

Canadian NATO  
Parliamentary Association



Association parlementaire  
canadienne de l'OTAN

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

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

**Ljubljana, Slovenia  
March 31, 2012**

# Report

The Canadian NATO Parliamentary Association has the honour to present its report on the Meeting of the Standing Committee, held in Ljubljana, Slovenia, on March 31, 2012.

In the Slovenia, Canada was represented by Cheryl Gallant, M.P., Senator Pierre-Claude Nolin, Senator Joseph A. Day, Senator Raynell Andreychuk, Senator Jane Cordy, and James Latimer, Association Secretary.

## **SECRETARIES OF DELEGATION MEETING**

The Secretaries of Delegation met on March 30, 2012, at 16h40. The meeting was chaired by the Secretary of the Slovenian delegation to the NATO PA, Tamara Gruden-Pecan.

Logistical arrangements concerning the program and social events were presented, including the latest changes to the agenda of the Standing Committee meeting.

It was noted that, from the perspective of the International Secretariat, the new format for sessions had proven useful. That being said, the secretariat welcomed on-going feedback from delegations.

Tanja Espe, Secretary of delegation to the Estonia, gave an update on preparations for the Spring Session to be held in Tallinn in May 2012.

Iva Masarikova, Secretary of delegation to the Czech Republic, gave an update on the preparations for the Annual Session to be held in Prague in November 2012.

Flemming Kordt Hansen, Secretary of delegation to Denmark, gave an update on the preparations for the Standing Committee meeting to be held in Copenhagen in March 2013.

The meeting closed at 17:30.

## **STANDING COMMITTEE MEETING**

The meeting opened at 9:05 a.m., The President, Dr Karl A. Lamers, in the chair.

The President thanked the Head of the Slovenian delegation, Melita Zupevc, for her delegation's hosting of the Standing Committee meeting. Melita Zupevc thanked the President, and welcomed all participants.

The President welcomed new heads of delegation to the meeting. Apologies had been received from the following members of the Standing Committee:

- Leonard DEMI (Albania)
- Eftychios DAMIANAKIS (Greece)
- Jadwiga ZAKRZEWSKA (Poland)
- Juraj DROBA (Slovakia)
- Ali Riza ALABOYUN (Turkey)

- Mike TURNER (United States)

## **ADOPTION OF THE SUMMARY OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE MEETING HELD IN BUCHAREST, ROMANIA, ON SUNDAY 9 OCTOBER 2011**

The President thanked the Head of the Romanian delegation, Sever Voinescu-Cotoi, for his delegation's hosting of the Annual Session in Bucharest in October 2011.

The summary of the Standing Committee meeting held in Bucharest was adopted.

## **ASSEMBLY ACTIVITIES AND SUBJECTS IN 2012**

The President explained the Standing Committee's role in approving the package of Assembly activities and subjects. Plans had naturally evolved slightly since the Standing Committee's last discussion at the Annual Session in Bucharest in October 2011.

The Secretary General, David Hobbs, presented the proposed changes in greater detail, and reviewed the updated list of priorities. For reasons of timing and deadlines, a number of changes had already been approved by the Bureau at its meeting in Brussels in February. However, the general thrust of the programme remained as it had been in Bucharest, with four central themes:

- Developments in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA)
- NATO operations
- NATO's post-Lisbon pre-Chicago adaptation
- Partnerships.

In terms of the first priority, several events deserved a special mention. The upcoming joint Rose-Roth and Mediterranean and Middle East Special Group (GSM) Seminar in Marseilles would focus on dialogue and engagement with the MENA region. It would also look at opportunities for assistance in security sector reform, though for the time being, it did not look like there was a strong demand for such assistance. The GSM seminar in Italy in the second half of the year would not doubt provide a good opportunity to follow up on the Marseilles discussions.

Further activities in the region included:

- GSM visit to Jordan, now confirmed for 11-14 June;
- Presidential visits to Egypt and Tunisia;
- Possible visit to Libya. The International Secretariat was in contact with NATO to determine the feasibility of such a visit, taking into account that there is currently no designated NATO Contact Point Embassy in the country. In any event, participation in the visit would likely need to be limited to a smaller group, for instance Committee officers.

Lastly, as agreed by the Assembly's Bureau at its meeting in Brussels in February, ad hoc invitations had been extended to delegations from the MENA region with a formal status with the Assembly to attend the Spring Session in Estonia. A number of delegations had

already responded positively. Incidentally, the Bureau had also decided to invite a delegation from the Assembly of Kosovo to participate in the Tallinn Session.

Other changes in the programme of activities included:

- the Azerbaijani delegation had confirmed that it would be glad to host a Rose Roth seminar, but in 2013 rather than in 2012; consequently, the special seminar in Vilnius had been “upgraded” to a Rose Roth seminar, and its focus extended from just Belarus to also include other countries on the Eastern edge of the Alliance, namely Russia, Ukraine and Moldova. As the 80th Rose Roth seminar, it will also be a commemorative event.
- the visit originally planned in Afghanistan in March through the good auspices of the Lithuanian delegation had had to be postponed in light of the situation. Alternative dates were being considered, but the International Secretariat had been made aware of guidance by SACEUR to NATO military and civilian authorities to try to limit leadership visits during the fighting season until the end of the summer.
- The DSCTC was now planning to visit only Djibouti in 2012, instead of the original plan to combine Djibouti with a visit to the US 5th fleet in Bahrain and the US-UK military base in Diego Garcia;
- The PCTR had now postponed plans to visit Iraq until 2013, and instead would visit Germany jointly with the DSCFC;
- The PCNP was still considering the feasibility of a visit to Pakistan; a possible alternative would be a visit to Kuwait, in line with the Sub-Committee’s long-standing interest in the Gulf region;
- Two Sub-Committees were planning a joint visit Russia, thereby hoping to resume the practice of such visits;
- The President was planning a visit to Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan.

The Secretary General further mentioned the proposed change of name for the “New Parliamentarians Programme” to become the “NATO Orientation Programme”, which better fitted with the philosophy and content of this very successful training programme.

As for the Joint Committee meetings in Brussels in February, it was the Secretary General’s impression that members were satisfied with the new format used in 2012. Plans for 2013 would therefore follow a similar model.

Lastly, the upcoming session in Prague in November 2012 would provide an opportunity to commemorate NATO’s enlargement to 7 countries of Central and Eastern Europe, which was decided at the NATO Summit in Prague in 2002. Consideration was also given to holding another joint meeting of the Assembly in plenary sitting and the North Atlantic Council at the Spring Session in Luxembourg in May 2013.

The Committee agreed the revised programme of Assembly activities and subjects for 2012.

## **KEY MESSAGES FOR THE PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS AT THE NATO SUMMIT OF HEADS OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT IN CHICAGO, USA, ON 20-21 MAY 2012**

The President presented the main points he intended to make in his address to NATO Heads of State and Government in Chicago:

- The need to strengthen co-operation on capabilities in the framework of the smart defense initiative;
- The need for coordinated national decisions on troop levels in Afghanistan, for a responsible handover to the Afghans, and a clear post-2014 strategy, also involving neighbouring countries;
- The importance of strengthening NATO's partnerships, particularly with countries of North Africa and the Middle East;
- The need to reaffirm NATO's commitment to enlargement.

With reference to the letter from the Head of the US delegation, Mike Turner, stressing the Assembly's leadership role on NATO enlargement and the importance for the Chicago Summit to send a strong message on enlargement, the President suggested that, following the discussion on this item and on the following item, he would prepare a press statement describing the overall messages which he intended to deliver in Chicago on behalf of the Standing Committee.

The President noted that it would be a challenging task to address all issues within the short time allotted to him in Chicago. He agreed that the issue of the vital importance of the transatlantic link should be the overarching theme for his speech. While recognizing the important role of the Arab League, he noted that there were profound divergences among the League's members. Regarding Syria, he recalled that any consideration of a military intervention would require a UN mandate, regional support and consensus among Allies. Lastly, he stressed the difficulty there was in grasping the complex developments currently affecting the MENA region, citing for instance concern regarding the recent decision by the government of the UAE to close the local office of one German political foundation.

The President concluded the discussion by informing members that the NATO Secretary General, Anders Fogh Rasmussen, had confirmed to him his participation to the Assembly's Annual Session in Prague in November 2012 and to both of the Assembly's sessions in 2013. The NATO Secretary General was unfortunately not able to address the Assembly at the upcoming Spring Session in Tallinn, but he would be represented by his Deputy, Ambassador Alexander Vershbow, the first American national to hold that position.

### **DRAFT STATEMENT ISSUED BY THE NATO PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY'S STANDING COMMITTEE ON "*SUPPORTING A SHARED APPROACH TO CAPABILITIES IN CHICAGO*"**

The President explained that, during the February meetings in Brussels, members had expressed strong interest in the issue of smart defense, and the Bureau had agreed it should feature on the agenda for the Standing Committee meeting. He had therefore

asked Petras Austrevicius, NATO PA Vice-President and Chairman of the Economics and Security Committee, to prepare a draft statement for approval by the Standing Committee. If adopted, the statement would encapsulate the Standing Committee's collective view on this important topic ahead of the Chicago Summit.

Mr Austrevicius presented the main points in the draft statement. The draft Statement, as amended, was adopted unanimously.

## **PARTICIPATION OF THE DELEGATION OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION IN ASSEMBLY ACTIVITIES: AN UPDATE**

The President explained the background and chronology of the restrictions imposed by the Standing Committee on the participation of the Russian delegation in certain Assembly activities. He recalled that, at the Standing Committee's meeting in Portugal in April 2011, a new mechanism had been adopted for deciding whether the Russian delegates could participate in Committee and Sub-Committee meetings. For each meeting open to Associate members, the relevant Chairman and host decided whether the visit should include Russian participation or not. It was also agreed that this mechanism would be reviewed after a year, which explained why this was on the agenda for this meeting.

The President noted that, as a result of decisions made in accordance with the new mechanism, in 2012, Russian delegates would be invited to participate in all four Sub-Committee meetings open to Associate members, and the two GSM seminars. The President supported maintaining this mechanism, which offered a good balance between dialogue and engagement on the one hand, and the principle that there was no business as usual on the other.

The President also reminded members that a new formula had been introduced for the meeting of the NATO-Russia Parliamentary Committee (NRPC), whereby the discussion focused on a topic of common interest to all delegations, rather than the binary model with one speaker representing the NATO position and another the Russian position. He also noted that, following a visit by the Assembly's Bureau to Moscow in November 2011, Committee visits would resume this year, with two Committees planning a joint activity in Russia.

The Standing Committee agreed to maintain the mechanism adopted at its meeting in Portugal in April 2011 for deciding on the participation of Russian delegates in Committee and Sub-Committee visits, and GSM seminars.

## **THE ASSEMBLY'S RELATIONS WITH UKRAINE**

The President explained that he had received a letter from the Head of the French delegation, Loïc Bouvard, in which he suggested that the Standing Committee discuss relations with Ukraine in the light of recent worrying political developments in that country, notably charges brought against former Prime Minister Yulia Tymoshenko and other former government officials in trials which competent international organisations said fell short of international norms of due process. The President fully agreed that these developments deserved the Standing Committee's attention. Document concluded that

engagement was a better approach than isolation, but envisaged several options for expressing the Assembly's concerns about recent developments.

Before opening the discussion, the President asked Mr Bouvard and Mr Agov to report on the main conclusions of the meeting of the Ukraine-NATO Interparliamentary Council (UNIC) in Kyiv on 14 March, in which they both participated.

Mr Agov noted that several members of UNIC had expressed serious concern about trials brought against former members of government, as well as about the deteriorating health of Ms Tymoshenko and others in prison. Members had heard no satisfactory response from government representatives on these issues. Pressure seemed to be working, however. Therefore, he recommended continuing to raise concern with Ukrainian counterparts, while maintaining channels open for dialogue. Specifically, he supported adopting the four following measures:

- issuing a presidential statement expressing the Standing Committee's concern;
- inviting Ms Tymoshenko's daughter to address one of the Committees in Tallinn;
- sending a NATO PA delegation to observe the 28 October parliamentary elections;
- monitoring and reviewing the situation again at the next Standing Committee meetings.

The President noted an emerging consensus on the following points:

- the Assembly stood for values, and its engagement with Ukraine clearly aimed at supporting the consolidation of democracy in the country;
- the Assembly could express its concerns through a presidential statement, a discussion on developments in Ukraine, the Assembly's participation in election monitoring, and a decision to monitor and review the situation at the Standing Committee's next meetings;
- in order to have a balanced discussion, invitations could be extended to Ms Tymoshenko's daughter on the one hand, and a government official on the other;
- this discussion could take place either in a Committee – most likely the CDS Committee – at the Tallinn Session or at the Rose Roth seminar in Vilnius.

The Standing Committee agreed with the Secretary General's request for handling this in a flexible manner after the meeting.

## **ASSESSMENT OF THE NEW SESSION FORMAT**

The President reminded the members of the decisions taken by the Standing Committee at its meeting in Vilnius in early 2009 to reduce the financial and organizational burden on session hosts and on delegations participating to sessions. In particular, by abandoning

the practice of organizing an excursion, sessions had been shortened by a day. All future hosts were now basing their planning on this new format, but adjustments could still be envisaged, such as:

- at Spring Sessions, and if flight schedules allow, hold the Standing Committee or NRPC meeting after the Committee meetings on the late afternoon of the Sunday, or after the plenary sitting on Monday afternoon;
- at Annual Sessions, split the Standing Committee in two parts, one on Friday afternoon, and one on Sunday after the Committee meetings, in case of a heavy agenda;
- at Annual Sessions, discuss what measures, if any, should be envisaged to take into account the fact that many delegations leave before the end of the plenary sitting;
- use roving microphones in the plenary sitting at Annual Sessions – as is done already at Spring Session – to allow for a quicker set-up of the plenary at a lower cost for hosts.

The President also invited Standing Committee members to discuss whether they were satisfied with the measures taken to reduce the number of participants, particularly at Spring Sessions. He concluded that changes of format needed to be considered carefully, as they also had an impact on the substance of the meetings, and the quality of discussions and interactions between members.

The President concluded that no further changes should be considered to participation, but members of the Standing Committee agreed that the abovementioned adjustments to the format could be considered if needed.

## **CONSIDERATION OF THE COMMENTS OF THE SECRETARY GENERAL OF NATO AND CHAIRMAN OF THE NORTH ATLANTIC COUNCIL ON THE POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS ADOPTED IN 2011 BY THE NATO PARLIAMENTARY**

### **ASSEMBLY**

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

### **FINANCE**

The President thanked the Treasurer for his work, including the fact that he had submitted a budget for 2012 at the same cash level as in 2011.

The Treasurer thanked delegations for the early payment of contributions. He explained that the 2011 Financial Year had closed with a surplus. However, a large share of this surplus had been carried over from 2010. This situation was also partly thanks to the larger than expected contribution of the UK delegation to the overall cost of the special seminar on Afghanistan held in London in November 2011. The Treasurer suggested three ways of allocating this surplus. One was to carry over what remained of last year's



allocation for the project to update the Assembly's website. Secondly, he suggested increasing the provision for Chapter 3 (Sessions) to cover the cost of a possible future session in North America or the exceptional situation in which no host would come forward for a future session. Thirdly, the Treasurer proposed allocating part of the surplus to the provision for Personnel Costs. The Assembly was legally bound to increase salaries by inflation every year. Given the adoption of a zero growth budget for 2012, there was inevitably going to be a shortfall in the salary budget. Several staff members were expected to retire in 2014-2015, which would help consolidate the salary budget, as any new recruits would start at the bottom of the salary scale. In the meantime, however, it would be necessary to draw on the provision for Chapter 1 to fill the shortfall.

The Treasurer asked members of the Standing Committee for guidance as he prepared the draft budget for 2013, stressing that it would be useful for him to know how much pressure delegations faced to reduce contributions, and what the target should be for the budget: increase only by inflation, zero real growth, zero nominal growth, or perhaps an even more severe cut.

The Treasurer explained that the website needed to become more user-friendly. It contained a vast database of information which was used by researchers, experts and students among others. The Secretary General concurred that, while the website's content was extremely developed, the website was in need of a face-lift. New features also needed to be added, such as the capacity to add photos and videos, and an upgraded search engine, which all came at a cost. This, however, was a once in a decade exercise.

The Treasurer explained that he would be preparing a detailed report for the Tallinn Session looking at savings already achieved in the past and options for further savings. However, he was reluctant to consider any cut in the Committees, as these represented the very essence of the Assembly's work.

The President stressed that this was only the first in a series of discussions on the budget, and invited delegations to make their comments and suggestions known to the Treasurer.

The Standing Committee adopted the financial documents.

## **UPDATE FROM THE SECRETARY GENERAL ON AN AGREEMENT ON THE STATUS OF THE INTERNATIONAL SECRETARIAT OF THE NATO PA, DELEGATES AT THE NATO PA AND THE INTERNATIONAL STAFF**

The President reminded members that, at the Annual Session in Valencia in 2008, the former NATO lawyer had presented to the Standing Committee a draft agreement on the Assembly's status. This had been circulated to delegations, some of which had raised objections.

The Secretary General summarized the background of this issue and the reasons for seeking an international agreement. He reminded members that the Assembly grew out of precedent, and was not based on the NATO Treaty or any subsequent international agreement. Following the International Secretariat's move to Brussels in 1966, the Belgian Parliament adopted a law in 1974 defining the status of the Assembly within Belgium. This text gave the Assembly a legal foundation and granted the International Secretariat almost all the rights of an international organization, including the provision that employees'

salaries were paid net of tax. However, a Belgian law could not make Belgian citizens exempt from paying tax. This meant practically that Belgian staff members or staff members that are considered as resident in Belgium were taxable, and that tax had to be paid from the Assembly's central budget. Effectively, that meant that a Belgian or Belgian resident cost more than other employees.

The Secretary General acknowledged the remarkable efforts deployed by the Belgian delegation to resolve this problem nationally, which unfortunately proved unsuccessful. The alternative route of an international agreement was then explored. A draft text was prepared with the help of the NATO lawyer, and circulated to delegations. Since 2009, the International Secretariat had been trying to address the objections raised by certain delegations. However, even if nations agreed on an international agreement, any such text would need to be complemented by a headquarters agreement with the host nation, which would likely be less favourable than the 1974 law. In addition, with an international agreement, foreign ministries would likely want to exercise greater scrutiny and even control over the way the organization is run, which, given that the Assembly was a parliamentary organization, would raise serious questions regarding the separation of powers. The Secretary General added that the financial problem connected with this issue was bound to resolve itself as more and more Belgian employees approached retirement.

The Secretary General's recommendation was therefore to drop the matter, as there was more to be lost than to be gained in pursuing it further, and the ambiguity in the legal status of the Assembly had not caused any major problem since 1955.

The Standing Committee approved the Secretary General's suggestion to suspend efforts to conclude an international agreement on the status of the Assembly.

## **FUTURE SESSIONS AND MEETINGS**

The President explained that hosts had come forward for all Standing Committee meetings and sessions until the end of 2014, and one delegation was hoping to make a firm commitment for the Annual Session in 2015. However, hosts were still sought for the Standing Committee and the Spring Session in 2015.

Ms Solberg announced that Norway would be looking into the possibility of hosting the Spring Session in 2015.

Mr Mikser, Jan Hamacek, and Troels Lund Poulsen briefed the Standing Committee on preparations for the forthcoming Spring Session in Tallinn, Estonia in May 2012, the Annual Session in Prague in November 2012, and the early spring Standing Committee in Denmark in 2013 respectively. Boris Blazekovic announced that the Annual Session in Croatia in 2013 would take place in Dubrovnik.

The President thanked all delegations for their offers to host meetings.

## **MISCELLANEOUS**

Mr Ormel noted that the EU had recently decided to strengthen the rules of engagement of its counterpiracy operation Atalanta off the coast of Somalia, a step NATO had not yet taken. He encouraged members of the Assembly to consider this issue and the possible

consequences of this discrepancy between the rules of engagement of the NATO and EU counterpiracy missions.

The President thanked the Standing Committee, and again thanked Ms Zuperc and the Slovenian delegation for their hospitality.

The meeting closed at 3:21 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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

## Travel Costs

<b>ASSOCIATION</b>	Canadian NATO Parliamentary Association (NATO PA)
<b>ACTIVITY</b>	Meeting of the Standing Committee
<b>DESTINATION</b>	Ljubljana, Slovenia
<b>DATES</b>	March 31, 2012
<b>DELEGATION</b>	
SENATE	Senator Pierre-Claude Nolin Senator Joseph A. Day Senator Raynell Andreychuk Senator Jane Cordy
HOUSE OF COMMONS	Mrs. Cheryl Gallant, M.P.
STAFF	Mr. James Latimer
<b>TRANSPORTATION</b>	<b>\$38,609.34</b>
<b>ACCOMMODATION</b>	<b>\$3,081.06</b>
<b>HOSPITALITY</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>
<b>PER DIEMS</b>	<b>\$2,524.10</b>
<b>OFFICIAL GIFTS</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>
<b>MISCELLANEOUS / REGISTRATION FEES</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$44,214.50</b>