

Canadian NATO
Parliamentary Association



Association parlementaire
canadienne de l'OTAN

**Report of the Canadian Parliamentary Delegation
respecting its participation at the Mediterranean and
Middle East Special Group (GSM)**

Canadian NATO Parliamentary Association (NATO PA)

**Rome, Italy
June 27-28, 2010**

Report

INTRODUCTION

The Canadian NATO Parliamentary Association has the honour to present its report regarding its participation in the Mediterranean and Middle East Special Group (GSM) of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly (NATO PA) seminar held in Rome on June 27-28, 2010. Canada was represented by Senator Raynell Andreychuk.

The main topics of the seminar were maritime security and piracy, immigration and security, as well as energy interdependence in the Mediterranean region. The keynote presentation was delivered by Elizabeth Dibble, Deputy Chief of Mission of the US Embassy in Italy, who spoke about the US vision for the peace process in the Middle East. In her presentation she focused on the importance of the continuation of negotiations between Israelis and Palestinians, and she stressed that the resolution of this conflict has become one of the primary foreign policy goals of the Obama administration.

AN OVERVIEW OF THE GULF REGION: HOW DEMOCRATISATION AND STATE BUILDING IN IRAQ CAN INFLUENCE FUTURE SCENARIOS IN THE GULF

Reidar Visser from the Norwegian Institute of International Affairs (NUPI) and Faleh Abdul-Jabar from the Iraq Institute for Strategic Studies (IIST) spoke about the internal dimension of state-building efforts in Iraq as well as the role of the regional actors for the internal security and the stability of Iraq.

Mr Visser provided an overview of the two possible scenarios for Iraq. The first is of a centralised Iraq, while the second is of a weak, decentralised state dominated by outside forces and sectarianism. Mr Visser believed that centralised state is the only viable option and one that is within reach, but this can only be achieved if the main parties succeed in building an issue-based coalition. He noted that Maliki and Alawi agree on many basic points and should be able to reach a consensus on issues such as the centralisation of state authority and independence vis-à-vis Iran.

The second scenario of Iraq is one of a weak decentralised state that is dominated by its neighbours. Mr Visser noted that the proponents of a decentralised state are a minority in the Iraqi parliament, but that they have an influence. He cautioned against the temptation to form a national unity government that would be inclusive at the cost of its effectiveness.

Mr Abdul-Jabar highlighted five major issues in the Gulf region: democratisation, federalism, Islamic Shi'ia radicalism, the US military presence, and what he termed the "failed state syndrome". He then briefly touched on how those issues affect the main players in the region. He noted that Iran has mostly failed in achieving its objectives in Iraq, particularly in installing a friendly government there or in taking control of religious seminaries. He stressed that the Gulf States are concerned about the strength of Shi'a groups in the region and see the political rise of the Shi'a majority in Iraq as a potential danger if it radicalises the Shi'a population in the Gulf. Mr Abdul-Jabar concluded by noting that Iraq is a model for some intellectuals in the region who ask that if political pluralism can function there, why can it not function elsewhere in the Arab world?

The questions from parliamentarians focused on the development of civil society in Iraq and whether the withdrawal of the US forces from Iraq would provide an opening for Iranian influence. The speakers explained that Iranian influence in Iraq is overestimated and that the development of a middle class in Iraq that is independent of the state is leading to the development of a true civil society and the basis of a democratic society.

MARITIME SECURITY AND PIRACY

Vice Admiral Maurizio Gemignani, Commander of the Allied Maritime Command Naples (COM MC), and Massimo Marotti, International Security Coordinator in the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, focused on the international efforts to combat maritime piracy. They stressed that piracy in the Gulf of Aden and Horn of Africa regions has a significant impact on the free flow of goods and international humanitarian aid. Consequently, piracy is impacting the security and economic interests of the member states of the Alliance.

Operation Allied Provider was the first NATO multinational and military engagement against piracy in the Horn of Africa. This operation was initially replaced by the EU-led Operation Atalanta, but NATO is now conducting Operation Ocean Shield in co-ordination with Operation Atalanta, US Task Force 151 and the national contributions of Russia, China, India, Pakistan, Japan and others.

Adm. Gemignani emphasised that there is a need for a more specific legal framework to govern the counter-piracy operations. Issues such as where and if to try captured pirates are contentious and there is no co-ordinated framework between the nations participating in the counter-piracy operations. Many of the pirates have been released because of a lack of evidence or a lack of bilateral agreements, which could allow them to be prosecuted in a country in the region. He stressed that there must be internationally agreed rules of engagement that clarify how to deal with suspected pirates.

Mr Marotti noted that the large cost of military operations makes it difficult to sustain counter piracy missions in a time of global economic crisis. He also stressed that ransom payments received by pirates could finance terrorist organisations operating in the region and that it is important to develop improved means of tracking financial assets.

Questions from the members of parliament focused on the practicalities of pursuing pirates to their bases on land and placing armed forces on board civilian vessels. The speakers noted that there is a danger of escalation if the fight is taken to pirate land bases as well as a risk of potential casualties among hostages and civilians.

ENERGY INTERDEPENDENCE IN THE MEDITERRANEAN: CIVIL USE OF NUCLEAR POWER

Lorenzo Trombetta, Expert on Syrian-Lebanese Issues and Middle East Correspondent for Italian news agency ANSA in Beirut, spoke about the civil use of nuclear power in the Middle East and, in particular, the Gulf States.

Since 2006, there has been a race to develop nuclear power in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA). Many of these countries have abundant energy resources, but claim that growing populations are increasing their energy needs. Egypt was the first

state in the region to recently declare its intention to develop nuclear power, but several others including Syria and Libya have declared their intentions as well.

In the discussion that followed after the presentation, several parliamentarians pointed out the costs of nuclear power programmes, including waste storage, and asked about the impact of Iran's nuclear programme on the decisions of states in the region.

IMMIGRATION AND SECURITY: CO-OPERATION AMONG MEDITERRANEAN COUNTRIES

Ivan Ureta from the University of Lugano, Switzerland, and King's College, London, addressed the migration/mobility security nexus in the Mediterranean. He noted that although immigrants constitute a small percentage of the overall population in the European Union, the rate of increase is striking. In Italy, the percentage of immigrants of the total population has increased from 2% in 1990 to 8% today. In Spain, the percentage has increased from 4% to 14% in the same period of time. The source of immigration is an important factor to consider. Many of Spain's immigrants come from Latin America with a similar language and culture and are more easily assimilated into Spanish society than Italy's new immigrants coming from Africa and the Middle East. Mr Ureta underlined the question of values and that the traditional cultural values of immigrants can clash with the more open and tolerant culture of Europe. He acknowledged the concerns of the connection between immigrants and terrorism, but warned that an overly broad criminalisation of immigrants would be counterproductive.

Robert Maroni, Italian Minister of Interior, noted that Italy plays a strategic role for the rest of the European Union. As one of the states in the Mediterranean, it is a magnet for immigration. Mr Maroni argued that EU role in the Mediterranean region has been unsatisfactory. He argued that drug trafficking and illegal immigration networks are often linked and that this is an EU-wide problem that must be addressed at that level.

Mr Maroni stressed the importance of initiatives with the countries that are the source of the immigration. Italy has established more than 30 bilateral agreements with African countries in an attempt to stem the flow of illegal immigrants and ensure their safe return passage to their countries of origin. The initiatives involve equipment provision, intelligence sharing, and training programs for the armed forces of these countries. Mr Maroni emphasised that this was a benefit for the security of all of Europe, not just Italy. Criminal organisations and human traffickers, however, understand the limits of these agreements and they choose the routes accordingly. An EU agreement would help to prevent this sort of problem.

Respectfully submitted,

The Honourable Senator Raynell Andreychuk
Canadian NATO Parliamentary Association (NATO PA)

Travel Costs

ASSOCIATION	Canadian NATO Parliamentary Association (NATO PA)
ACTIVITY	Mediterranean and Middle East Special Group (GSM)
DESTINATION	Rome, Italy
DATES	June 27-28, 2010
DELEGATION	
SENATE	Senator Raynell Andreychuk
HOUSE OF COMMONS	
STAFF	
TRANSPORTATION	\$6,653.63
ACCOMMODATION	\$516.39
HOSPITALITY	\$0.00
PER DIEMS	\$198.08
OFFICIAL GIFTS	\$0.00
MISCELLANEOUS / REGISTRATION FEES	\$0.00
TOTAL	\$7,368.10