

Canadian NATO
Parliamentary Association



Association parlementaire
canadienne de l'OTAN

**Report of the Canadian Parliamentary Delegation
respecting its participation at the Meeting of the
Standing Committee**

Canadian NATO Parliamentary Association (NATO PA)

**Riga, Latvia
April 4 to 6, 2014**

Report

The Canadian NATO Parliamentary Association has the honour to present its report on the Meeting of the Standing Committee, held in Riga, Latvia, from April 4 to 6, 2014. Canada was represented by Senator Pierre-Claude Nolin, Cheryl Gallant, M.P. and Jack Harris M.P.

The Standing Committee met on March 23, 2013. The President, Hugh Bayley (UK), opened the meeting at 09.30.

The President thanked the Head of the Latvian delegation, Ojars Eriks Kalnins, for his delegation's hosting of the Standing Committee meeting.

Ojars Eriks Kalnins (LV) welcomed all participants.

The President listed the apologies received from the members of the Standing Committee:

- Tchetin KAZAK (Bulgaria)
- Marko MIHKELSON (Estonia)
- Mihaly BALLA (Hungary)
- Melita ZUPEVC (Slovenia)
- Mike TURNER (United States)

He informed members of the Standing Committee of Sven Mikser's recent nomination as Estonia's Minister of Defence.

ADOPTION OF THE DRAFT AGENDA

The President presented the main items on the agenda.

The draft agenda was adopted.

WELCOMING REMARKS BY SOLVITA ABOLTINA, SPEAKER OF THE LATVIAN PARLIAMENT

The President welcomed and introduced Solvita Aboltina, Speaker of the Latvian Parliament.

Ms. Aboltina welcomed participants. She noted that the timing of the meeting could not have been better. These were troubling times. Russia's aggression in Ukraine would previously have been unimaginable.

Ms. Aboltina recalled that Latvia was celebrating ten years since it joined NATO. As members of NATO, Latvians felt safe, the speaker noted, urging the Alliance to reaffirm the Open Door policy at NATO's upcoming Summit of Heads of State and Government in Wales in September 2014. As a member of the Alliance, Latvia had also demonstrated that smaller Allies could make significant contributions. Sending soldiers to operations often came with a high price, but it was one that nations sometimes had to pay. Allies also need to fulfil their financial obligations by increasing their contribution to collective security.

The President thanked Ms. Aboltina for her address.

PRESENTATION BY RAIMONDS VĒJONIS, MINISTER OF DEFENCE OF LATVIA, ON PRIORITIES AND EXPECTATIONS FOR THE WALES SUMMIT, FOLLOWED BY A Q&A PERIOD

The President welcomed and introduced Raimonds Vējonis, Minister of Defence of Latvia.

Mr. Vējonis noted that the current crisis in relations with Russia showed that cooperative security with Russia had failed. The world had changed and relations with Russia would never go back to what they were before. Warning that the situation in Ukraine remained unstable and unpredictable, Mr. Vējonis maintained that, at best, Russia would remain in Crimea; it was difficult to predict what could happen in the worst case scenario.

Taking into account this new situation, Mr. Vējonis called for a new strategy, not against anyone, but pro-EU and pro-NATO. He suggested that Allies should better counter Russia's narrative of a moral empire in the face of a decadent West. He also called on Europeans to take energy security more seriously and develop alternative sources of energy.

Faced with a Russia that did not feel bound by agreed rules and principles, the Alliance should consider itself exempt from other constraints, e.g. on the location of military installations and units, Mr. Vējonis argued.

A reinforced and more visible NATO presence in the Baltic region would be welcome, he stressed. This should be one of the deliverables at the Wales Summit. The Alliance itself should get back to basics after focusing on operations abroad for the past two decades. According to Mr. Vējonis, the way the Alliance survived previous shocks was by focusing on Article 5 and collective defence. This time again, NATO should demonstrate its readiness to defend its citizens and deter adversaries, he emphasized.

In response to a question from Andrius Mazuronis (LT), Mr. Vējonis noted that energy security was a sensitive matter for Baltic countries. Latvia's energy sector was 100% dependent on Russian gas. He regretted that the European Union had not responded to the crisis sooner, and hoped this crisis had opened European leaders' eyes about the need to take appropriate steps.

Asked by Karl A. Lamers (DE) about the measures taken to strengthen the NATO presence in the region, Mr. Vējonis thanked Allies for their support, while stressing that additional measures, such as permanent bases or presence and additional exercises, should be considered. In response to Dr. Lamers and Menzies Campbell (UK), Mr. Vējonis stressed that continued efforts on capability development were indeed needed, and duplication should be avoided as much as possible. Europeans needed to address the gap in capabilities with the United States and increase their share of NATO's defence spending. While Latvia was still short of the NATO defence spending target of 2% of GDP, there was strong political will to reach that target by 2020, Mr. Vējonis assured participants. Latvia had adopted a development plan for its armed forces. The objective for the country's defence was to develop at least the minimum capabilities required to protect the country and defend the population during the first days of an aggression.

Asked by Julio Miranda Calha (PT) and Diego Lopez Garrido (SP) about the diplomatic response to the crisis in Crimea, Mr. Vējonis repeated that he regretted the delays in the EU and NATO's responses to the crisis. He agreed that Allies needed to keep a door open for negotiations with Russia, but it was clear to him that Russia would continue to seek to maintain its influence in the post-Soviet space through military presence and basing.

The speaker agreed with Ali Riza Alaboyun (TK) that the decision-making process at 28 was bound to be slower, but argued that the key challenge was to ensure that this process starts as quickly as possible. NATO should be able to call meetings of Defence Ministers more frequently, Mr. Vējonis argued.

As to the measures adopted in response to the crisis, sanctions against individuals were useful, but, in the speaker's view, to really influence Russia's policy, Allies needed to reduce their dependence on Russian gas and seek to achieve a drop in the price of gas, which would have a disastrous impact on Russia's economy.

Ms. Aboltina stressed that it was essential for NATO and the EU to speak with one voice. She also concurred with Mr. Vējonis on the need to bolster energy and economic security, including through the adoption of the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP), and to enhance measures to protect Baltic Allies.

Cheryl Gallant (CA) noted that Canada was building facilities that would allow it to ship gas to Europe more quickly and at a cost that would not exceed Russia's. She asked Mr. Vējonis about his views on NATO's preference for a political rather than a military solution and on granting Georgia a Membership Action Plan (MAP).

Mr. Vējonis stressed that the current crisis can only be resolved diplomatically, through a direct dialogue between Russia and Ukraine, with the European Union and possibly NATO. He supported a positive decision on granting MAP to Georgia at the Wales Summit. In response to questions by Mr. Alaboyun and Andrzej Szewinski (PL), Mr. Vējonis argued that the current crisis would have been avoided had NATO granted MAP to Georgia and Ukraine in 2008.

In response to a question by Ronald Vuijk (NL), Mr. Vējonis called on Allies to update Baltic operational plans based on the lessons learned from Russia's large exercise ZAPAD 2013 and from the current crisis. Latvia was revising its own operational plan and focusing both on border and internal security. He was particularly concerned about the potential impact of provocations aimed at destabilising Latvian society from the inside. Ms. Aboltina added that in Ukraine, as in Georgia, and now in the Baltic countries, Russia was using internal destabilisation as its first weapon.

Ms. Aboltina also concurred with Boris Blazekovic (HR) that this was not just a crisis between Russia and Ukraine but a crisis between Russia and the international community, which required a response through the United Nations.

Gilbert Le Bris (FR) condemned Russia's unacceptable violation of international law and stated France's full support for the Baltic States. He called on Allies to remain united in their firm response; to review the state of their investment in defence; to go back to the basics of article 5; and to keep the door open to contacts with Russia.

ADOPTION OF THE SUMMARY OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE MEETING HELD IN DUBROVNIK, CROATIA, ON SUNDAY 13 OCTOBER 2013.

The President thanked the Head of the Croatian delegation, Boris Blazekovic, for his delegation's hosting of the Annual Session in Dubrovnik in October 2013.

The summary of the Standing Committee held in Dubrovnik was adopted.

CONSIDERATION OF THE COMMENTS OF THE SECRETARY GENERAL OF NATO AND CHAIRMAN OF THE NORTH ATLANTIC COUNCIL ON THE POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS ADOPTED IN 2013 BY THE NATO PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY.

The President called the attention of the Committee to the Comments of the Secretary General of NATO on the Policy Recommendations of the NATO PA. He welcomed these comments as part of the constructive relationship between the Assembly and NATO.

PRESENTATION BY RUSLAN KOSHULYNSKYI, DEPUTY SPEAKER OF THE VERKHOVNA RADA, ON THE SITUATION IN UKRAINE, FOLLOWED BY A Q&A PERIOD

The President welcomed and introduced Ruslan Koshulynskyi, Deputy Speaker of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine and co-chair of the Ukraine-NATO Interparliamentary Council (UNIC).

Mr. Koshulynskyi stated that with the overthrow of the regime of former President Yanukovich, Ukraine's European path was now clear and irreversible. He thanked NATO governments and the NATO PA for their support throughout the crisis that Ukraine was facing, and in particular for refusing to recognise the results of the referendum in Crimea. He warned of the continued threat to Ukraine's territorial integrity, emphasizing that this crisis has a direct impact on the security and stability of the Euro-Atlantic space as well as of the world.

The speaker countered claims about the lack of legitimacy of the current Ukrainian authorities and allegations of violation of the rights of ethnic Russian populations in Ukraine. On the latter issue, he noted that there was no evidence of such violations, and pointed out that, on the contrary, the referendum in Crimea had exacerbated interethnic tensions. On the former, he reminded participants that former President Yanukovich had refused to sign the Verkhovna Rada's decision to return to the 2004 version of the Constitution, in violation of the agreement he had concluded with opposition leaders on 21 February 2014. After fleeing, he was no longer able to fulfil his duties, which led the Parliament to sanction the transfer of responsibilities to the new authorities.

The speaker stressed that Ukraine would remain a reliable and special partner for NATO. Membership was currently not on the agenda, although certain political forces supported this goal in the current context.

He concluded by assuring participants that Ukraine would conduct the 25 May presidential election in accordance with the highest international standards and urging Assembly members to come to observe these elections.

Asked by Mr. Le Bris about the nomination of Mikhaylo Dobkin as the Party of Regions' candidate for the presidential elections, Mr. Koshulynskyi maintained that the party's influence was vanishing, and that Mr. Dobkin's influence in the election should therefore not be overestimated.

Replying to questions by Mr. Kalnins and Jose Lello (PT) about the fate of Ukrainian soldiers in Crimea, Mr. Koshulynskyi explained that some of the troops were able to leave Crimea, but many vessels could not because Russia had purposefully sank some of its old ships off Sevastopol to cut escape routes. This was a well-planned operation based on the model used in Georgia in 2008. He cited as example the fact that the Black Sea fleet had been relocated one week before Russia's intervention in Crimea, noting that, unlike Georgia, Ukraine had not responded to Russia's actions with military force.

In response to a question by Gabriel Vlase (RO), Mr. Koshulynskyi said he was not aware of any territorial ambition by Russia over Ukraine's Snake Island despite the territory's strategic location.

Asked by Mr. Vlase and John Dyrby Paulsen (DK) about contacts between Russian and Ukrainian officials, Mr. Koshulynskyi explained that the only current contacts were low-level and practical. As far as future relations with Russia were concerned, Mr. Koshulynskyi admitted in response to Paolo Alli (IT) that Russia would always have some influence if only because of geography.

Replying to questions by Nicole Ameline (FR) and Mr. Lopez Garrido, Mr. Koshulynskyi detailed the measures the Ukrainian authorities envisaged taking in connection with Crimea. The Parliament was considering a draft law on the temporarily occupied territories which included measures for the protection of the rights of citizens in Crimea. The authorities also envisaged granting Sevastopol the status of a free port to promote the area's economic development. The social and economic success of the new Ukraine was key. Ukrainian authorities were striving to build an entirely new country while at the same time defending Ukraine's territory. What was at stake was a civilizational fight between the post-Soviet and European paths, Mr. Koshulynskyi emphasized.

Asked by Muzaffer Bastopcu (TK) about measures taken to protect the Tatar population of Crimea specifically, Mr. Koshulynskyi replied that Ukrainian authorities provided the maximum possible level of support. Tatar authorities were now considering a possible referendum about the status of the Tatar population within Crimea.

On the question of the federalisation of Ukraine proposed by Russia, Mr. Koshulynskyi rejected Russia's attempts at interfering in Ukraine's internal affairs – be it through the issue of the protection of the Russian language, the stationing of military forces, or talk of federalisation – as unacceptable. He echoed Rasa Jukneviene's (LT) call to resist the temptation to trust the sincerity of Russia's intentions. It was for the Ukrainian people through a referendum or through the Parliament to decide about the constitutional set-up of the country, the speaker stressed. Federalisation was only supported by a small fraction of the population and was not on the agenda.

Asked by Mr. Vuijk, Pandeli Majko (AL), Daniel Bacquelaine (BE) and Marc Angel (LU) about other measures the current government envisaged to bolster minority rights, including protection of minority languages, Mr. Koshulynskyi informed participants that he

was chairing an ad hoc parliamentary committee on the language issue. The committee was currently preparing a draft law, which would be sent to international experts and representatives of national minorities and civil society for consultation. He stressed, however, that the Constitution of Ukraine made it clear that Ukrainian was the only official language, and therefore the law adopted in 2012 on the status of the Russian language was unconstitutional. He rejected arguments that the Russian language was endangered. The Constitution provided for the protection of minority languages, with special preference given to Russian. In his view, Russia was using the linguistic issue as a pretext to block Ukraine on its European path, and fulfil Russia's own geostrategic aspirations.

In response to another question by Mr. Lopez Garrido, Mr. Koshulynskyi informed participants that the Ukrainian government had set a deadline for armed groups and individuals to hand over their weapons to police authorities, with no exceptions.

Addressing Lord Jopling's (UK) question about Ukraine's current financial needs, Mr. Koshulynskyi explained that the country's budget was currently frozen. An increase in excise duties and wealth tax, as well as the introduction of a progressive income tax, had provided additional income. At the same time, cuts in public service staff and energy savings helped keep spending under control, but this was a long process, Mr. Koshulynskyi admitted. Ukraine was also looking at alternative sources of energy, including the great potential connected with shale gas reserves. He also hoped that foreign investment would help bolster the economy. He informed participants that the Parliament was about to adopt the second set of legislation required by the European Union for visa facilitation.

Mr. Koshulynskyi confirmed to Ms. Gallant that support for closer relations with NATO was mounting in the Parliament. He personally regretted the slow pace of this rapprochement, but acknowledged the impact of a long legacy of anti-NATO rhetoric in the country.

The President concluded the exchange by restating the Assembly's support for and solidarity with Ukraine in the face of what was not only an attack by Russia against Ukraine's territorial integrity but also against the Alliance's values.

RELATIONS WITH THE DELEGATION OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION

The President reported on his exchanges with the leaders of the Russian delegation and the Russian Ambassador to NATO, as well as on the measures he had taken, in consultation with the Assembly's Bureau, in response to the crisis in Crimea. At its meeting the previous day, the Bureau had agreed to put forward a statement on Ukraine at the Assembly's next session in Vilnius in May.

The President noted that allied governments had already adopted a number of sanctions in response to Russia's actions in Ukraine. Since these actions had been actively backed by the Russian Federal Parliament, the Assembly now needed to decide whether and how its relations with the Russian delegation should be modified. The President reminded delegates of the measures taken following Russia's occupation of Abkhazia and South Ossetia in 2008, and summarised the options presented in document.

Two delegations which could not be represented at the Standing Committee meeting – Estonia and the United States – had made it clear to the President that they advocated a

firm response. The President and the Bureau's view was that Russia's actions in Crimea posed an even greater challenge to Euro-Atlantic values than its actions in Georgia, because they now constituted a pattern. The status of Associate Delegation of the NATO PA implied a commitment to these values, which Russia had now showed it did not truly share. It was therefore the President's opinion that Russia's associate membership of the Assembly was no longer appropriate.

Should the Standing Committee wish to maintain dialogue with the Russian Parliament, it could decide to offer it the status of parliamentary observer, which would allow Russian parliamentarians to attend annual sessions, and, upon a special invitation, spring sessions. The forthcoming spring session in Vilnius could be used as a venue to explore a different future format for the NATO-Russia Parliamentary Committee, the President suggested.

The President acknowledged, however, that certain members might wish to exclude Russia entirely from the Assembly on the grounds that past experience had showed that dialogue with Russian parliamentarians brought little added value.

Mr. Lello supported a suspension of Russia's participation in Assembly activities rather than a change of status. He also suggested postponing a decision until the Assembly's spring session in Vilnius.

Baroness Ramsay (UK), Mr. Kalnins, Mr. Campbell, Mr. Majko, Mr. Mazuronis and Mr. Szewinski argued in favour of a full suspension of Russia's participation in the Assembly; this would send the strongest and clearest signal, they argued. Ms. Jukneviene supported this suggestion, citing the direct responsibility of members of the Russian delegation in Russia's actions and the precedent of the Assembly's decision regarding Belarus. She suggested authorising the Bureau to have contacts with Russian parliamentarians, however, and report back to the Standing Committee. Mr. Campbell asked what more Russia needed to do for the Assembly to suspend it and what value had been gained from keeping up dialogue after the Georgia war in 2008. He strongly opposed any suggestion of a dialogue with Russian parliamentarians in Vilnius.

Mr. Blazekovic also endorsed this position, arguing that dialogue should be maintained only at the level of the President.

Mr. Miranda Calha and Jack Harris (CA) spoke in favour of a temporary suspension of relations, which they distinguished from a complete cut-off of relations.

Dr. Lamers, Troels Lund Poulsen (DK), Ms. Ameline, Mr. Alaboyun, Mr. Angel, Mr. Alli, Sverre Myrli (NO) and Mr. Vuijk supported the President's proposal to downgrade Russia's status to that of parliamentary observer. This would signal a clear condemnation of Russia's actions, while keeping the option of further adjustments open, and maintaining channels of contact whereby Assembly members could make their views known to Russian parliamentarians. Dr. Lamers and Mr. Vuijk also suggested reducing the size of the Russian delegation.

Mr. Lopez Garrido similarly favoured the middle options, which allowed the Assembly to maintain dialogue, and provided a flexible response which could be adjusted depending on the situation.

Mr. Bacquelaine challenged the view that suspending relations with Russia was more serious than downgrading its status, pointing out that restoring the status of Associate Delegation would be more difficult than reversing a suspension of relations. He personally supported the President's proposal, and favoured keeping the option open of tougher sanctions depending on the evolution of the situation. In his view, the prerogative of future contacts should rest with the President.

Ms. Gallant enquired about the possibility that future contacts would be on a purely ad hoc basis, and asked for more time to allow the Committee to reach a consensus.

The President remarked that the Committee was united in its view that relations with Russia could not continue as before. He suggested voting first on whether to end Russia's status of Associate Delegation. Should this motion be carried, the Committee would then be asked to consider whether to grant parliamentary observer status. The President explained that voting against this second proposition would in effect lead to Russia's membership being simply removed or suspended.

The Committee voted and agreed unanimously to remove Russia's status of Associate Delegation.

Several members raised points of order on the second vote. Mr. Harris asked whether the first decision was to suspend or end Russia's current status. He wondered whether the Committee could grant Russia a status it might not want.

The President clarified that the Committee had decided to end Russia's status.

Lord Jopling argued that the Committee needed to vote first on the most severe option – i.e. a full suspension – before considering other, less severe options, such as a downgrade in status.

The President reiterated that following the Committee's first decision, Russia currently had no status with the Assembly. In response to a question by Mr. Lopez Garrido, he explained that the second vote would be about whether to now grant Russia parliamentary observer status.

Mr. Harris restated his position that it had not been clear to him whether the first vote was on suspending or ending Russia's current status, and that a country whose status was ended would presumably have to re-apply for a different status. Mr. Campbell and Mr. Kalnins concurred with Mr. Harris on his latter point.

Mr. Paulsen remarked that, having agreed to remove Russia's status, the Standing Committee would now be rewarding Russia if it were to grant it parliamentary observer status. Mr. Lello deplored that the Committee was now faced with a decision which it could not possibly explain to the public.

Rather than vote on granting Russia parliamentary observer status, Ms. Gallant proposed that the Bureau be authorised to invite Russian parliamentarians on an ad hoc basis.

The President insisted that document clearly presented the options and the two-step vote: first on removing Russia's Associate membership; and second on whether or not to grant parliamentary observer status. Many delegations had expressed the view that Russia should have parliamentary observer status, so this proposal should be put to a vote, he argued.

Following a first tied vote, the Standing Committee decided by a vote of 12 to 10 against granting Russia parliamentary observer status.

Ms. Gallant reiterated her proposal that the President or the Bureau be authorised to invite Russian parliamentarians to Assembly meetings on an ad hoc basis.

Mr. Lello argued that such sensitive matters should be decided through consensus rather than by a vote.

Mr. Campbell seconded Ms. Gallant's proposal.

The President suggested that the authority to call ad hoc meetings with representatives of the Russian Duma and Federation Council should be granted to the Bureau rather than just the President, and that these meetings should take place outside regular Assembly activities.

The proposal to authorise the Bureau to invite Russian parliamentarians to meet on an ad hoc basis and outside regular Assembly activities was agreed by consensus.

Mr. Angel pleaded that the message coming out of the Standing Committee's meeting included a broader statement of solidarity towards those of Russia's neighbours who felt vulnerable, including Baltic states. The President agreed with this suggestion.

ASSEMBLY ACTIVITIES AND SUBJECTS IN 2014

The Secretary General presented plans for Assembly activities in 2014. He stressed that the five priorities identified previously – NATO operations with a special focus on Afghanistan, NATO adaptation, developments in the Middle East and North Africa, partnerships and the open door policy, and the transatlantic link – remained as important and relevant as before. However, the crisis in Crimea had required substantial adjustments to the Assembly's programme of activities, many of which had already been decided by the Assembly's various bodies. Thus, the Ukraine-NATO Interparliamentary Council had met in Kyiv in February, and Ukrainian officials had been invited to address the Standing Committee meeting in Riga and the Spring Session in Vilnius. Other previously planned activities provided additional opportunities to discuss the implications of the Crimean crisis: a training programme for Moldovan parliamentarians, the Political Committee's visit to Georgia and Armenia, and the Rose-Roth seminars in Azerbaijan and in Poland.

Another distinctive feature of the 2014 programme was the four activities hosted by the United States delegation in addition to the Parliamentary Transatlantic Forum. The Secretary General stressed that these activities provided opportunities for interaction with the United States delegation at a time when it was increasingly difficult for them to travel.

The Assembly President had set outreach and transparency – including financial transparency – as an additional important priority, to which the President himself had greatly contributed, the Secretary General emphasized.

The planned programme for 2014 thus included some 40 activities, which made up a vigorous and relevant agenda.

The Secretary General noted that the Committee was asked to consider approving two specific proposals for activities related to Ukraine:

- Whether the Assembly should monitor the presidential elections in Ukraine on 25 May;
- Whether it should respond positively to the invitation by the Speaker of the Ukrainian Parliament to organise an additional activity in Ukraine.

Mr. Lello asked for the rationale behind the emphasis on financial transparency, adding that this was a matter for the North Atlantic Council, not for the Assembly.

The President explained that this matter would be discussed under a different item of the agenda. He asked the Standing Committee to approve the Assembly's participation in the observation of the presidential elections in Ukraine, noting that the election was likely to include two rounds. The President himself supported this participation on the basis that these were undoubtedly exceptional circumstances.

The President further proposed that the Bureau visit Ukraine once the new Ukrainian president took office in order to demonstrate the Assembly's solidarity and support.

Mr. Lello and Mr. Vlase both supported the proposal to visit Ukraine as the best way to demonstrate support. Both opposed the Assembly's participation in the observation of the presidential elections, on the grounds that other organisations were better suited for these missions and that the Assembly had little to gain from its participation.

Mr. Angel also supported the proposed presidential visit to Ukraine, adding that efforts should be made to visit other parts of the country outside Kyiv. Both he and Mr. Kalnins spoke in favour of the Assembly's participation in election observation, pointing out that Assembly members received comprehensive briefings about all aspects of the election and were fully embedded with their colleagues from other organisations.

The Standing Committee endorsed the President's recommendation to accept the invitation to observe the presidential elections in Ukraine on 25 May, as well as the proposal to organise a Bureau visit to Ukraine following these elections.

- **Presentation by Dr. Daniel Hamilton, Austrian Marshall Plan Foundation Professor and Director of the Center for Transatlantic Relations at the Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS), Johns Hopkins University, on The NATO Summit – a US Perspective followed by a Q&A period**
 - The President welcomed and introduced Dr. Daniel Hamilton, Austrian Marshall Plan Foundation Professor and Director of the Centre for Transatlantic Relations at the Johns Hopkins University's Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies.
 - Dr. Hamilton stressed that Ukraine had become a – if not the – headline issue at the NATO Summit in Wales, and that Allies needed to resist the temptation to react at a purely tactical level. The change in the strategic landscape brought about by the crisis in Ukraine called for a revived, relevant, modern narrative

- about what the Alliance is about, and an approach that looked beyond NATO at the broader community of nations which Europe and North America make up.
- In his view, the NATO Summit should open the next phase in the Alliance’s evolution, combining internal consolidation with the ability to project out of area. Dr. Hamilton listed five priorities in this regard:
 - Convey a clearer sense of shared risk, solidarity and commitment to collective defence by ensuring that all Allies truly have equal access, equal obligations and equal responsibility for collective defence, revisiting NATO’s self-imposed restrictions about its military presence in new member states, and carrying forward work on burdensharing and a “framework nation” concept for shared capabilities;
 - Use energy as a strategic asset by facilitating US energy exports, carefully monitoring Russian investments in Europe and North America’s energy sectors; and enhancing cooperation on energy matters between both sides of the Atlantic as well as with other regions, e.g. North Africa;
 - Preserve the Alliance’s ability to work with partners in future operations and enhance cooperation with the EU, the United Nations and other regional organisations; working with partners can help NATO enhance its understanding of the cultural, regional and political dynamics in the theatres where it is called to intervene;
 - Put real meaning behind the slogan of a Europe whole and free and reinvigorate NATO and the EU’s approach to the wider Europe through a combination of open door and conditionality;
 - Recognise the major strategic significance of the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) and the EU-Canada agreement as a second anchor to NATO, and the strong message TTIP would send about the shared norms, values and standards in the transatlantic space.
 - Dr. Hamilton urged Allies to think strategically and define the Alliance’s purpose independently of third parties in a short and clear statement at the Wales Summit. Demonstrating that the Western model worked for the people of Europe and North America, and that Allies were serious about a Europe whole and free was what would allow them to project their model beyond NATO’s borders.
 - In response to a question by Ms. Gallant, Dr. Hamilton reiterated his call to look at energy beyond the narrow NATO – defence angle, start investing now into what could become a genuine transatlantic energy community, and looking into ways to support energy security in other regions, e.g. North Africa. In Dr. Hamilton’s view, new energy developments were likely to make the broader Atlantic basin, including South America and Western Africa, the energy reservoir of the world in the next 20 years.
 - Asked by Lord Jopling about the prospects that the United States Congress would grant the President fast-track authority to negotiate TTIP, Dr. Hamilton

explained that the issue had become entangled in US politics, in the power struggle between Congress and the White House and in parallel and more problematic negotiations for a Transpacific Trade Partnership. He was confident that Congress would grant the President fast-track authority on TTIP after the November 2014 elections, but urged Europeans to build a pro-TTIP cross-border coalition to advertise the potential benefits of TTIP.

- In response to a question from Mr. Mazuronis about the use by Russia of propaganda and other soft power tools, Dr. Hamilton reiterated his call for Allies to put forward a genuine perspective and narrative which would be appealing to countries in the wider Europe. He recalled the comprehensive and pro-active strategies put in place in the early 1990s to incorporate Baltic States into Euro-Atlantic institutions, and the clear and radical vision developed in 1999 that the Western Balkans belonged in Europe. Allies now needed to recommit to the vision of a Europe whole and free, and give it some sense and direction, Dr. Hamilton pleaded.
- Asked by Mr. Paulsen about the UN's appetite for closer ties with NATO, Dr. Hamilton admitted that the issue was sensitive. To overcome sensitivities, he pleaded in favour of a practical approach, whereby Allies would provide ad hoc support depending on the UN's needs in each particular case. The EU was also particularly well placed to assist with stabilisation and reconstruction in crisis situations, in the intermediate phase between conflict and a return to stability.
- Asked by Dr. Lamers whether in the light of the Ukraine crisis, the United States would reconsider its pivot to Asia and re-balance to Europe, Dr. Hamilton pleaded for a transatlantic pivot, which would entail a greater focus on the wider Europe; a closer integration of societies on both sides of the Atlantic, including through TTIP; and an agreement between Europe and North America on how to deal with third issues beyond the Euro-Atlantic space, such as Afghanistan or security in Asia.

- **The Assembly's contribution to the NATO Summit**

- Key Messages for the President's Address at the NATO Summit of Heads of State and Government in Newport, United Kingdom, on 4-5 September 2014
- Consideration of the draft Declaration on Transatlantic Relations
- The President's publication on the value of NATO
- Letter from John Dyrby Paulsen, Deputy Head of the Danish delegation to the NATO PA
- The President suggested deferring a discussion of the main themes for his address to the NATO Summit in Wales until the Standing Committee's next meeting in Vilnius. He reminded delegates of the background for the draft declaration on transatlantic relations he was presenting to the Standing Committee and which was based on the contributions received from several

- delegations. In his view, the draft covered the main points, but the language could be more forceful. He welcomed further contributions from delegations until the spring session in Vilnius, when the final draft would be adopted.
- Mr. Le Bris proposed a new paragraph after paragraph 19 to clarify that NATO does not have the ambition to play a role in civilian crisis management and stress the importance of coordination with the EU and other organisations in crisis management operations.
 - Mr. Paulsen agreed with Mr. Le Bris that NATO's contribution to crisis management should come as a supplement to – and not a replacement for – its collective defence role. However, he referred to Dr. Hamilton's point that NATO's relations with the UN and the support Allies could provide to UN peacekeeping operations should be on the agenda for the Wales Summit.
 - Dr. Lamers agreed with both contributions, pointing out that NATO, as a political-military organisation, should take on both collective defence and crisis management tasks. He added that citizens in NATO countries would see support for UN peacekeeping operations favourably.
 - The President agreed to include a reference to the importance of a comprehensive approach to crisis management operations with a clear delineation of tasks between NATO and other organisations.
 - *The Standing Committee agreed that members should submit any further thoughts and ideas ahead of the Spring Session so that these could be incorporated in a new draft which the President would present at the Session.*
 - In connection with the letter from Mr. Paulsen, Mr. Alli suggested that NATO might be interested in having a stand at the 2015 world fair, whose main theme will be food security. The President suggested the Mr. Alli raise this proposal with the newly appointed Foreign Minister of Italy and former Head of the Italian delegation to the NATO PA, Federica Mogherini.
 - Lastly, the President invited comments from delegations on his draft publication on the value of NATO. He intended to add an introduction or section on the impact of the crisis in Crimea, as well as a clear statement on the need for robust defence budgets in the face of this crisis. A revised draft would be circulated at the spring session in Vilnius, with a view to publication before the summer break.
- **Consideration of the draft Declaration on Commemorating NATO Enlargement**
 - The President reminded delegates that 2014 marked the 5th, 10th and 15th anniversaries of the three last rounds of enlargement. In view of the political significance of these anniversaries, the Lithuanian delegation was putting forward a draft declaration commemorating NATO enlargement.
 - Ms. Juknevičienė introduced the draft declaration, stressing the political significance of a statement on the benefits of NATO enlargement in the current

context, and as NATO celebrated its 65th anniversary. She challenged the view put forward by some that NATO enlargement was a mistake. In her opinion, without NATO enlargement Europe would have experienced several Crimea-type crises.

- Mr. Kalnins proposed replacing the word “pole” with “pillar” in paragraph 1.
 - Mr Angel argued that greater emphasis should be placed on the assistance the NATO PA had provided in support of past enlargements. The President suggested this could be done by adding the words “as it has done in the past” in paragraph 9.
 - Dr. Lamers enquired whether the names of current aspirant countries could be mentioned in the declaration. The President proposed that the Rapporteur list those in her presentation of the declaration at the spring session.
 - Mr. Vlase wondered if the word “commemorate” was appropriate as it had a funereal connotation. Both the President and the Rapporteur agreed that the title of the declaration should be amended to “Declaration on NATO Enlargement”.
 - *The Standing Committee agreed for the draft declaration as amended to be put to the full Assembly at the spring session in Vilnius.*
- **The Assembly of Kosovo’s application for parliamentary observer status**
 - The President reminded delegates that this item was first discussed at the Standing Committee’s meeting in Copenhagen a year earlier, but that the Standing Committee had postponed a decision until now. He argued that the circumstances were now ripe for a decision: in November 2013, Kosovo had for the first time successfully held local elections on its whole territory; in January, Serbia had started accession negotiations with the EU, and Kosovo was expected to sign an Association Agreement with the Union shortly; lastly, the general elections in Serbia in March 2014 had given the pro-European and “pro-dialogue with Pristina” government a historically large majority. In view of these developments, the President favoured accepting the Assembly of Kosovo’s application to become parliamentary observer. He noted that this decision would only concern the NATO PA’s relations with the Assembly of Kosovo and not the status of Kosovo.
 - Mr. Lopez Garrido indicated that he would abstain in the vote.
 - Mr. Kalnins understood the sensitivities around this issue in some nations, but noted that Kosovo was a success story for the EU. Mr. Blazekovic, Mr. Miranda Calha, Dr. Lamers and Mr. Myrli also supported a positive decision. Mr. Myrli added that the Defence and Security Committee’s Sub-Committee on Transatlantic Defence and Security Cooperation was due to visit Belgrade and Pristina in June 2014. He favoured keeping the current designation of the delegation “Assembly of Kosovo”.

- Dr. Lamers and Mr. Myrli did not object to notifying the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) of invitations sent to the Assembly of Kosovo but stressed that the invitations should also go directly to the Assembly of Kosovo.
 - *The Standing Committee approved the Assembly of Kosovo’s application for parliamentary observer status by 15 votes in favour. Four delegations abstained.*
 - *The Committee agreed that the Head of UNMIK should continue to be notified of invitations sent to the Assembly of Kosovo.*
 - *Lastly, the Committee agreed that the delegation should continue to be referred to as the “Assembly of Kosovo” in all official NATO PA documents.*
- **The participation of non-member delegations at spring sessions**
 - The President reminded delegates that in 2009, the Standing Committee introduced a number of measures to reduce the burden of hosting sessions. One of these was to reduce the size of Regional Partner and Mediterranean Associate and of parliamentary observer delegations, and invited these delegations only to Annual Sessions. Since the Arab Awakening, however, the Standing Committee or Bureau had extended ad hoc invitations to all delegations from the Mediterranean and Middle East – as well as to Libya and Mali – for spring sessions as well, including the upcoming spring session in Vilnius. Given that developments in North Africa and the Middle East were likely to remain a major focus for the Assembly in the near future, the document proposed restoring the right of Regional Partner and Mediterranean Associate delegations to participate in spring sessions starting in 2015. Other delegations from the region or beyond could still be invited on an ad hoc basis.
 - In response to a question by Mr. Campbell, the Secretary General and the President clarified that this would only imply a minimum additional cost for host countries.
 - *The Standing Committee agreed to restore the right of Regional Partner and Mediterranean Associate delegations to participate in spring sessions starting in 2015.*
 - **The future structure of February meetings**
 - The President explained that in order to facilitate the participation of the US delegation and avoid the perception of a two-tier programme for those members who participated in the joint meeting with the North Atlantic Council and those who did not, it was proposed to start the Joint Committee meetings in Brussels on a Saturday rather than a Sunday and finish the programme on Monday following the meeting with the North Atlantic Council. He thanked the Belgian delegation for their hosting of this annual meeting.
 - Mr. Myrli did not favour meeting on weekends, but agreed that the new proposed structure could be tried if this facilitated US participation.

- *The Standing Committee agreed to test the proposed new format for the Joint Committee meetings in Brussels in 2015.*
- **Supporting greater transparency of NATO's accounts**
 - The President reminded delegates that the North Atlantic Council had agreed that NATO audit reports should be published. The NATO Secretary General had assured him that the default position would be in favour of publication, but the North Atlantic Council reserved the right to raise security concerns in some cases. The UK National Audit Office had agreed to provide to the UK delegation an analysis of the first NATO audit reports to be published in 2014, which the delegation was happy to share with the Standing Committee. In the future, and if the Assembly decided it wanted to make this a regular process, different national audit authorities could take turns in producing analyses of NATO's audit reports. The President had also met with the President of the Court of Auditors of the Netherlands, Saskia Stuiveling, who was promoting a separate project on the transparency of NATO's finances. Ms. Stuiveling had agreed to address the Economics and Security Committee on this matter at the Assembly's upcoming annual session in The Hague.
 - Lord Jopling and Mr. Vuijk congratulated the President on these achievements.
- **Financial documents**
 - Secretary General's Report on the Financial Statements for 2013
 - Treasurer's Report and proposal for the allocation of the 2013 surplus and the current financial year
 - Audit Report on the Financial Statements of the NATO PA and the NATO PA Provident Fund for the year ending 31st December 2013 presented by Dr. Charilaos Charisis, Chairman, International Board of Auditors for NATO (IBAN)
 - Management Representation Letter relating to Financial Statements for the year ending 31st December 2013
 - Statement on Internal Control
 - Audited Financial Statements for the year ending 31st December 2013
 - The NATO PA Provident Fund Annual Report 2013: Audited Financial Statements
 - The President thanked the Treasurer for his outstanding work over the past 6 years, and particularly for keeping a flat budget for the past four years despite the statutory obligation to increase salaries annually by the rate of inflation.
 - The Treasurer started by thanking delegations for the early payment of their contributions for 2014. He explained that the Financial Year 2013 had ended with a surplus of € 24.818,32, the smallest ever. Most of it came from investment income and interest on term deposits, while only € 10.898,86 came from the normal budget. This showed the careful management of the

Assembly's tight budget. The Treasurer also thanked the Swiss Ministry of Defence for its generous contribution to the Rose-Roth programme in 2013 as in previous years.

- Dr. Charilaos Charisis, Chairman, International Board of Auditors for NATO, explained that the audit had been completed earlier than usual, and briefed delegates on the new format IBAN adopted for its reports following comments received by Allied governments. He reported that the Board had issued an unqualified opinion on both sets of Assembly documents for the financial year 2013, as well as an unqualified opinion on whether the activities and information reflected in the financial statements were, in all material respects, in compliance with authorities which govern them. An unqualified opinion meant that the financial statements presented fairly the financial position of the NATO PA, that the underlying transactions were, in all material respects, in compliance with the budgetary provisions, applicable rules and regulations, and that the funds were properly used for the statement of authorised expenditure. No observations were raised and there were no outstanding observations from 2012.
 - Dr. Charisis noted that substantial progress had been achieved by the NATO PA over the years and confirmed that the Board was very satisfied with the quality of the financial management and the accounting and control systems implemented. He thanked the NATO PA staff for its excellent co-operation.
 - The Treasurer's proposal was to allocate the entire 2013 surplus to Chapter 1 Article 3: Recruitment expenses. The International Secretariat was indeed undergoing several changes. One full-time person needed to be recruited after the retirement of two part-time staff members in 2013. Two other recruitments were also planned to replace the retiring IT manager and another staff member who had announced her departure. Allocating the surplus to the budget for recruitment would help cover the shortage in this Article for 2014.
 - *The Standing Committee adopted all financial documents.*
 - The Treasurer thanked members of the Standing Committee for their support throughout very difficult financial times, and noted that the Assembly had been able to overcome challenges thanks to the measures taken early on at the beginning of the financial crisis, particularly through the review conducted by the Working Group on Assembly Reform, which he had chaired. He also thanked the NATO PA staff for their support, and extended his best wishes to his successor, Mr. Angel.
 - Mr. Angel and Dr. Lamers congratulated the Treasurer on his outstanding work and contribution.
 - *The Standing Committee paid tribute to the Treasurer for his exceptional service.*
 - The President thanked Dr. Charisis for addressing the Standing Committee.
- **Future sessions and meetings**

- Distribution of Assembly Sessions and Standing Committee Meetings
 - Future Sessions and Meetings
 - Spring Session, Vilnius, Lithuania, 30 May - 2 June 2014
 - 60th Annual Session, The Hague, Netherlands, 21-24 November 2014
 - Offer from Georgia to host the 2017 Spring Session
- The President explained that hosts had come forward for all Standing Committee meetings and sessions until the early spring Standing Committee meeting in 2017. Germany and Bulgaria had de-conflicted their offers to host the early spring Standing Committee meeting in 2017, and agreed that this meeting would be held in Germany.
 - The President had received an offer from Georgia to host the Spring Session in 2017. The Bureau's recommendation was to accept this offer. *The Standing Committee accepted Georgia's offer to host the Assembly's Spring Session in 2017.*
 - The Treasurer offered to enquire with Canadian authorities about the possibility that Canada could host the Assembly's Annual Session in 2017.
 - Mr. Mazuronis briefed the Standing Committee on preparations for the Spring Session 2014 in Vilnius.
 - Mr. Vuijk reported that preparations were also on track for the Annual Session 2014 in The Hague. He invited suggestions from members of the Standing Committee about ways to celebrate the fact that this will be the Assembly's 60th Annual Session.
 - Mr. Campbell presented the state of current preparations for the early spring Standing Committee meeting in 2015 in London.
 - Both Mr. Angel and Mr. Blazekovic confirmed that their respective parliaments were prepared to host the early spring Standing Committee meeting in 2018 or 2019.
 - The President invited both delegations to consult on this matter, and extended his sincere thanks and gratitude to all future session hosts.
- **Miscellaneous**
 - No other business was brought to the attention of the Standing Committee.
 - The President again thanked Mr. Kalnins and the Latvian delegation for their hospitality, and all members of the Standing Committee for their ongoing commitment to the Assembly.
 - Mr. Kalnins also thanked the Standing Committee for what had been a successful meeting.

The meeting closed at 17.40

Respectfully submitted,

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

Travel Costs

ASSOCIATION	Canadian NATO Parliamentary Association (NATO PA)
ACTIVITY	Meeting of the Standing Committee
DESTINATION	Riga, Latvia
DATES	April 4 to 6, 2014
DELEGATION	
SENATE	The Hon. Pierre Claude Nolin, Senator
HOUSE OF COMMONS	Mrs. Cheryl Gallant, M.P. Mr. Jack Harris, M.P.
STAFF	N/A
TRANSPORTATION	\$21,061.67
ACCOMMODATION	\$1,967.61
HOSPITALITY	\$0.00
PER DIEMS	\$954.78
OFFICIAL GIFTS	\$0.00
MISCELLANEOUS / REGISTRATION FEES	\$0.00
TOTAL	\$23,984.06