

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Canadian NATO Parliamentary Association meets with NATO and European Union officials, and members of the North Atlantic Council

From 20 to 22 February 2023, [Julie Dzerowicz](#), MP, Chair of the Canadian NATO Parliamentary Association, led a delegation to Brussels, Belgium, to participate in the 2023 Annual Joint Meetings of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization Parliamentary Assembly's (NATO PA's or the Assembly's) Defence and Security, Economics and Security, and Political committees. The other delegates were Senators [Pierre-Hugues Boisvenu](#), [Clément Gignac](#) and [Mohamed-Iqbal Ravalia](#), and MPs [Rachel Blaney](#), [Cheryl Gallant](#), the Honourable [Steven MacKinnon](#), PC and [Christine Normandin](#).

In addition to work undertaken during the Joint Committee meetings themselves, as a NATO PA Vice-President ex-officio, Julie Dzerowicz also participated in the drafting of a NATO PA Bureau [statement](#) on the war in Ukraine, which was released on 24 February 2023. This statement underlined that the NATO PA is "united and resolute in [its] unreserved condemnation of Russia's aggression and criminal actions and in [its] steadfast support for Ukraine in words and in deeds." It also indicated the NATO PA's commitment to mobilizing support from parliaments in NATO member countries for "increasing and speeding up the delivery of military, financial, humanitarian, training and intelligence support to Ukraine."

The main purpose of the 2023 Annual Joint Committee meetings, which were also attended by the officers of the Democracy and Security, and the Science and Technology committees – was to allow delegates to be briefed by officials and discuss the key challenges facing NATO. This visit to Brussels marked the first time that the Canadian delegation has participated in the Annual Joint Meetings in person since 2020.

During the 2023 Annual Joint Committee meetings, approximately 120 legislators from 28 NATO member countries and Sweden had [discussions](#) with NATO, European Union (EU), and government officials. Delegates also met with, and questioned, NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg and other members of the North Atlantic Council, which comprises representatives from NATO's 30 member countries. During a 20 February 2023 meeting with NATO PA President Joëlle Garriaud-Maylam, NATO

Secretary General Stoltenberg [remarked](#) that the NATO PA “provides a vital link between the Alliance and parliamentarians, helping to build awareness and understanding of NATO policies.”

The 2023 Annual Joint Meetings dealt with a variety of issues that confront NATO as its member countries both implement decisions taken during the 2022 NATO Madrid Summit and negotiate priorities leading up to the 2023 NATO Vilnius Summit. The issues included:

- Russia’s illegal war against Ukraine;
- NATO’s response to new and emerging security and defence challenges;
- China’s assertiveness and the Indo-Pacific region;
- Allied efforts to counter foreign manipulation and interference;
- the EU’s climate and energy policies; and
- nuclear policies and deterrence.

The Annual Joint Meetings were held during the week that saw Russia’s full-scale and illegal war of aggression in Ukraine enter its second year, leading delegates to focus on further actions that NATO member countries could take to assist Ukraine in defending itself and recapturing its territory. They also discussed the steps that NATO member countries are taking to strengthen their own deterrence and defence posture in such locations as NATO’s Eastern Flank, where Canada leads a multinational battle group in Latvia.

Finally, as part of its preparations for the Annual Joint Meetings, the delegation first met with Canada’s Permanent Representative to NATO, Ambassador David Angell, and Canada’s Deputy Military Representative to NATO, Colonel Richard Pamplin. Delegates were briefed on key issues facing NATO and on Canadian priorities.

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