



## NEWS RELEASE

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October 17, 2023

### **The Canadian NATO Parliamentary Association attends the 69<sup>th</sup> Annual Session of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization Parliamentary Assembly in Copenhagen**

From 6 to 9 October 2023, [Julie Dzerowicz](#), MP, Chair of the Canadian NATO Parliamentary Association, led a delegation to Copenhagen, Denmark to participate in the 69<sup>th</sup> Annual Session of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization Parliamentary Assembly (NATO PA, or the Assembly). The other delegates were Senators [Pierre-Hugues Boisvenu](#), [Donna Dasko](#) and [Rebecca Patterson](#), and MPs [Rachel Blaney](#), [Frank Caputo](#), [Darren Fisher](#), [Cheryl Gallant](#) and [Kristina Michaud](#).

The 69<sup>th</sup> Annual Session brought together more than 270 legislators from 31 NATO member countries and 25 partners to discuss a number of defence and security issues affecting NATO, including the current war in Ukraine and NATO's deterrence and defence posture along its Eastern Flank.

During the meetings of the NATO PA's [five thematic committees](#), delegates discussed and adopted 17 draft reports on a wide range of defence and security issues. Throughout 2023, Ms. Dzerowicz, MP, served as a special rapporteur for the Committee on Democracy and Security's report on [food security and conflict](#), which the Committee adopted unanimously at the 69<sup>th</sup> Annual Session. Ms. Dzerowicz, MP, will continue serve as a special rapporteur for that Committee in 2024.

Each NATO PA committee also held elections for committee and sub-committee chairs, vice-chairs and rapporteurs. Ms. Gallant, MP, was elected as the Chair of the Political Committee's Sub-Committee on Transatlantic Relations, Senator Patterson was elected as a vice-chair of the Defence and Security Committee's Sub-Committee on Future Security and Defence Capabilities, and Senator Cordy, was acclaimed as a vice-chair of the Committee on Democracy and Security's Sub-Committee on Resilience and Civil Security.

At the plenary sitting, delegates debated and adopted the following six resolutions :

- [Protecting Allied Democracies and Partners from Disinformation](#) that, among other matters, urges NATO governments and parliaments to

strengthen their efforts to address and counter disinformation, while “guaranteeing respect for freedom of expression.”

- [Implementing NATO’s New Deterrence and Defence Baseline](#) that, among other matters, acknowledges NATO member countries’ commitment to spend at least 2% of their national gross domestic product on defence.
- [Strengthening Stability and Security in the Black Sea Region](#) that, among other matters, calls on NATO governments and parliaments to implement “fully and effectively” the decisions taken by Allied leaders at the 2022 Madrid and 2023 Vilnius Summits to “establish a new baseline for NATO’s enhanced deterrence and defence posture” along the Alliance’s Eastern Flank.
- [Towards the Reconstruction of Ukraine](#) that, among other matters, refers to Russian attacks and other acts of violence against civilians and critical infrastructure in Ukraine as “war crimes,” urging NATO governments and parliaments to ensure that Russia is held accountable for those crimes, as well as for crimes against humanity and “reported acts of genocide.”
- [Delivering on the Vilnius Summit Decisions: Accelerating NATO’s Adaptation, Supporting Ukraine](#) that, among other matters, reaffirms the Assembly’s support for Ukraine, and the Alliance’s “360-degree approach” to address a wide a range of defence and security issues This resolution also calls on NATO governments and parliaments to support the work of the NATO Centre of Excellence for Climate Change and Security, which will be located in Montreal, Canada.
- [Enhancing the Protection of Allied Critical Maritime Infrastructure](#) that, among other matters, urges NATO governments and parliaments to continue enhancing their efforts to protect critical maritime infrastructure.

A number of individuals addressed the plenary, including Mette Frederiksen, Prime Minister of Denmark; Volodymyr Zelenskyy, President of Ukraine; Ruslan Stefanchuk, Chairman of the Ukrainian Parliament; Mircea Geoană, NATO Deputy Secretary General; General Philippe Lavigne, NATO Supreme Allied Commander Transformation; and Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya, the Opposition Leader of Belarus and the recipient of the NATO PA’s 2023 Women for Peace and Security Award. Furthermore, delegates elected a new NATO PA president at the plenary sitting, with Michał Szczerba of Poland being chosen to succeed French Senator Joëlle Garriaud-Maylam.

During the questions and comments portion of the plenary sitting, Ms. Dzerowicz, MP, [opened her remarks](#) by stating that Canada “unequivocally condemns the [recent] multi-front terrorist attack [carried out] against Israeli citizens by Hamas.” Ms. Dzerowicz, MP, then asked NATO Deputy Secretary General Geoană to explain what steps were being taken to seek a new agreement that would allow grain exports from Ukrainian ports in the Black Sea region, following Russia’s July 2023 withdrawal from the Black Sea Grain Initiative. As well, reaffirming Canada’s steadfast support for Ukraine, Ms. Dzerowicz asked General Lavigne to share any lessons that NATO has learnt from the war in Ukraine.

While in Copenhagen, the Canadian delegation held bilateral meetings with Finnish, Latvian and Swedish delegates. They also met with Denis Robert, Canada's Ambassador to the Kingdom of Denmark, to discuss, among other matters, bilateral relations.

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