

Canadian NATO
Parliamentary Association



Association parlementaire
canadienne de l'OTAN

**Report of the Canadian Parliamentary Delegation respecting
its participation in the Joint Meeting of the Defence and
Security, Economics and Security, and Political Committees**

Canadian NATO Parliamentary Association (NATO PA)

**Brussels, Belgium
February 16 to 18, 2014**

Report

Introduction

The Canadian Delegation to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization Parliamentary Assembly (NATO PA) has the honour to present its report on the Joint Meeting of the Defence and Security, Economics and Security and Political Committees, held in Brussels, Belgium on 16-18 February 2014. Canada was represented by Mrs. Cheryl Gallant, M.P., Head of the Canadian Delegation, Senator Raynell Andreychuk, Senator Joseph A. Day, Leon Benoit, M.P., Lavar Payne, M.P., Jack Harris, M.P., and Paul Dewar, M.P. The Delegation was accompanied by Ms. Melissa Radford, Association Advisor from the Library of Parliament.

The main purpose of the annual joint committee meetings in Brussels, which also include the officers of the Committee on the Civil Dimensions of Security and the Science and Technology Committee, is to provide delegates with an update on the Alliance's activities and operations from senior bureaucrats and military officers working at NATO headquarters. Canadian delegates also met with the NATO Secretary General, Anders Fogh Rasmussen, and were briefed by Canada's Permanent Representative to NATO, Mr. Yves Brodeur.

The meetings in Brussels were conducted under the Chatham House rule.

Summary of Discussion

Delegates attended ten sessions where they heard from senior civilian officials and senior military personnel from NATO headquarters, senior officials from the European External Action Service (EEAS), as well as various Permanent Representatives to NATO. As former Chairman of the Defence and Security Committee, Senator Day was asked to chair one session of the Defence and Security Committee and one session of the Economic and Security Committee on behalf of two colleagues who were unavailable for the meetings.

Topics of discussion included the Alliance's priorities for the upcoming NATO Summit: Afghanistan, defence capabilities and transatlantic relations, as well as an update on ongoing NATO operations, partnerships, NATO enlargement, emerging security challenges, the current situation in Ukraine and NATO-Russia relations. The following sections summarize the key elements of these discussions.

NATO Summit 2014

Delegates were told that 2014 is a pivotal year for NATO. The Summit, which will take place in September of this year, will address the Alliance's future, particularly with respect to Afghanistan, defence capabilities, and transatlantic relations.

This year marks the end of the NATO combat mission in Afghanistan. There are ten months left to the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) mission and there are currently 50,000 troops from 49 nations remaining in the country. Since 2011, ISAF has been gradually transferring the responsibility for security in the country to the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF). Though the ANSF have become increasingly capable, they will still require support in terms of training and financing in future years. To date, a Bilateral Security Agreement between the Governments of Afghanistan and the United States and a Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA) between the Government of Afghanistan and NATO have yet to be signed – these are necessary precursors to the United States (U.S.) and NATO maintaining a military presence in the country. The SOFA would permit NATO to begin its follow-on mission, RESOLUTE SUPPORT, to train, advise and assist the ANSF. Furthermore, following the April elections in Afghanistan, NATO and the NATO PA will be engaging with a new president and new legislators – an additional consideration as the allies realign their relations with the country's future government and parliament.

Delegates were told that the effects of the economic crisis on members have resulted in a \$40 billion cut to allied national defence budgets in the last year, raising concerns with respect to the future of NATO's defence capabilities. Though the ISAF mission was an important driver for the Alliance with respect to ensuring allied and partner capabilities were interoperable, the mission also consumed a large amount of resources. Now that the mission is ending, it is clear that the Alliance will need to recalibrate its capabilities and look to current and future needs, particularly as national governments retract their forces and defence budgets after 12 years of heavy operational tempo. At the same time, the Alliance needs to be prepared for the next security challenge. As one official stated, the Alliance is transitioning from "NATO deployed" to "NATO ready." While NATO realizes that defence spending competes with other much needed government spending, the organization is responsible for ensuring that these cuts do not result in a long-term security gap and officials expressed their concern with having to do much more with much less. At the 2010 NATO Summit in Chicago, allies agreed to a number of initiatives, such as NATO forces 2020, Smart Defence, and the Connected Forces Initiative, in order to prioritize and acquire its future defence capabilities in the most cost effective way possible while strengthening interoperability among allies and partners. Canadian delegates asked that NATO ensure that the UN Security Council Resolutions on Women, Peace and Security are implemented throughout its projects where appropriate.

The NATO Summit in September will be an opportunity for member-states to shape "Future NATO," which includes investing in the appropriate capabilities, maintaining interoperable forces, and strengthening cooperation with partners to shape a NATO able to meet future challenges. Delegates were told that one the Alliance's priorities, after 12 years of predominantly counter-insurgency operations, is to re-establish the Alliance's ability to counter the full spectrum of threats, from high intensity combat to crisis management operations. Therefore, it seeks the capabilities and capacity necessary to

accomplish this rebalancing. The Alliance has determined that its priorities include intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR), ballistic missile defence, cyber-defence and maritime security. Canadian delegates observed that the Alliance will need to take into consideration the rapid change in technology as it prioritizes its future defence capabilities. For instance, technology can increasingly be used for force protection, such as in counter-IED scenarios, and NATO will be required to integrate these innovations into the battlefield. In addition, Canadian delegates agreed with NATO officials who stated that efforts to maintain readiness and interoperability among allies and partners through training and exercises should remain a key priority. In fact, delegates were told that allies are likely to agree on a large scale exercise for 2015 at this year's Summit. NATO officials highlighted the importance of synchronized communications and information systems across the Alliance. This does not require all allies to have the same equipment, but standardization across platforms is essential. Canadian delegates urged that before any given mission, NATO needs to have better knowledge as to whether or not communications across Alliance platforms are interoperable.

Reductions in defence spending have also resulted in an imbalance with respect to burden sharing between American and European allies. This imbalance has perpetuated a negative narrative with respect to transatlantic relations, with critics pointing to what appears to be Europe turning inward and the U.S. turning to the Pacific. In contrast, there has been an increase in economic cooperation between the U.S. and Europe as exemplified by the launch of negotiations for a U.S.-Europe free trade agreement. In addition, NATO continues to be the forum where North American and European allies discuss defence and security challenges in an increasingly unstable regional and international environment. An American official made his country's commitment to NATO very clear, stating that there is no other political and military alliance in the world like NATO and its investments to the Alliance, particularly with respect to ballistic missile defence, are key indicators that the U.S. still considers European security to be a critical component of its own security. It is expected that allies will take the opportunity at this year's Summit to re-energize and mark their continued commitment to the transatlantic bond.

Finally, the NATO Summit in September 2014 will be NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen's last summit and an opportunity will be taken to appoint a new secretary general for the Alliance. This new appointment coincides with that of a new president and 27 new commissioners of the European Commission, the European Union's (EU) executive body. How this leadership change in Europe will affect transatlantic relations and the relationship between NATO and the EU will be of considerable interest to Canada and its allies.

Partnerships

NATO officials emphasized the importance of partnerships between NATO and non-Alliance states as well as with regional and international organizations. NATO has worked with non-Alliance states such as Australia, New Zealand, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates, to name a few, in operations in Afghanistan and Libya. These partnerships not only help with burden sharing, but also give the Alliance situational awareness of regions outside of North America and Europe where crises may erupt. The Alliance is looking to strengthen these partnerships and build new ones. In this context, the contribution to the

ISAF mission by 21 partner states resulted in peak interoperability and cohesiveness among allied and partner militaries, particularly with respect to counter-insurgency operations, and among air and land forces. Maintaining these hard-earned gains is a priority for the Alliance. NATO also seeks to strengthen its partnership with regional organizations such as the EU and the African Union (AU), as well as with international organizations, namely the United Nations (UN). With respect to NATO's relationship with the EU, practical cooperation occurs in theatre – for instance in counter-piracy operations off the Horn of Africa and in the Balkans. However, a lot more cooperation and coordination could occur if differences at the political level were resolved. Tensions between Turkey and Cyprus continue to be an irritant and hinder the two organizations from jointly addressing issues of mutual concern, such as crisis prevention and management. Other opportunities hindered by these tensions include the pooling and sharing of defence resources, particularly capabilities that have a dual (civilian and military) use, such as drones, air-to-air refuelling and satellites.

Delegates were told that the relationship between NATO and the AU is improving. The AU is quite "NATO-shy;" therefore, the Alliance has had limited engagement in that continent. Canadian delegates were interested to know if the Alliance had been asked to support the stabilization efforts in the Central African Republic. Though NATO has not been asked for any concrete assistance, the EU is active in the country through its own military operation.

NATO is also strengthening its partnership with the UN. For instance, it is currently working with the UN on counter-terrorism and assisting it with counter-improvised explosive device (IED) training.

Some of NATO's most important partners are the states that are aspiring to join the Alliance: Montenegro, Georgia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. NATO has a strong military to military relationship with the four aspirant nations whose soldiers have been trained by NATO forces and have contributed to the ISAF mission. Though the current aspirant states have yet to meet NATO's standards for accession, NATO is actively assisting them in meeting the criteria.

The Situation in Ukraine

At the time of these NATO PA meetings, the situation in Ukraine was becoming increasingly worrisome. Delegates were told that Ukraine currently sits at a crossroads, not between East and West, but between its past and its future. To expect the country to unequivocally choose between Europe and Russia is to misunderstand the realities of its identity. EU officials expressed their disappointment and surprise at Ukraine's sudden, last minute decision to dissolve the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement that had been supported by its highest levels of government during seven years of negotiations and followed a few days later, by an agreement by Ukraine to accept a US\$15 billion deal from Russia. Officials explained that Russia could have used all its power and influence to derail the negotiations over the preceding years, but undermined the process with the use of disincentives in the last months leading up to the anticipated signing of the association agreement. Furthermore, throughout the negotiations, Russia had not requested any consultations. The reason for Russia's sudden manoeuvre was attributed to a change in policy to now push its desire for a Eurasian Union to top priority and, therefore, to

assemble the most number of partners possible. Though the EU has no objections to Russia establishing a Eurasian Union, it stresses that fundamentally any decision by states to join such a union should be based on their free will and sovereign choice. For instance, the EU is not an empire, but a collection of sovereign states. Canadian delegates agreed with EU officials who stated that it is not solely western Ukrainians who want closer relations with Europe and propagating these inaccurate divisions is dangerous and could potentially fragment the country even further.

Though Ukraine had decided it would not seek to become a NATO member, NATO-Ukraine relations have strengthened over the years both politically, through the NATO-Ukraine Commission, and militarily, through various defence and security cooperation initiatives. For instance, Ukrainian troops are all trained to NATO standards and have contributed to every NATO operation, including the ISAF mission. Even throughout this current crisis, NATO officials expressed that it was important that these political and military channels with Ukraine remain open and strong. Canadian delegates pointed to a crucial fact that the Ukrainian military was not involved in suppressing the protests and troops have remained in their barracks. NATO officials voiced their appreciation to the NATO PA for its continued diplomacy with Ukrainian parliamentarians.

NATO-Russia Relations

Events in Ukraine made the discussion on NATO-Russia relations all the more timely. NATO officials stated that NATO and Russia cooperate on many fronts including in Afghanistan, in Kaliningrad (where NATO is assisting with the disposal of obsolete munitions) and in research and development, particularly with respect to counter-terrorism technology. However, NATO does have various concerns. For a while, there were two camps within the Alliance: allies who were skeptical of Russia's intentions and those who were more optimistic about the relationship. Officials noted that those who were more optimistic are becoming more skeptical and are now taking a more realistic view. Delegates were told that Russia is focussed on two spheres of influence: Eastern Europe and Central Asia. Countries like Ukraine, Moldova, Belarus, Georgia and the Central Asian states continue to face considerable pressure from Russia. Other challenges in NATO-Russia relations include tense discussions over ballistic missile defence and nuclear weapons, as well as the lack of transparency with respect to Russia's military exercises. Despite these concerns, the NATO-Russia Council remains the only cooperative mechanisms between the West and Russia and allows for continued cooperation on issues of mutual concern and dialogue on more difficult matters.

Emerging Security Challenges

Delegates received a briefing on the emerging threats that NATO must be prepared to counter. With respect to cyber-security, NATO officials noted that the cyber-attacks against Estonia and Georgia were a wake-up call. In 2011, NATO released its cyber policy priorities, one of which was to place all NATO websites – over 50 in all – under centralised protection. As of October 2013, this was achieved. With respect to cyber-defence and Article 5, NATO maintains that the collective defence provision remains the same for a cyber-attack as it would be for a conventional attack. This means that a cyber-attack against an ally could result in the Alliance invoking Article 5 and subsequently

countering with a political, cyber or military response. The invocation of Article 5 and any response would be political decisions taken at the time of the attack. According to officials, there is no reason for the Alliance to revisit or redefine how Article 5 could be used in the event of a cyber-attack; the ambiguity of Article 5 gives the Alliance the flexibility it requires to respond to any type of attack.

With respect to terrorism, officials spoke about the arc of instability from Mali to Pakistan, including the challenge of Al-Qaeda spreading and franchising in the Maghreb, Somalia, Syria and Pakistan. Allies are particularly concerned about the consequences with respect to their own national security when their own citizens, who have become foreign fighters, return home. Canadian delegates expressed their frustration with respect to the lack of humanitarian assistance in Syria. They thanked their Turkish counterparts for keeping the pressure on the Alliance and the international community to find a political solution to the conflict and for taking responsibility for the hundreds of thousands of Syrian “guests” currently taking refuge in Turkey.

Conclusion

The annual joint committee meetings in Brussels offer Canada’s delegates the opportunity to have in-depth discussions with senior officials at NATO and the EU and with parliamentarians from NATO member-states on current defence and economic priorities pertinent to the Alliance. Topics covered by the presentations included the Alliance’s priorities for the upcoming NATO Summit: Afghanistan, defence capabilities and transatlantic relations, as well as an update on ongoing NATO operations, partnerships, NATO enlargement, emerging security challenges, the current situation in Ukraine and NATO-Russia relations. Canada continues to have significant interests in all these issues.

Respectfully submitted,

The Honourable Raynell Andreychuk, Senator
Canadian NATO Parliamentary Association

Travel Costs

ASSOCIATION	Canadian NATO Parliamentary Association (NATO PA)
ACTIVITY	Joint Meeting of the Defence and Security, Economics and Security, and Political Committees
DESTINATION	Brussels, Belgium
DATES	February 16 to 18, 2014
DELEGATION	
SENATE	Hon. Raynell Andreychuk, Senator Hon. Joseph A. Day, Senator
HOUSE OF COMMONS	Mr. Leon Benoit, M.P. Mrs. Cheryl Gallant, M.P. Mr. Paul Dewar, M.P. Mr. Jack Harris, M.P. Mr. Lavar Payne, M.P.
STAFF	Ms. Melissa Radford, Analyst
TRANSPORTATION	\$48, 596. 14
ACCOMMODATION	\$ 8, 496. 17
HOSPITALITY	\$ 0. 00
PER DIEMS	\$ 4, 732. 47
OFFICIAL GIFTS	\$ 0. 00
MISCELLANEOUS / REGISTRATION FEES	\$ 0. 00
TOTAL	\$61, 824.78