

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 15 – 17, 2009**

And

**Annual Economics and Security Committee Consultation
with the OECD**

**Paris, France
February 18-19, 2009**

Report

The Canadian NATO Parliamentary Association has the honour to present its REPORT on the Joint meeting of the Defence and Security, Economics and Security and Political Committees of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly, held in Brussels and Paris, February 15-19, 2009. The Canadian delegation was represented by Senator Jane Cordy, Senator Joseph A. Day, Senator Pierre Claude Nolin, Mrs. Lois Brown, M.P., Mrs. Cheryl Gallant, M.P., Mr. John McKay, M.P. and Mr. Claude Bachand, M.P.

During their meetings, delegates again followed the tradition of "Chatham House Rules", which stipulate that debate should be as open as possible and that no attribution be made.

The 2009 session was opened by the Hon. John Tanner, President of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly. During the ensuing discussion delegates focused on the future of the Alliance, given its 60th anniversary. It was generally agreed that NATO could not do everything and needed to ensure the retention of its core capabilities. Some noted that the Euro-Atlantic area was more stable than ever and this, it was felt, was largely due to the existence of the Alliance.

It was also observed that the mood among Alliance members was contemplative rather than euphoric. Afghanistan was recognized as a problem still requiring resolution, but, on the positive side there were welcome signals coming from the new U.S. administration. The NATO – Russia relationship was again on a positive footing and the French return to the Alliance's military structure was a welcome development. Many also noted that they were looking forward to the finalization of the "new strategic concept."

Some delegates suggested that the Alliance seems to have lost its strategic consensus. However, this was recognized as being due to the fact that the organization was in a phase of transition and was waiting for the new U.S. administration to make its intentions clear. It was argued that NATO was in its fourth, and most difficult, incarnation. The first was from 1945 to the end of the Cold War in 1989 – 1990. The second, from 1990 to 1995 was the period when NATO extended its hand to the newly independent states of Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. The third, from 1995 to the present consisted of operational peacekeeping and peacemaking, as characterized by Kosovo and Afghanistan. The fourth was post-9/11 and the development of asymmetric threats. It was further suggested that NATO will go through one more transformation and that will be NATO under a new strategic concept.

Delegates also spent time talking about the nature of new threats and how the Alliance could best prepare for them. It was suggested that today there is no longer a single threat perception. At the same time there are also important differences among Alliance members. For example, while the United States believes itself to be at war against terrorism and deems this to be a global challenge, not all European nations share this assessment.

Today cyber attacks are a new threat and there is no single view on how best to ensure stable energy supplies. The security perceptions of member states have changes and there are, therefore, different positions on a variety of matters.

Delegates were also told that, while China prefers to keep its relations discreet, it does want to engage NATO. The Chinese want to understand why NATO is in Afghanistan and although they may have some concerns over the matter they have a good view of NATO as a whole and consider the Alliance to play a positive role in overall security matters.

With respect to Central Asia, it was noted that there are different levels of cooperation between NATO and states in the region. This is only natural given the large size and diversity of the region. However, it was also argued that Russia is putting pressure on the states of the region not to deal with NATO. The Russian preference would be for these states to deal with NATO through Russia. It was also suggested that, with respect to Georgia, Russia might not have acted as it did had Georgia been a member of the Alliance. A further theme discussed was whether or not the Alliance might be moving too quickly with respect to expansion. Some argued that while Russia was not an immediate threat it could be bellicose. New members have the right to prepare their militaries and train and should not be intimidated by Russia.

Defence Transformation was also a topic of wide discussion. Here it was argued that the Alliance should be under no illusion about being able to anticipate all future problems. Non-traditional threats will continue to be important and it will be essential for the Alliance to be able to operate far from “traditional” territories. Out of area operations should not be seen as detracting from core area defence needs, rather, they should be understood as buttressing those needs. NATO requires flexible interoperable forces; ones that can be ready on short notice and capable of operating far afield. It was also argued that the NATO-EU relationship needs to be revitalized.

Finally, some argued that Afghanistan needs more in the way of commitment from certain Alliance members. The increased U.S. contribution was seen as very positive, but it was also suggested that individual nations need to view Afghanistan as a whole and shouldn't only focus on their regional or functional roles.

At the OECD, meetings were opened by Deputy Secretary General, Pier Carlo Padoan. This was followed by an overview of the world economy by Klaus Schmidt-Hebbel, Chief OECD Economist and Head of the Economics Department. The Directorate for Financial and Enterprise Affairs led a discussion on issues surrounding the financial crisis. Pawel Olejarnik, an energy analyst with the Office of the Chief Economist, International Energy Agency, provided an overview of the world energy outlook. Finally, the meetings concluded with an address by Angel Gurría, OECD Secretary-General.

The members of the delegation also participated in the High-Level OECD Parliamentary Seminar on the Financial and Economic Crisis. This seminar covered such topics as: the OECD response to the crisis; social aspects of the crisis such as pensions; sovereign wealth funds and OECD guidance to recipient countries; tax implications of the crisis and corporate governance.

Respectfully submitted,

Mr. Leon Benoit, M.P.
Chair
Canadian NATO Parliamentary Association (NATO PA)

Travel Costs

ASSOCIATION	Canadian NATO Parliamentary Association (NATO PA)
ACTIVITY	Joint Meeting of the Defence and Security, Economics and Security, and Political Committees
DESTINATION	Brussels, Belgium
DATES	February 15-17, 2009
DELEGATION	
SENATE	Senator Pierre Claude Nolin, Senator Jane Cordy and Senator Joseph Day
HOUSE OF COMMONS	Mr. Claude Bachand, M.P., Mr. John McKay, M.P., Mrs. Lois Brown and Mrs. Cheryl Gallant, M.P.
STAFF	Mrs. Jodi Turner and Mr. Wolfgang Koerner
TRANSPORTATION	\$20,790.44
ACCOMMODATION	\$9,512.28
HOSPITALITY	\$0.00
PER DIEMS	\$4,172.10
OFFICIAL GIFTS	\$0.00
MISCELLANEOUS / REGISTRATION FEES	\$0.00
TOTAL	\$34,474.82