

Canadian NATO
Parliamentary Association



Association parlementaire
canadienne de l'OTAN

**Report of the Canadian Parliamentary Delegation
respecting its participation at the 78th Rose-Roth Seminar
and at the Visit of the Sub-Committee on Transatlantic
Defence and Security Co-operation (DSCTC)**

Canadian NATO Parliamentary Association (NATO PA)

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Report

The Canadian NATO Parliamentary Association has the honour to present its report on the visit of the 78th Rose-Roth Seminar, held in London, United Kingdom, from November 21-22, 2011 and the Visit of the Sub-Committee on Transatlantic Defence and Security Co-operation (DSCTC), held in Lincoln and Glasgow, United Kingdom, from November 22-25, 2011.

The two visits were combined in this report, as they occurred consecutively.

REPORT ON THE VISIT OF THE 78TH ROSE-ROTH SEMINAR

LONDON, UNITED KINGDOM, NOVEMBER 21-22, 2011

More than 100 Members of Parliament from 33 NATO and partner countries gathered in London, UK, on 21-22 November for the 78th Rose-Roth Seminar, entitled “2011-2014: Afghanistan Towards Transition”. The seminar’s objective was to review the priorities of the NATO-led operation in Afghanistan and the challenges that lie ahead, as Afghanistan prepares to take over full responsibility for its security by the end of 2014.

Canada was represented by Senator Joseph A. Day.

Four months after the official start of the process of transition to Afghan-led responsibility for security, the seminar, organised by the NATO Parliamentary Assembly (NATO PA) in co-operation with the British Parliament and with the support of the Swiss government, provided a timely opportunity to assess progress regarding some key aspects of the mission. This included issues such as the building-up of the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF); good governance and the rule of law; reconciliation and reintegration; reconstruction and economic development; as well as regional co-operation. Participants engaged in extensive discussions with a broad range of high-level officials from NATO, Allied and partner governments, Afghanistan and Pakistan, as well as independent experts.

The debates made it clear that continued efforts by the Alliance, its partners and the Afghans themselves were needed to make progress irreversible. Afghanistan remained vital to Euro-Atlantic security, and the gains achieved so far would be at risk if the international community and NATO member states were unwilling or unable to provide sufficient support until, and also beyond, the end of 2014. The international conference on Afghanistan in Bonn in December 2011 and the NATO Summit in Chicago in May 2012 were seen as important opportunities to confirm the international community’s long-term commitment to Afghanistan.

AFGHANISTAN 2001-2011: LESSONS LEARNED AND THE WAY AHEAD

Opening the seminar, UK Foreign Secretary William Hague told participants that “hard-won but fragile progress” had been achieved in Afghanistan in many areas. Transition

to full Afghan ownership was the “right strategy”, as it provided a clear path, setting Afghanistan on “a journey of self-reliance” within a “credible” timeline, Mr Hague stressed. However, “enduring international commitment” and “strategic patience” would be essential, and international forces would have to “face the insurgency every remaining day” of their combat mission. This message was echoed by the two other speakers, Mr Zia Nezam, Senior Advisor in Afghanistan’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and Ambassador Stephen Evans, NATO’s Assistant Secretary General for Operations.

Among examples of the formidable progress the country has experienced since 2001, Mr Hague cited the remarkable increase in access to health care, to education – including the fact that one third of all children in schools are girls –, and the establishment of functioning institutions and political processes. Mr Nezam similarly pointed out the considerable achievements over the last ten years, in particular with regard to the security situation, services provided to the population and living conditions. He also highlighted progress in the political field, citing regular cycles of elections, freedom of the media, and women’s rights as positive examples. A recent poll by the Asia Foundation also indicated high levels of trust among the population in the ANSF, low level of support for the Taliban, and greater optimism about the future of the country.

According to Ambassador Evans, with 2011 marking ten years of international engagement in the country, the results were indeed significant. The Afghan state was increasingly able to assume its proper roles and responsibilities. This sense of strengthened ownership lies at the core of NATO’s current mission, and strategy.

The international community has begun implementing a strategy of transition to Afghan lead responsibility in matters of security, a process which was expected to be completed by the end of 2014. All three speakers stressed that the transition strategy reflects the Afghan authorities’ expressed desire to take full charge of the country’s affairs and security. Mr Nezam also underlined that the transition process would be of mutual benefit, at the same time decreasing the load shouldered by its international partners and increasing the trust of the Afghan population in their government.

In Ambassador Evans’ words, the adoption of this strategy at the Summit of Alliance Heads of State and Government in Lisbon in November 2010 had put NATO and the Afghan government on “a glide path” towards transition, and the “touchdown” in 2014 would see Afghanistan become fully responsible for its own security. According to current plans, areas across Afghanistan would be progressively transferred to the ANSF in five phases with an interval of approximately 18 months between each phase. A first transfer representing some 20% of the Afghan population was currently being implemented, and an announcement of the second phase was imminent. This second phase was expected to bring a total of 50% of the population under ANSF control, including a number of more difficult areas. It was hoped that Afghan authorities would be fully in charge of security across Afghanistan by 31 December 2014, at which point ISAF’s combat role would end. Ambassador Evans expected that already in mid-2013 a tipping point would be reached, when ISAF would cease to focus on combat missions, and would mostly advise, assist and support. It was further expected that by

2014, the ANSF would number around 350,000 men and women. Coupled with sustained training and equipping of the ANSF, this would allow ISAF to transfer and progressively end its combat mission.

According to Mr Hague, transition was “on course”. Mr Nezam echoed this assessment, noting that, naturally, transition would have to be gradual, but the first phase of transition was successful and happened without a major incident. Pointing to the good progress on building up the ANSF, he told the delegates that 3,500 soldiers were trained every week and that the ANSF already led over 50% of the operations against terrorists and insurgents. The forces would have the necessary capabilities to assume full responsibility for security in time, but stressed the need for further investment in training and equipment.

Ambassador Evans also agreed that “transition is on track, the direction is clear”, but warned that “it will be challenging”, as the enemy naturally had a role, a vote and a hand in shaping events. There was evidence that the insurgency was diminishing, but the Taliban had the capabilities and the capacity to conduct attacks and grab headlines. Commenting on recent high-profile attacks in Kabul, he stressed that these attacks were failures in military terms and that the ANSF had taken the lead role with NATO “in the back seat.”

Nevertheless, the insurgents would only be defeated when the Afghans felt fully confident that their government could provide services to the population, Mr Hague stressed. Developing a political process and strengthening the population’s allegiance to the state were also essential, he insisted. Further progress was also necessary in the fight against drugs and corruption. Good governance had always had the support of the people, Mr Nezam argued. Consolidating governance, however, also required avoiding “parallel structures” to that of the Afghan government, he stressed, referring in particular to Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs). In terms of the economy, an “Afghan-first” policy should be implemented, and he appreciated NATO support in this regard. Mr Nezam also called for fulfilling the goal of delivering 50% of international assistance through the Afghan budget.

While all speakers recognised that the assassination of the President of the High Peace Council, Burhanuddin Rabbani, had been a significant blow, they were also adamant that the Afghan President was strongly committed to the process of reconciliation, and that Mr Rabbani’s assassination should not be allowed to derail this process. Mr Hague explained that the international community was supporting reconciliation efforts, for example by reviewing the list of insurgent groups and leaders on the UN sanctions list. However, in his view, it was still unclear whether the insurgency was willing to negotiate.

All speakers stressed that engaging Pakistan was essential in this and other respects. According to Mr Nezam, the international community and Afghanistan itself had to ensure that terrorists could not enjoy safe hideouts outside Afghanistan, in particular in Pakistan. Afghan-Pakistani relations were not as good as both governments were

hoping for, Mr Nezam regretted. However, the Afghan government was taking unprecedented steps to improve the relationship. The recent strategic agreement between Afghanistan and India was not, by any means, directed against other governments, he underlined. Ambassador Evans, for his part, pointed to the vital importance of Pakistan in a successful transition process. NATO itself had to focus on its efforts in Afghanistan, as relations with Pakistan were being handled by member states on a bilateral basis. All speakers saw the recent regional conference in Istanbul as a step in the right direction and a good initial framework to approach regional co-operation.

All speakers agreed that beyond the end of the transition process in 2014, a long-term commitment was still needed, in particular to help Afghans build a capable ANSF and a viable state with a fair and inclusive political process. Mr Hague did not doubt that security challenges would remain after 2014. Pockets of insurgents would certainly persist. However, he was “cautiously optimistic” that, by continued growth, training and support, including financial support beyond 2014, the ANSF would be able to overcome these challenges. Given the current significant gap between the Afghan government’s income and the expected cost of maintaining the ANSF at planned levels, the issue of sustainability of the ANSF was mentioned by all three speakers as a key challenge for the post-transition phase. International support for the ANSF had to be forthcoming until the end of the decade, Ambassador Evans argued. All the gains made so far might otherwise be lost, he warned, citing lessons from the Soviet experience: the Najibullah regime failed when the Soviet Union stopped supporting it financially, he noted.

After a successful transition, Afghanistan would still need its friends and the presence of a security force in the country, Mr Nezam emphasized. “The end of transition should not mean the end of co-operation”, he said, noting that the Afghan government was determined to build strategic partnerships with NATO and Allied nations, an objective also endorsed by the traditional Loya Jirga convened the preceding week. Ambassador Evans confirmed that while ISAF should end its combat role at the end of 2014, NATO would live up to its commitments and build an enduring partnership. Afghanistan should never again become a safe haven for terrorists. While the details and structures had yet to be fully defined, the nucleus of this enduring partnership would focus on training, advising, mentoring the ANSF, and providing appropriate support where required.

Air support was one area where the ANSF would likely not be fully operational by 2014, Ambassador Evans noted. However, it was still unclear whether this capability would be provided by NATO or NATO Allies beyond 2014.

All speakers saw the upcoming conference on Afghanistan in Bonn in December 2011 as well as NATO’s Summit in Chicago in May 2012 as important opportunities to further strengthen the international community’s long term political, economic and security support to Afghanistan.

SECURITY: HOW TO MAKE TRANSITION WORK?

Lars Jensen, Director of Operations in the Office of the NATO Senior Civilian Representative in Afghanistan, presented ISAF's plans for a transition of the PRTs to be implemented parallel to the security transition. This had been an explicit request made by President Hamid Karzai in his 2009 inauguration speech, in which he outlined his vision for transition. Indeed, PRTs were perceived by Afghan authorities as parallel structures that competed with Afghan local authorities. Mr Jensen pointed out, however, that provincial governors had grown accustomed to the PRTs and the way they worked, and that they were still providing a lot of assistance in the areas currently transitioning.

A concept for PRT evolution until 2014 had thus taken shape, which should complement the process of security transition. PRT evolution plans would progressively transform PRTs from service-delivery to capacity-building organisations. At the end of this process, they would be able to hand over all service delivery functions mostly to the Afghan government.

According to Mr Jensen, progress achieved since President Karzai's inauguration speech was "impressive." Nevertheless, he stressed that the international community had to be "realistic", because it was not going to be "all good days". Overall, however, "there is a clear sense that we have a plan, and we are on the right track", he stated.

Brigadier General Tim Bevis, Director of the ISAF Strategic Transition and Assessments Group, provided further details about the implementation of the security transition. One of the key changes that transition had brought is the fact that decisions were now taken jointly at all levels; this was helping build confidence across the board, Brigadier General Bevis emphasized. Lessons were also being drawn from the first stages of transition, which initially focused on "low-hanging fruits" in order to prepare for the harder cases ahead. Brigadier General Bevis mentioned three of these: first was the need to do circular planning, combining ISAF's preference for a bottom-up approach and the Afghan government's predilection for a top-down approach; second, was that this was first and foremost about security transition; last, was the need to integrate the roadmap provided by the Afghan government's National Priority Plans.

The second phase, to be announced soon, would include areas with more difficult security and governance challenges. Plans were also already being drawn up for the third and fourth phases. Phase Five would, naturally, be the toughest challenge, Brigadier Bevis made clear.

Among some of the key priorities and challenges in implementing transition, Brigadier Bevis mentioned the need to: co-ordinate the ANSF's growth in size and skill with ISAF's thinning out; get command and control and operational co-ordination right; provide enablers for the ANSF; tie up the strategic and tactical levels; and integrate governance with security and development. He underlined that confidence, both in each other and in the results of transition, was of utmost importance for the success of transition.

Asked about the role and capabilities of the Afghan police, Brigadier Bevis acknowledged that severe problems had existed, especially in the uniformed police. However, he argued that, among other things, the higher commands were raising standards, drug abuse was falling, and discipline was improving. Progress had also been achieved in enhancing literacy among ANSF personnel. Over 100 000 personnel had now reached grade 1 literacy and should have reached grade 3 in three years' time. Special police forces, notably the Afghan National Civil Order Police (ANCOP), were already performing at very high standards, and enjoyed similar high levels of trust from the population as the army. He explained that one of the difficulties of transition was that the police would, for some time, need to continue to play a dual role, both as a community police and a security force.

Commenting on the security situation, Brigadier Bevis mentioned that the Taliban in the south and the southwest were "on the back foot". The number of enemy incidents there was falling for the first time in years, and there was a move from guerrilla warfare to terrorism, with, for example, high-profile urban terrorism. They were also increasingly shifting to the use of Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs), which rose by 20% over the past year. In this regard, Brigadier Bevis recalled that 85% of civilian casualties were caused by insurgents. In other words, "the Taliban are trying to undermine us, rather than compete with us", Brigadier Bevis stated, "they are not a ground holding insurgency".

Both speakers ended with an appeal to keep up the commitment to Afghanistan beyond 2014.

THE REGIONAL DIMENSION

"While transition is indispensable for success, the success of transition remains uncertain", Ashley Tellis, Senior Associate in the South Asia programme of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, told delegates. He saw two dimensions to success. The internal dimension had to do with the effectiveness of the Afghan government and of the ANSF, the external dimension with whether the international community's efforts to achieve security and political reconciliation will succeed. Mr Tellis likened this dimension to a donut: at its core were the United States, Afghanistan, Pakistan as well as the Afghan Taliban, and its penumbra also included India, Iran, the Central Asian Republics and Saudi Arabia. If the four players at the core are unable to agree on a solution, the position of the other players is irrelevant, Mr Tellis argued.

While all external actors shared the same basic objectives – a peaceful resolution leading to a stable, capable and independent Afghanistan, which should never again become a sanctuary for terrorists – several difficult challenges stood in the way of achieving these. A first question was whether the Taliban leadership was at all interested in reconciliation; this was still unclear. In this regard, Mr Tellis regretted the decision to announce the timeline for the drawdown of coalition troops at the same time as the troop surge because of the signal this gave to the Taliban that they could "run down the clock."

A second challenge related to Pakistan's strategy regarding reconciliation in Afghanistan. According to Mr Tellis, Pakistan's "spectre of strategic encirclement" had led it to pursue the objective of "a stable but subordinate" Afghanistan by supporting the Afghan Taliban, an approach that puts Pakistan on a "collision course" with US and international strategies. Mr Tellis was convinced, however, that the United States and its partners did not have any alternative to engagement with Pakistan, although the question remained whether Islamabad would settle for "the second best option" in relation to Afghanistan. This matter was further complicated by the fact that Pakistan's civilian government and its military held different views on these issues. Similarly, it remained unclear whether other regional players – India, Iran and Central Asia – will be satisfied with the Afghanistan the international community is planning to leave behind.

Mr Tellis argued that a solution to the Kashmir problem, which was at the heart of the Indian-Pakistani rivalry, would not be found before 2014, but was also not essential to solving Afghanistan. Iran, for its part, was playing a very complex and subtle game, Mr Tellis pointed out. In the short term, Iran would continue to seek to "inflict pain on the United States in Afghanistan", but Iran would turn their back on the Taliban as soon as they would get too close to regaining power.

Farooq Hamid Naek, Chairman of the Senate of Pakistan, told the delegates that he wanted to clarify perceptions of Pakistan, arguing that it was very easy to criticise from the outside, whereas Pakistan's perspective was that of "a boxer in the ring". "Afghanistan is at the heart of Asia", Mr Naek stated, a peaceful and prosperous Afghanistan would therefore be good for the region. He acknowledged that Pakistan and Afghanistan shared a unique relationship, and their destiny was inextricably linked. He was thus grateful that relations had improved since about 2008.

The instability of three decades had had an impact on the region, especially in Pakistan. He told delegates that his country was the largest victim of terrorism, with over 30,000 civilians and 5,000 military personnel lost in the fight against it. He regretted that Pakistan had never been given proper recognition for its efforts. Nevertheless, it was wholeheartedly committed to combating terrorism; terrorists are "enemies of Islam", Mr Naek stated. He denied the Pakistan government had ever protected Osama bin Laden and urged the parliamentarians to stop being so critical of Pakistan, as the country was "part of the solution, not the problem". "The trust deficit must be removed" and "an end must be put to the blame game", he insisted.

Pakistan was also "fully committed to the reconciliation process", as military solutions alone were insufficient. In this regard, he regretted the loss of former President Rabbani, reminding participants that Pakistan had offered its full assistance with the investigation, and that Afghanistan and Pakistan had established a Joint Commission on reconciliation. Pakistan did not want any negative spill-over from Afghanistan after the end of transition, and therefore supported a stable Afghanistan with an inclusive government, which, in his view, also meant increasing the representation of Pashtuns from the South.

Mr Naek also insisted that economic development, especially in the border regions, was essential for long-term stability and would help address a host of underlying issues connected with poverty. He called on international partners to support regional development. The key was to join hands in these challenges, he concluded.

NATO PARTNERS IN ISAF: LESSONS LEARNED AND PERSPECTIVES ON TRANSITION

Coming from the first per capita troop contributor among all non-NATO ISAF countries, Giorgi Kandelaki, the Head of the Georgian Delegation to the NATO PA, underlined that the reason why partners were engaged in Afghanistan was that they all understood that NATO was there because a secure and stable Afghanistan was in everyone's interest.

A representative of another key contributor, Brendan Nelson, Ambassador of Australia to the EU, NATO, Belgium and Luxembourg, underlined his country's firm commitment to the Afghanistan mission. With about 1,550 personnel in Afghanistan, Australia was the largest non-NATO contributing country in absolute numbers, the ninth largest ISAF troop contributor overall, and the third largest contributor of Special Operations Forces. In his mind, there were four reasons why Australia saw their commitment to Afghanistan as crucial to its national interest. First was the security alliance with the United States. Second was the fact that Australian citizens had fallen victim to terrorist attacks, notably in Bali and Jakarta; one of the perpetrators of the 2002 Bali bombing had in fact trained in Afghanistan. A third reason was that "our generation is fighting a global insurgency throughout the world", Ambassador Nelson stated, adding that this insurgency was fundamentally opposed to freedom and other basic human rights. Fourth, to be engaged in Afghanistan was simply "the right thing to do" according to Ambassador Nelson. Australia was trying to defend its core values; leaving this task to NATO member states alone would be "completely irresponsible", he stressed.

Commenting on Australia's relations with NATO, Ambassador Nelson explained that while Australia initially felt that NATO partners' voice was not heard in shaping operations and strategic decisions, it was now satisfied with the provisions of NATO's new Strategic Concept, which led to the establishment of a formal mechanism for relations with NATO's operational partners. Australia also welcomed the Strategic Concept's endorsement of a global approach to Euro-Atlantic security, and of the need for NATO to develop a civilian capability.

Australia would remain committed to Afghanistan until the end of the decade, Ambassador Nelson confirmed. After transition would be complete, Australia would switch to its main effort to development co-operation, mentoring and special operations. He stressed the need to plan the international community's post-2014 commitment now, citing the long-term financial commitment to Afghanistan, the 2014 presidential elections, reconciliation, quality of the ANSF and the role of Afghanistan's neighbours, as key issues in this regard. Afghanistan's revenue gap was a particularly worrying problem, Ambassador Nelson emphasized: according to World Bank estimates, if the economy's annual growth remained at the current rate of 6%, the

country would need 20 years to double its per capita income. It was therefore imperative to develop a framework with the Afghans, and “turn geopolitical uncertainties into economic and other types of opportunities”.

Ambassador Nelson also cited a number of positive developments. He drew on a recent poll by the US-based Asia Foundation that saw 46% of Afghans arguing that their country was going in the right direction, while only 35% were seeing it going the other way – an improvement compared to past polls. Eighty seven per cent of Afghans also believed the ANA was helping improve the security situation. In Australia’s area of deployment in the South, the situation was improving, and the ANSF had, in some cases, performed heroically, Ambassador Nelson reported.

Colonel Mats Danielsson, the former Commander of the Swedish PRT Mazar-i-Sharif and now the Commander of the Military Academy in Karlberg, provided an overview of the lessons learned from the Swedish experience in Northern Afghanistan. The PRT covered an area four times the size of Kosovo. Yet, the military component consisted of a light mechanized battalion, with nominally 750 soldiers – most of these Swedish – compared with the 16,000 troops deployed to Kosovo at the peak of the deployment. The military presence in the area was being progressively reduced; by 2014, no more than 200 would remain.

Colonel Danielsson argued that Sweden had come quite far down the transition path in their area of responsibility. The ANSF had now fully taken the lead in the PRT area as part of the first phase of transition. Step-by-step, the Swedish forces were thus moving into a mentoring, advising, supporting, and enabling role. The Swedish PRT was also shifting to a civilian leadership, and it was hoped that the PRT could be handed over to the Afghans in 2013. Nevertheless, he cautioned that there were challenges every day and that realities on the ground would ultimately determine the pace of progress. He acknowledged that the security situation had worsened, including an increased IED threat, which had forced Swedish personnel to start moving using armoured vehicles and thus made communication with the local population more difficult.

Colonel Danielsson ended with a number of lessons and recommendations for how to implement transition. He stressed that it was important to carefully choose the area to be handed over first, so it can provide a positive example for other areas. Transition will accelerate under Afghan leadership. Strong leadership and governance were therefore essential; in Balkh province, the governor had been very successful, but still needed outside support to secure these successes. It was important to understand “transition does not drive the mission, but the mission objectives deliver transition”, Colonel Danielsson stressed.

ADDRESSING GOVERNANCE CHALLENGES: PROSPECTS FOR 2014 AND BEYOND

Professor Ali Jalali, a Distinguished Professor at the Near East South Asia (NESA) Center for Strategic Studies at the US National Defense University, provided his assessment of the current state of governance in Afghanistan.

According to Professor Jalali, Afghanistan's current constitution had brought the political system from excessive decentralisation under the Taliban rule to excessive centralisation today. While Professor Jalali did not believe the Taliban could return to power, he saw three major flaws in the current system, which imperatively needed to be addressed.

The first major flaw was that too much power had been concentrated in the executive branch, which still did not have the capacities to make the best use of these formal powers, Professor Jalali argued. It lent itself to abuses of authority – regardless of how many rules were supposed to prevent this. Too few powers rested with the parliament and judiciary. While the 2010 Kabul Conference argued for “whole-of-government” and “whole-of-state” reforms, including building up ministries' capacity, little had happened in this regard, he argued. In the current situation, the government wanted to undermine the parliament and vice versa. Only the international community served as check on the executive – instead of the Afghan institutions. The overlapping mandates of ministries and of sub-national structures, and the unclear distribution of power between formal and informal institutions were also serious problem, as was the incapacity of the Kabul government to control and co-ordinate international assistance.

The second crucial problem lay in corruption and the predatory nature of the Afghan state, Professor Jalali said. President Karzai lacked the political muscle to offset local power brokers. Instead, they became the “go to” choice. The political and economic sectors were thus invaded by corruption. Formal structures were used as a tool for parochial networks. Power brokers were also utilised by ISAF, Professor Jalali underlined. He also accused the Afghan government of being the driver of the insurgency at the local level, as there were no legitimate and effective tools to redress grievances. To address corruption, it was not enough to simply arrest people; it had to be rooted out at a deeper level. For, after all, it was a “low-risk business in a high-risk environment”, Professor Jalali cautioned.

Lastly, the unsustainability of aid limited the development of good governance structures in the country. Eighty per cent of aid was delivered “off-budget”, he regretted. According to IMF estimates, at current growth rates, only in 2024 will Afghanistan be economically and financially self-sustaining, Professor Jalali noted. In the meantime, the ANSF would need 4 to 6 billion USD to be kept afloat. The international community should therefore think of how the current security sector could be financed in a different way. The institution of a draft was one suggestion, but a true peace settlement would also ease the burden on the ANSF. It was clear, however, that in the short term, the reduction of the international presence and assistance would lead to a recession.

The Afghan state needed true structural reform in order to boost its capacity to deliver services to its population. Empowering peripheral areas was one requirement, Professor Jalali stressed. Currently, the strongest governor is the one who illegally steals money for legitimate purposes. This had to change, Professor Jalali underlined. Greater priority should also be given to combating drug trafficking, investing in agriculture and mining, and creating jobs.

Constitutional change, including the institution of a Prime Minister in charge of co-ordinating government activities, may be required at a later stage, Professor Jalali suggested. He estimated that it would take five to ten years of continued international assistance after the end of transition for the political system to become sustainable.

Professor Jalali pointed to three major problems in the judicial system: lack of capacity, contradictory laws and frameworks as well as the absence of court houses in many parts of the country. The current lack of co-ordination between the police, the prosecution and the judiciary also needed to be addressed.

Turning to the role of women in Afghan society, he told the audience that they played a much bigger role today, but that profound social change would take time.

CAN AFGHANISTAN BUILD A SUSTAINABLE ECONOMY

Lindy Cameron, Former Head of the UK Provincial Reconstruction Team in Helmand and Member of the Royal College of Defence Studies at the Department for International Development, started by addressing a key misunderstanding that she had seen time and again: while many people thought that development agencies, in fact, develop, it is rather the private sector that develops the country with outside agencies as facilitators.

Ranking 172 out of 187 in the United Nations' Human Development Index, Afghanistan was presented with a massive challenge. Even if it were to grow for 20 years at current rates, it would not do much better than certain parts of Pakistan today, she argued. Ms Cameron therefore underlined that one had to be realistic, put things into context and get expectations and the starting point right. In the medium term, Afghanistan could only afford a very small state, she argued. Among other things, it had a broken infrastructure, a big educational gap and was a landlocked country. While Afghanistan had made dramatic improvements in education, it would deal with the consequences of a "lost generation".

The overarching goal in the UK PRT's efforts in Helmand during her time had been to help improve security in the province, so that capable Afghan authorities could set the conditions for the private sector, i.e. markets that functioned, for example for agricultural products. It was important to understand that the goal was therefore not to build a sustainable economy, but to reach the point where that could become the main focus.

The narcotics industry had posed a particular challenge in Helmand. One reason why opium was so attractive was that it could be stored. Many alternative crops suffered from the bad infrastructure: products could simply not reach markets in time. Opium was still very attractive in Helmand, but the governor had initiated a good alternative crop programme, combined with eradication efforts and a working judicial system. Nevertheless, to opt out from producing opium was still a very tough individual choice, as families most often did not have any savings that could buffer short-term transition losses. Whereas economic development would take a long time, Ms Cameron was

impressed with progress achieved in developing functioning markets in Helmand. The government should not try to create wealth, she argued, but rather facilitate private investments.

Donald “Larry” Sampler, Principal Deputy Assistant to the Administrator and Deputy Director of the Office of Afghanistan & Pakistan Affairs at the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), argued that “Afghan solutions to Afghan problems” was what would eventually allow sustainable development in Afghanistan to work, despite the hard challenges. In general, the role of the international community was to “stay out of the way”, and “help when we can, where we can”.

The development of Afghanistan hinged on civil society, business communities as well as the government. A main, but hard, question was, whether the Afghan government possessed the necessary tools to provide the right framework for good economic progress. He referred to a new World Bank study that looked at the consequences of transition for the Afghan economy. One of the findings was that there was not enough money and intellectual capacities to get it right. Afghanistan was too dependent on providing services (53%) – a sector which would inevitably decline as ISAF transitioned. Too little funds were spent on agricultural development, where Afghanistan indeed possessed major potential. The revenues of the Afghan state were increasing, but domestic revenues could not offset transition costs.

There were some rays of light, however. Copper mines were increasing their revenue substantially, and the drug economy was going down: whereas it made up 61% of the Afghan economy in 2004, it represented only 11% in 2010.

In the end, the Afghans would make transition work if the international community gave them the chance: Afghans had always been entrepreneurs, but they currently lacked the necessary stability and continuity. He pointed out that Afghanistan was currently one of the worst places in the world to do business, inhibited by, for example, red tape and lacking transparency. Parallel legal systems also meant that processes could drag on for a long time, since Afghan businessmen knew how to beat the system. Ms Cameron was more hopeful regarding Afghanistan’s business communities. In Helmand, for example, they were trying to form business associations, as a possible first step towards a chamber of commerce. Indeed, businesses were responding to market changes fairly effectively, Ms Cameron told the delegates.

Mr Sampler also noted that the Afghan government was getting better at disbursing aid money through the regular budget process, even though the target of channelling 50% of aid through Afghan institutions was not going to be met soon. Ms Cameron concurred, citing the positive example provided by the Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund.

There was great hope also for a transit economy in Central Asia, but that required investment in infrastructure whose benefits would not be appreciated immediately.

JOINT COMMITTEE MEETING: NATO BEYOND TRANSITION IN AFGHANISTAN

The seminar was followed by a special meeting in which parliamentarians discussed broader issues of Alliance coherence, co-ordination and solidarity. Several themes and views emerged from these discussions, which were, for the most part, widely shared among participants.

It was argued that in the last few months the tactical momentum had swung in favour of ISAF and away from the insurgents. This was particularly clear in Kandahar and Helmand. There was evidence of a decline in the insurgents' capabilities. There was therefore a clear sense that the tactics, resources and direction were right, that there was a path to success. Nevertheless, many challenges remained and tactical successes needed to be translated into strategic advantages.

Strategic communication was also a key element of success, and one which needed to be managed better. Spectacular attacks in recent months had grabbed the headlines; this created a false perception which needed to be corrected. The precedent of NATO's operation in Kosovo showed the importance of psychology in a conflict, and convincing the other side that it will not win. There was also a clear sense that not enough was done to explain NATO and the reasons of the Alliance's engagement in Afghanistan to citizens of the Alliance.

Transition was about creating the conditions for enduring success, not about leaving Afghanistan, delegates were told. Transition was a process, not an event, and was more about confidence than about territory. Supporting, mentoring, enabling and sustaining the ANSF were the key elements of transition. Addressing challenges to the ANSF was essential; priorities included: reducing attrition to sustain the growth in personnel; enhancing leadership at all levels; providing appropriate equipment; building out reliance on ISAF enablers; and defining the long-term affordability of the ANSF. As transition is implemented, a delicate balance would need to be struck between the progressive thinning out of combat forces and the building up of the ANSF. Transition should therefore start sooner rather than later in more difficult parts of the country, while ISAF troop numbers are higher.

Defining the post-2014 engagement was also seen as key to the pre-2014 success. This meant resolving another difficult equation: the size of the post-2015 ANSF versus the level of international assistance. It was hoped that both elements of the equation would be clearer by the time of NATO's Summit in Chicago in May 2012. In military terms, the type of assistance required post-2014 would likely include some support for the Afghan special operations forces and for sustaining the ANSF as an institution, but assistance on the field to the ANSF would likely be minimal.

Safe havens for insurgent fighters in Pakistan were seen as a remaining serious challenge. Another key issue was improving governance, so that the Afghan state could effectively take over when transition would be coming to an end. Doing better than insurgents on these two fronts was seen as essential.

While traditional conservative views were widespread among Southern Pashtuns, support for the Taliban among this segment of the population was assessed at 10-15%. It should be expected that certain Taliban will remain irreconcilable; others will want to reintegrate, but with some form of recognition and the guarantee of a certain standing.

Co-ordination of policies within member states, between Allies and with other international actors needed to improve, many participants argued. After transition, there was no doubt between delegates, an enduring partnership with Afghanistan needed to be build by NATO and its member states. Furthermore, the lessons learned in Afghanistan and the capabilities developed needed to be transitioned into the Alliance's and member states core capabilities, so that they would not get lost in the future.

The meeting also discussed the broader implications of the Afghan mission, as well as operations in Libya, for NATO. While there was no doubt that, in Article 5 situations, Alliance cohesion would be at a maximum, Allies' future response to non-Article 5 situations was less clear. Missions in both Afghanistan and Libya were raising concern that future operations, even if approved by all Allies, would in fact be implemented by coalitions of the willing, possibly also with a greater imposition of caveats on the use of troops. This led to further concern of a two-tier Alliance with unequal burden-sharing. These fears were compounded by the impact of the global financial and economic crisis on resources and defence capabilities.

Delegates heard strong warnings that a world without NATO would impose an even greater burden on the United States and all Allies. Some participants called for further efforts towards pooling and sharing, as well as force modernisation. In times of budget consolidations in most member states, care should also be taken to inform in due time or co-ordinate with, Allies. Further integrating partners into NATO structures, while maintaining the specificity of the Euro-Atlantic link, could also be valuable

REPORT ON THE VISIT OF THE SUB-COMMITTEE ON TRANSATLANTIC DEFENCE AND SECURITY CO-OPERATION (DSCTC)

LINCOLN AND GLASGOW, UNITED KINGDOM, NOVEMBER 22-25, 2011

The United Kingdom's (UK) contributions to the North Atlantic Alliance's implementation of its November 2010 Strategic Concept are significant and multifaceted, and will endure despite significant budgetary austerity in the coming years. This was the principal message delivered to members of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly's Sub-Committee on Transatlantic Defence and Security Cooperation during a visit to the UK from 22 to 25 November 2011.

The delegation, led by Sub-Committee Chairman Sir John Stanley (UK), was composed of 19 members of the national parliaments of 12 NATO member states. In a series of visits to military installations featuring substantive discussions on issues ranging from Alliance operations to nuclear deterrence and missile defence, the Sub-

Committee engaged with top-level Ministry of Defence leaders, as well as senior UK and international military commanders. Delegates were also afforded direct access to specific UK assets, from cutting edge radar facilities to a nuclear submarine base. Delegates came away with a sense of the breadth of advanced capabilities maintained by the UK to support its national and Alliance commitments.

THE UNITED KINGDOM AND NATO

NATO remains the cornerstone of the UK's defence, Gerald Howarth, MP, Minister for International Security Strategy, assured the delegation.

Minister Howarth suggested that operations in the Balkans, Afghanistan, and Libya demonstrated that NATO continued to have a role to play in the post-cold war world. Indeed, not enough had been made of NATO's success in leading the Libya operation; its rapid response to a UN Security Council mandate, and its ability to link in regional partners into the operation was an unquestionable success, he stated.

However, he warned that the operation had also demonstrated some of the Alliance's weaknesses, in particular the low number of countries taking part in the operation and in combat strike roles. Mr Howarth also warned about the impact of decreasing defence spending across the Alliance, in Europe especially but also including the potentially dramatic sequestration process affecting the US budget. Europe's unsustainable dependence on US capabilities was underlined by the fact that 27 of 42 air-to-air refuelling tankers in the Libya operation were provided by the United States. With two million people under arms across Europe, the Alliance should not struggle to find operationally deployable forces when they are needed, he added.

The United Kingdom supported the NATO Secretary General's "smart defence" initiative, which seeks to find multinational projects that would provide a cost-effective means of maintaining critical capabilities. Mr Howarth also called for an "audit" of what capabilities are currently available to the Alliance and to what extent these are being "hollowed out" by defence cuts. Maintaining capabilities in an unpredictable security environment was critical, he stated, although fiscal health was a necessary pre-condition for defence strength.

The United Kingdom's treaty-based defence co-operation with France was approaching its first anniversary. These two countries combined to form 50% of European defence spending (and 75% of defence research and development), Howarth informed members. Many synergies existed between the countries, creating a natural context for potentially important and fruitful co-operation, he said. Tom McKane, the Ministry of Defence's Director General for Security Policy, added that the main features of co-operation over the last 12 months included discussions on a combined joint expeditionary force; agreement on the development of a hydrodynamics facility for nuclear weapons research; and co-operation on equipment development. The United Kingdom engaged in other partnerships as well, such as a "Northern Group" of countries which focuses on a range of shared security interests (for example, counter-piracy); and structured dialogues on defence issues with Germany and Italy.

While the United Kingdom was active in the development of the European Union's Common Defence and Security Policy, he emphasised that concerns remained about the possibility of the EU duplicating structures that were already in place at NATO, a waste of resources for organisations with largely overlapping memberships. On the other hand, he had sensed over the last 18 months a growing recognition by EU members that duplication of this sort made no sense.

Mr McKane elaborated on the UK's contribution to the implementation of NATO's November 2010 Strategic Concept. The UK government had recently engaged in two fundamental reviews: the laying out of a National Security Strategy, and the Strategic Defence and Security Review (SDSR). These had been deliberately linked with the government's overall budgetary decision-making process. The resulting policy documents were fully consistent with NATO's strategic concept, Mr McKane assured delegates, stating that NATO had been consulted during the UK process.

Mr McKane stressed that, despite criticisms that the SDRS had been driven by financial considerations, it was clear that without a strong economic foundation, a strong UK defence was an impossibility. He also emphasised that the United Kingdom would continue to remain above the NATO-agreed 2% defence spending-to-GDP ratio in the current planning period of roughly four years. The United Kingdom defence posture that will result from these reviews was described as "adaptive", and characterised as light and flexible in the face of an uncertain future. The United Kingdom would maintain a broad spectrum of capabilities (rather than a full spectrum), and would maintain the ability to regenerate additional capabilities in the future.

One area where the UK was making additional investments, despite overall budget reductions, was in cyber security. The new funding amounted to 650 million pounds over the next three to four years, which would contribute to the building up of a new UK Defence Cyber Operations Group, based on a cadre of experts tasked with securing UK networks and developing new capabilities. The new Group would conduct operations, ensure the cyber element was at the core of all defence activities, and integrate planning, training and exercises. A new Cyber Security Policy white paper laying out the roles and responsibilities of various ministries in the cyber domain was to be published shortly.

The United Kingdom's deployable operational forces also provided a major contribution to the Alliance, McKane stated, laying out the roles of the Joint Rapid Reaction Forces (force elements of which are made available to NATO operations and the NATO Response Force) and the HQ Allied Rapid Reaction Corps (a High Readiness Force HQ, currently deployed as HQ ISAF). The United Kingdom was a significant contributor to the NATO Response Force, providing uncaveated headquarters and force elements. The United Kingdom provided NATO Response Force's Maritime Component Command in 2011, and will do so again in 2016. It will provide both the Land Component Command and Air Component Command in 2013 and 2017. McKane also described the United Kingdom's Future Force 2020 concept. Amongst other capabilities, this will include: the Trident force and supporting capabilities, seven new Astute class hunter-killer submarines, a carrier-strike capability based around a single

new operational aircraft carrier from 2020 with a second kept at 'extended readiness', and a surface fleet of 19 frigates and destroyers; five new multi-role brigades structured to give the United Kingdom the ability to deploy highly capable assets quickly but also to prepare a greater scale and range of capability if required; and highly capable multi-role combat aircraft, strategic and tactical airlift, and other capabilities such as helicopters and Intelligence, Surveillance, Target Acquisition, and Reconnaissance (ISTAR).

UNITED KINGDOM'S NUCLEAR DETERRENT

Given the NATO consensus that the Alliance would retain a nuclear deterrent as long as nuclear weapons existed, the United Kingdom was committed to maintaining a continuous at sea sub-marine-based deterrent, the MoD's McKane stated. The government had decided to reduce the numbers of operational missile tubes and warheads in the coming years, as well as extending the life of the current generation of Vanguard nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarines (SSBNs), for a total cost reduction of three billion pounds over ten years. Decisions on moving to newer capabilities were deferred to later in the decade. (see slide for addtl details as necessary).

A visit to Her Majesty's Naval Base Clyde at Faslane gave the delegation a rare opportunity to view an active military nuclear submarine facility. The facility is the Royal Navy's submarine repair and maintenance facility; it also conducts nuclear weapons storage and processing. Employing 5,600 personnel, the base currently ported four SSBNs; one nuclear-powered attack submarine (SSN); and seven Mine Counter Measure Vessels (MCMVs).

The base's primary mission was the provision of continuous at sea deterrence. This requirement was a challenging one, the delegation was told, given the limited numbers of submarines available, and requirements for maintenance and crew training. The challenge was exacerbated by the extreme complexity of nuclear submarines, the aging of the fleet, and the very broad range of skills required to support the mission.

Its mine counter measure vessels were also regularly deployed, including one ship that had just returned at the time of the delegation's visit from a 94-day mission off of Libya, performing mine clearance in support of NATO's Operation Unified Protector. Indeed, two of the MCMVs were continuously committed to NATO.

The base also hosted a very busy maritime search and rescue (SAR) unit, an extremely sophisticated training facility for submariners, and a 170-man Royal Marines element whose mission was close protection of navy units. The unit was in high demand and deployed operationally on a constant and increasing basis, including on counter-piracy missions.

Finally, delegates also visited the NATO Submarine Rescue System¹, a joint UK, French and Norwegian effort that would come to the support of a NATO submarine in difficulty – or likely any other as well. Delegates were informed that out of 34

submarine incidents since the beginning of the cold war, only two have seen successful rescue attempts. The System, since 2008, provided a unique combination of capabilities, to include an extremely capable rescue boat, as well as a pressurised (hyperbaric) medical facility to treat injured submariners who have been rescued without exposing them to the additional risk of decompression problems. The rescue equipment was kept on 12-hours notice to move and could be anywhere in the world in three to four days.

UNITED KINGDOM AND MISSILE DEFENCE

Although it would actively participate in the evolving NATO missile defence programme, including through Alliance common funding, the United Kingdom had no plan to develop its own national missile defence capability, according to Mr McKane. The United Kingdom's contribution to the US European Phased Adaptive Approach on missile defence also included radar installations at Royal Air Force (RAF) station Fylingdales and RAF Menwith Hill.

In a visit to the sophisticated Ballistic Missile Early Warning radar station at RAF Fylingdales, the delegation was briefed on the mission performed by the 360 military and civilian personnel operating the Solid State Phased Array Radar (SSPAR) at the facility, namely the provision of uninterrupted ballistic missile warning, as well as space surveillance. The radar, which searches out to some 3,000 miles continuously, detects and warns of ballistic missile attack against the United Kingdom, as well as UK forces deployed out of area; its coverage also includes the United States (including Alaska), western Europe, and Canada. Its space mission focuses on tracking and reporting space objects (some 38,000 to date) as well as their potential re-entry into earth's atmosphere.

The installation has been a fundamental element of the bilateral co-operation between the United Kingdom and the United States for some 44 years, the delegation learned, with the station reporting to both UK and US chains of command. In the NATO context, delegates were reminded that the United Kingdom supported NATO's missile defence plans through contributions to the common funding of elements of such a system, as well as through bilateral data exchange with the United States that would contribute to the US's European Phased Adaptive Approach (EPAA) to missile defence. The Fylingdales radar thus contributed data in the context of ensuring the effectiveness of the EPAA. NATO's missile defence tests had already demonstrated that the system could integrate the data from the EPAA (from Fylingdales) into its functioning.

RAF WADDINGTON

A visit to RAF Waddington provided the delegation with an overview of the United Kingdom's Intelligence, Surveillance, Target Acquisition, and Reconnaissance (ISTAR) assets. The station's roughly 3,000 personnel supported five different types of aircraft, 25% of which were deployed on operations at any given time. The mission of the base was to deliver agile and adaptable ISTAR to NATO operations, including in Libya and Afghanistan. The aircraft –the Sentinel, the E3D, the Rivet Joit, the Reaper

Unmanned Aerial Vehicle, and the Shadow – all provided a different capability in operational use, ideally working in a combined fashion to provide comprehensive information in a complex battlespace. In the NATO context, the E3D was considered a UK contribution to the NATO Airborne Warning and Control System (AWACS) force: the 6 E3Ds were part of a wider NATO Allied Early Warning force which included 17 additional aircraft based in Geilenkirchen, Germany.

The delegation also carefully reviewed the RAF Waddington's Air Battlespace Training Centre, a networked simulated combat environment that served to train personnel in proper procedure and communications, and which could run joint simulations with similar facilities in the United States. After an initial capability demonstration ending 2008, the Centre became fully operational, providing 'synthetic operational air training' in order to address the constraints inherent in 'live' training, including cost and environmental considerations. The delegation viewed training modules specifically designed to prepare forces for the United Kingdom's Afghan operations. Delegates noted that while this extremely advanced training capability was accessed by a small number of Allied forces, it had the potential to serve as a significant NATO-wide force multiplier, should far greater use of it be made of across NATO forces.

MCC NORTHWOOD / NATO'S COUNTER-PIRACY EFFORTS

In a visit to Allied Maritime Command Northwood, the delegation was briefed on the specificities of the Maritime domain, described by one briefer as the "Achilles heel of our societies." The challenges inherent to this domain ranged from classic naval conflicts to failed coastal states to trafficking in humans, narcotics or weapons; these were further aggravated by a layer of additional complications including pollution, trade disruption, economic interests, and natural disasters, to name only a few. Ninety per cent of the total volume of global trade moves by sea, the delegation learned, and 95% travelling through nine particularly vulnerable "chokepoints" such as the Straits of Hormuz.

NATO's recently-approved Maritime Strategy aligned with the Strategic Concept and laid out maritime tasks in contribution to Allied security that include deterrence and collective defence; crisis management; co-operative security; and maritime security.

Maritime Command Northwood itself is in the midst of implementing the new NATO Command Structure, shifting from a subordination to NATO's Joint Force Commands, to a direct report to Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe (SHAPE). Under the new arrangements, Northwood will continue to have operational command of NATO's counter-piracy operation, named Ocean Shield. Vice-Admiral Witthauer, Deputy Commander of Maritime Command Northwood, praised the advantages of the move, suggesting that the co-location with the EU anti-piracy mission, as well as physical proximity to representatives of the naval industry located in downtown London, allowed for uniquely effective liaison.

The military effort to counter piracy was complicated by a number of factors, the most significant being the vast operational area off the horn of Africa.

In addition to a number of independent deploying nations, three main coalitions were conducting operations: NATO (TF508); the European Union (TF465); and a Coalition Maritime Force (CMF – TF151), a US-led effort headquartered in Bahrain. Northwood officials suggested that co-operation amongst all these actors (as well as with the naval industry) was very well developed, even if their rules of engagement often differed, and in the case of independent deployers, were not transparent.

Northwood officials suggested that while the military efforts were making an impact, it has not been sufficient to create a deterrent effect on potential pirates. Indeed, the increasing ransom totals have led to a spread of the pirating phenomenon, which is now observable off of Western Africa.²

The effectiveness of military efforts could potentially be increased by enlarging the mandate of the military coalitions, allowing for the destruction of pirate supply depots on land (from sea), Northwood officials suggested, but this step had not been agreed politically by NATO.

Still, even more effective military efforts could only address the symptoms of piracy, rather than the political and economic roots of the problem, whose sources were on land. Without greater efforts by the international community to deliver economic opportunities and governance in Somalia, the problem of piracy was likely to endure for decades, Northwood officials warned. A move towards privatising the fight against piracy was already visible, the officials stated, relating that a significant number of ships travelling through the affected areas now had private armed security on board.

1 The program is not formally a NATO-directed activity; it was jointly launched by 9 nations but now included only three participating nations.

2 Admiral Witthauer sought to place the significant sums involved in pirate-related ransoms in context, suggesting that they bore no comparison with the hundreds of billions of dollars involved in the maritime drug trade in the Carribean, for example, which had direct impact on the national interests of NATO nations.

Respectfully submitted,

The Honorable Senator Joseph A. Day
Canadian NATO Parliamentary Association (NATO PA)

Travel Costs

ASSOCIATION	Canadian NATO Parliamentary Association (NATO PA)
ACTIVITY	78 th Rose-Roth Seminar and Visit of the Sub-Committee on Transatlantic Defence and Security Co-operation (DSCTC)
DESTINATION	London, Lincoln and Glasgow, United Kingdom
DATES	November 21-25, 2011
DELEGATION	
SENATE	Senator Joseph A. Day
HOUSE OF COMMONS	
STAFF	
TRANSPORTATION	\$1,574.51
ACCOMMODATION	\$1,338.20
HOSPITALITY	\$0.00
PER DIEMS	\$644.19
OFFICIAL GIFTS	\$0.00
MISCELLANEOUS / REGISTRATION FEES	\$0.00
TOTAL	\$3,556.90