

Canadian NATO  
Parliamentary Association



Association parlementaire  
canadienne de l'OTAN

**Report of the Canadian Parliamentary Delegation  
to the Joint Meeting of the Defence and Security, Economics  
and Security, and Political Committees**

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

**Brussels, Belgium  
February 17 – 18, 2008**

**and**

**European Commission  
February 19, 2008**

# Report

Senators, the Honourable Pierre-Claude Nolin, the Honourable Joseph Day, and Members of Parliament, the Honourable Joe McGuire and Mr. Blaine Calkins formed the Canadian delegation that attended a joint meeting of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly Defence and Security, Economics and Security, and Political Committees, in Brussels, Belgium 17-19 February 2008. They engaged in frank dialogue with other NATO member delegations, met with the North Atlantic Council in NATO Headquarters and also with European Commission appointments at the European Commission offices.<sup>1</sup>

SUNDAY 17 FEBRUARY 2008

The first presentation was delivered by Ms. Aurelia Bouchez, the NATO Deputy Assistant Secretary General for Regional, Economic and Security Affairs, who discussed NATO's political agenda, in the lead-up to the NATO summit meeting in Bucharest, in April 2008. She highlighted the main political issue absorbing NATO's attention, including:

- a the enhancement of NATO partnerships beyond the Euro-Atlantic area, specifically with the Contact Countries of Australia, Japan, New Zealand and South Korea; continuation of the Mediterranean Dialog; pursuit of the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative and the NATO-Ukraine intensified dialogue;
- b recognition and further evolution of NATO's comprehensive approach to crisis management;
- c NATO enlargement and further Euro-Atlantic integration, perhaps involving Albania, Croatia and Macedonia;
- d improvement of the NATO-Russia relationship;
- e debate about the promulgation of a new NATO strategic concept;
- f discussion about the need for new security initiatives in such areas as cyber-security and the security of energy supplies; and
- g the continuing transformation of NATO to be able to address new security issues in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Subsequent member discussion quickly settled on the perceived importance of the NATO mission in Afghanistan, particularly as it might affect the future of the Alliance. There was general agreement that military action alone was insufficient and that while NATO was appropriately involved reconstruction activity, the broader programme of development was beyond NATO's role and resources. Effective development is thought to require more energetic leadership by the United Nations (UN), improved cooperation between NATO and the European Union (EU), and a better understanding of the

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<sup>1</sup> NATO background information can be obtained from the NATO website at <http://www.nato.int/> Accessed February 2008. See the *Topics* link in the main menu.

complex nature of the comprehensive approach to the mission.<sup>2</sup> These topics persisted throughout the three days of meetings.

Members were reminded that NATO has changed from being a simple defence organization to a complex security organization. However, NATO remained a military organization and as such, it continued to impose obligations on all members. One of the principal obligations noted was that of burden-sharing, particularly in difficult operational theatres such as Afghanistan. This subject arose on many occasions, generating considerable attention each time.

Mr. Jean-Francois Bureau, the NATO Assistant Secretary General for Public Diplomacy spoke on the increasing importance of NATO public policy, another prominent topic of conversation in all meetings. It was clear that no nation was enjoying adequate success in effectively explaining the purpose and progress of the Afghanistan mission. Some members seemed to want NATO to deliver the explanation direct to the public, while others felt that such public communications were first and foremost the responsibility of national parliaments.

For them, it was necessary for NATO to provide a clear explanation of the NATO strategy and reliable reports of progress being made, so that NATO members can use it in their own public outreach programmes. Such information is expected to come from a document being drawn up now that will also help to frame the outline of a new strategic concept.

To pursue Canada's immediate interest, Mr. Blaine Calkins highlighted the existence of the *Manley Report* and the desire of Canada to acquire an operational partner in Kandahar Province. NATO officials and others acknowledged they knew of the report and Mr. Calkins' intervention served as a catalyst for supporting Spanish, UK and US commentary that once again pursued the broad requirement for greater burden-sharing in Afghanistan.

Mr. Jamie Shea, the Director of Policy Planning in the Private Office of the NATO Secretary General briefed the delegations on work leading to a new NATO Strategic Concept. Originally thought to be drafted this year, it now seems that a formal start on a new NATO concept will not be made until the 2009 NATO summit meeting in Berlin. It is expected to contain a general statement of the roles and principles of the Alliance, along with text addressing new security issues.

It would also probably deal with a new understanding of the meaning and implication of Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty<sup>3</sup>, in the new security environment. With NATO

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<sup>2</sup> The comprehensive approach is simply an international version of Canada's 'whole of government' approach, in which it is recognized that many government departments – and other international organizations – have an important role to play in the overall development of Afghanistan.

<sup>3</sup> Article 5 says, "The Parties agree that an armed attack against one or more of them in Europe or North America shall be considered an attack against them all and consequently they agree that, if such an armed attack occurs, each of them, in exercise of the right of individual or collective self-defence recognized by [Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations](#), will assist the Party or Parties so attacked by taking forthwith, individually and in concert with the other Parties, such action as it deems necessary, including the use of armed force, to restore and maintain the security of the North Atlantic area.

Any such armed attack and all measures taken as a result thereof shall immediately be reported to the Security Council. Such measures shall be terminated when the Security Council has taken the measures necessary to restore and maintain international peace and security."

conducting out-of-area security operations, the traditional defence of borders has now become the projected security of populations. Transnational threats do not respect boundaries and there is no longer any easy separation of domestic from external threats, or vice-versa. NATO cannot solve all contemporary security problems alone, but it can certainly offer a significant contribution to any comprehensive solution.

In related discussion, Dr. Shea refuted the idea that the Afghanistan mission would decide the future of Alliance, emphasizing he felt NATO was much more than what it was doing in Afghanistan.

Committee members were presented with an opportunity to engage in a round-table discussion with the Permanent Representatives of France, Lithuania, Turkey and the United States. It was noted that France is in the process of reconsidering its role in NATO and there is some hope that it might choose to return to the NATO military command structure. In practice, French military forces have long been working among other NATO members. In fact, a French General currently commands the NATO Kosovo Force (KFOR).

The US Permanent Representative made the point that Americans tended to feel the existential threat to their security more than Europeans [and, by implication, Canadians] and that therefore the US will continue to push for a strengthened NATO, as well as a stronger EU.

18 FEBRUARY 2008

The political challenges of NATO military operations were discussed by Mr. Gordon Brett, the Head of the NATO Headquarters Operations Section. He confirmed that Afghanistan is NATO's top operational priority. The Kosovo declaration of independence however, merited some attention at this time. NATO intended to have KFOR remain in place, as required by United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSC) 1244. He outlined the presence of other NATO operations in Iraq and the Mediterranean Sea. NATO also stands ready to provide support to the hybrid UN/African Union (AU) mission in Darfur, or the AU mission in Somalia. This was all subsequently confirmed by the Chairman of the Military Committee.

Mr. Brett made it clear that Afghanistan demanded a long-term commitment and that NATO was determined to stay the course. Significant progress is being made. Seventy per cent of serious incidents happen in only 10% of Afghanistan, mainly in the south. He noted that the UN hoped for stronger leadership from the UN and a bigger effort from the EU. There is also growing interest in having the Afghan government show improvement in fighting corruption.

Accelerated efforts to train the Afghan National Army (ANA) are underway and the Afghan National Police (ANP) are receiving more training support too.

General Ray Henault, Chairman of the NATO Military Committee and General Henri Bentégeat, Chairman of the EU Military Committee delivered presentations on NATO military operations and NATO-EU military cooperation respectively. General Henault reiterated the fact that Afghanistan is NATO's first operational priority, but noted that the

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approved force levels had not yet been met by all NATO members. There remains a 15% shortfall. Moreover, existing caveats on some national forces limits their operational flexibility and, to a degree, inhibits some NATO military operations.

NATO military transformation continues apace, with an altered force formula for the NATO Reaction Force (NRF) and an effort to reform and rationalize military headquarters organizations.

General Bentégeat pointed out that 21 of 27 EU members were also members of NATO, a fact that highlighted the need to achieve cooperation during the course of NATO-EU military operations. In fact, both Generals were adamant that NATO-EU military cooperation was good and that the frequent public complaints about a difficult NATO-EU relationship was mainly a reflection of tensions at the political level.

Interestingly, in the EU, as is sometimes the case with NATO, there is occasionally a mismatch between political decisions taken and national resources committed to the pursuit of those missions. In order to enhance its military operations, the EU is pursuing enhancements along three lines of effort: command structure reform; capability development and partnership synergy.

NATO PA delegates joined NAC members for lunch, followed by a joint meeting of the two groups. The NATO Secretary General outlined some issues expected to compose the Afghanistan agenda. NATO enlargement, perhaps with a membership invitation to Albania, Croatia and Macedonia will be discussed. Some members, who are not convinced that the three candidates have completed the necessary reforms, oppose the offer of membership. There is also discussion about whether Ukraine and/or Georgia might be offered an opportunity to enter the process that might lead to NATO membership.

During the discussion Senator Pierre-Claude Nolin delivered a pointed intervention, calling specifically on France and Germany to recognize the Canadian call for an operational partner in Kandahar Province. Polite responses by the French and German Ambassadors acknowledged our requirements but brought no indication of future support. A related point was forcefully made by the British Permanent Representative when he addressed the broader issue of equitable burden-sharing. He made it clear that the issue was serious and that it was not going to go away. The US NATO PA delegate made the same point with the same energy.

19 FEBRUARY 2008

Session four was conducted at the European Commission offices in Brussels. Mr. Eneko Landaburu, Director General, External Relations Directorate offered the delegates some frank views on the challenges of NATO-EU relations. Mr. David O'Sullivan, Director General, External Trade Directorate delivered a most interesting presentation regarding EU trade challenges with external partners, particularly the US. Senator Pierre-Claude Nolin asked about EU plans to enhance trade with Canada. Mr. O'Sullivan's response indicated that Canada was not at the top of the EU agenda, but politely suggested it could receive more consideration in the future.

Delegates traveled to NATO's Joint Forces Command (JFC) Brunssum, to be hosted and briefed by its Commander, General Egon Ramms, of Germany. Briefings on the

role of JFC Brunssum, the NATO mission in Afghanistan and the future of the NATO Response Force (NRF). Responding to questions by Senator Pierre-Claude Nolin and Mr. Blaine Calkins, General Ramms agreed with Canada's call for additional troops and capabilities in the southern region of Afghanistan, but did not agree with the idea that Canadian or any other troops should be rotated in or out of their established areas of responsibility. The tactical value of leaving troops in place to establish long-term relations with local Afghans is considerable and provides significant benefit to security, reconstruction and development efforts.

Senator Joseph Day's question on the inadequacy of NATO manpower in the southern provinces of Afghanistan prompted General Ramms to explain the overall difficulties he faces in trying to fill approved troop levels in all JFC Brunssum operational activity. NATO nations have consistently failed to provide adequate numbers of troops and capabilities in Afghanistan. NATO Afghanistan troop levels are currently about 15% below the politically agreed minimum. Moreover, national contributions to the NRF are also regularly less than required and approved.

## SUMMARY

Throughout the entire set of meetings, three principal issues arose time and time again:

- a the necessity for NATO members to come together under one commonly understood and aggressively executed strategy in Afghanistan, where the operational and reconstruction burdens are equitably shared, national caveats removed and where NATO's comprehensive approach is complemented by more energetic UN leadership and a more substantial EU effort;
- b NATO members must collectively do a much better job of informing their publics on the strategic aims being pursued in Afghanistan. Defeatist rhetoric must be countered by accurate accounts of real progress being made and the extent of the challenge and sacrifice remaining; and
- c as exemplified by the Canadian circumstances in Kandahar Province, the challenges of burden-sharing extends across a broad spectrum of NATO activity and the tendency for politically approved direction to be subsequently denied the resources necessary for its execution must be reversed.

Respectfully submitted,

Mr. Leon Benoit, M.P.

Chair

Canadian NATO Parliamentary  
Association (NATO PA)

## Travel Costs

<b>ASSOCIATION</b>	Canadian NATO Parliamentary Association (NATO PA)
<b>ACTIVITY</b>	Joint Meeting of the Defence and Security, Economics and Security, and Political Committees
<b>DESTINATION</b>	Brussels, Belgium and European Commission
<b>DATES</b>	February 17 – 19, 2008
<b>DELEGATION</b>	
SENATE	Senators Pierre Claude Nolin and Joseph Day
HOUSE OF COMMONS	Mr. Joe McGuire, M.P. and Mr. Blaine Calkins, M.P.
STAFF	Mr. Jim Cox, Advisor and Ms. Jodi Turner, Association Secretary
<b>TRANSPORTATION</b>	<b>\$33,407.21</b>
<b>ACCOMMODATION</b>	<b>\$6,992.02</b>
<b>HOSPITALITY</b>	<b>\$162.60</b>
<b>PER DIEMS</b>	<b>\$3,016.28</b>
<b>OFFICIAL GIFTS</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>
<b>MISCELLANEOUS / REGISTRATION FEES</b>	<b>\$112.48</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$43,690.59</b>