

Report of the Canadian NATO Parliamentary Association

2019 Spring Session

Bratislava, Slovakia

May 31- June 3, 2019

Report

INTRODUCTION

The Canadian NATO Parliamentary Association has the honour to report on its participation in the 2019 Spring Session of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization Parliamentary Assembly (NATO PA), which took place in Bratislava, Slovakia, from 31 May-3 June 2019. The Canadian delegation comprised the following members:

- Borys Wrzesnewskij, M.P., Head of the Canadian delegation;
- The Honourable Raynell Andreychuk, Senator;
- The Honourable Pierre-Hugues Boisvenu, Senator;
- The Honourable Jane Cordy, Senator;
- The Honourable Joseph Day, Senator; and
- Brad Trost, M.P.

The delegation was accompanied by Jean-François Pagé, Association Secretary, and Katherine Simonds, Association Advisor.

THE NATO PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY

Established in 1955, the NATO PA is an inter-parliamentary organization that brings together legislators from the national parliaments of the 29 member countries of NATO,¹ as well as 12 associate member countries.² It is institutionally separate and independent from the official NATO structure, but serves as a liaison for NATO and member parliaments.³ The NATO PA aims to strengthen parliamentary awareness, understanding and oversight of defence and security issues, while also enhancing the transparency of NATO policies. The Assembly also plays a significant role in deepening the transatlantic relationship that underpins the NATO Alliance.

The NATO PA has five thematic Committees:

- the Defence and Security Committee;
- the Political Committee;
- the Committee on the Civil Dimension of Security;
- the Science and Technology Committee; and
- the Economics and Security Committee.

¹ The 29 member countries of NATO are: Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Iceland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, the United Kingdom, the United States, Greece, Turkey, Germany, Spain, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Albania, Croatia, and Montenegro.

² The associate delegations are from: Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Finland, Georgia, North Macedonia, the Republic of Moldova, Serbia, Sweden, Switzerland, and Ukraine.

³ See North Atlantic Treaty Organization Parliamentary Assembly (NATO PA), "[Our Mission](#)."

Each of these committees has one or two sub-committees. Similar to the practices of parliamentary committees, NATO PA committee members hear from defence and security experts and conduct fact-finding missions throughout the year, which culminate in the drafting of reports and resolutions. Committee members consider these draft reports and resolutions during NATO PA Sessions.

THE 2019 SPRING SESSION

The 2019 Spring Session was hosted by the Parliament of Slovakia and chaired by NATO PA President, Ms. Madeleine Moon (U.K.). Parliamentarians, experts, and observers from NATO member countries, as well as nations in North Africa, the Middle East and Central Asia, participated in the session.

Discussions were guided by the following topics:

- The changing nature of contemporary conflict;
- Confidence and security-building measures and arms control;
- The state of NATO's technological capabilities;
- Border security;
- NATO-Russia relations;
- The transatlantic digital marketplace;
- North Macedonia's economic transition;
- The situation in Ukraine
- The efficacy of international sanctions; and
- Cyber security.

The program included meetings of the Standing Committee, each of the thematic committees and sub-committees, as well as a Plenary Session. A NATO PA coordination meeting involving members of the Bureau (President, Vice-Presidents and Treasurer), Chairpersons of Committees and Subcommittees, and Rapporteurs was also held.

Delegates also had the opportunity to meet with counterparts of their respective political groups from across the NATO Alliance countries: Conservative, Christian Democrat and Associates; Alliance of Liberals and Democrats; and, Socialists. Those meetings allow NATO parliamentarians from similar political parties to discuss issues of mutual interest to their own parties and constituents, further solidifying the representative nature of the NATO PA and advancing the parliamentary diplomacy that takes place during its sessions.

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSIONS

A. Standing Committee

The Standing Committee⁴ met on Friday, 31 May 2019, to receive updates from the Assembly's leadership, to plan for upcoming activities in 2019 and to address various administrative matters. A draft proposal for revising the Assembly's Rules of Procedure was discussed and it was agreed that suggestions made by Standing Committee

⁴ The Standing Committee of the NATO PA is comprised of Heads of National Delegations, Bureau members (President, Vice Presidents and Treasurer), Chairpersons of Committees and Sub-committees, and Rapporteurs.

members would be taken into consideration for the draft to be debated at the 2019 Annual Session.

The NATO PA Treasurer then presented financial documents including the draft budget for 2020, which proposed an increase of 1.74% to cover salary increases in accordance with Belgian legal requirements.

NATO PA Secretary General, Mr. David Hobbs, then outlined upcoming Assembly activities. Prior to adjournment, the Head of the United Kingdom (U.K.) delegation, Mr. Richard Benyon, welcomed delegates to attend the upcoming Annual Session of the NATO PA, to be held from 11–14 October 2019 in London, U.K.

Canadian Participation:

Borys Wrzesnewskyj, M.P., represented the Canadian delegation at the Standing Committee meeting. Senator Joseph Day attended as a member of the Bureau.

B. Committee Business

NATO PA Committees met simultaneously over the course of two days from 1–2 May 2019. During these meetings, Committees debated draft reports and considered *Comments of the Secretary General of NATO, Chairman of the North Atlantic Council, on the Policy Recommendations adopted in 2018 by the NATO Parliamentary Assembly*. In addition, these meetings were an opportunity for delegates to hear from academic experts as well as senior military and government officials from Slovakia, NATO headquarters, and the European Union (EU), as well as representatives of non-governmental organizations (NGO) on issues of interest to the Alliance.

1. Committee on the Civil Dimension of Security⁵

The Civil Dimension of Security Committee heard from three speakers on a range of issues:

- Ambassador Marcel Pesko, Director, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) Conflict Prevention Centre, discussed the OSCE's efforts to promote peace and stability in Ukraine;
- Jonas Ohman, Head of Blue/Yellow, delivered a presentation entitled *NGO Support of the Armed Forces in Ukraine – A Counter-Hybrid Solution*; and
- Balazs Jarabik, Nonresident Scholar, Russia and Eurasia Program, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, spoke about transition challenges in Belarus and Moldova.

Senator Cordy participated in a panel discussion on Ukraine, presented a draft report entitled *Ukraine: Five Years After the Revolution of Dignity* and responded to questions and comments from committee members. Additional draft reports were debated, and the Rapporteurs agreed to revise the drafts according to the suggestions made by Committee

⁵ A more detailed summary of the meeting can be found at NATO PA, "[Summary of the meeting of the Civil Dimension of Security Committee](#)," Sessions, 2019 Spring Session, Bratislava, Slovakia.

members. The final drafts are presented during the Annual Session.⁶ Lastly, the Committee discussed its studies and activities for 2019.

Canadian Participation:

Senator Jane Cordy, Rapporteur of the Sub-Committee on Democratic Governance, presented her report entitled *Ukraine: Five Years After the Revolution of Dignity*. Borys Wrzesnewskyj, M.P., and Brad Trost, M.P., also participated in the Committee's discussions.

2. Defence and Security Committee ⁷

The Defence and Security Committee heard four expert presentations during its meeting:

- Minister Peter Gajdoš, Minister of Defence of the Slovak Republic, provided an overview of *Slovakia's National Defence Interests: Near and Long-Term Challenges*
- Elisabeth Braw, Director of the Modern Deterrence Project, Royal United Services Institute, discussed NATO deterrence in the current security environment;
- Katarzyna Kubiak, Policy Fellow, European Leadership Network, delivered a presentation entitled: *The Demise of the INF – Implications for European Security*; and
- Ulrich Pilster, Policy Officer, NATO, addressed *Afghanistan 2019: Peace, Politics and Security*.

The Committee's rapporteurs also presented their respective draft reports and resolutions.⁸ The Committee then discussed upcoming studies and activities for 2019.

Canadian Participation:

As General Rapporteur, Senator Day presented the report on *A New Era for Nuclear Deterrence? Modernisation, Arms Control and Allied Nuclear Forces* and moderated the discussion that followed. Borys Wrzesnewskyj, M.P., Brad Trost, M.P., and Senator Boisvenu also participated in the Defence and Security Committee meeting.

3. Economics and Security Committee ⁹

Three speakers addressed the Economics and Security Committee:

⁶ The Committee on the Civil Dimension of Security's reports included: *A New Era for Nuclear Deterrence? Modernisation, Arms Control and Allied Nuclear Forces NATO at 70: Reaffirming the Alliance's Values, Ukraine: Five Years After the Revolution of Dignity, and Border Security*.

⁷ A more detailed summary of the meeting can be found at NATO PA, "[Summary of the meeting of the Defence and Security Committee,](#)" Sessions, 2019 Spring Session, Bratislava, Slovakia.

⁸ The reports discussed by the Defence and Security Committee reports included: *A New Era for Nuclear Deterrence? Modernisation, Arms Control and Allied Nuclear Forces; Evolving Security in the North Atlantic; and NATO Exercises – Evolution and Lessons Learned*.

⁹ A more detailed summary of the meeting can be found at NATO PA, "[Summary of the meeting of the Economics and Security Committee,](#)" Sessions, 2019 Spring Session, Bratislava, Slovakia.

- Erik Jones, Director, European and Eurasian Studies, Johns Hopkins University School of Advanced International Studies, focused his remarks on *The Challenge of Economic Populism*;
- Frances G. Burwell, Distinguished Fellow, the Atlantic Council, outlined *The Transatlantic Digital Marketplace: Cooperation and Tension*; and
- Paula Puskarova, Vice-Rector for Research and Doctoral Studies, Economics University of Bratislava, provided a presentation on *The Slovak Republic and the Digital Economic Revolution*.
- The Committee's rapporteurs then presented their respective draft reports.¹⁰ Finally, the Committee discussed its studies and activities for 2019.

Canadian Participation:

Senator Cordy represented the Canadian delegation during the Committee meeting.

4. Political Committee¹¹

The Political Committee heard from three speakers:

- Ambassador František Ružička, State Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs of the Slovak Republic, addressed *NATO's current and future role – the view from Bratislava*;
- Tim Sweij, Director of Research, the Hague Centre for Strategic Studies, discussed *The Changing Character of Contemporary Conflict – Implications for the Alliance*; and
- Walter Feichtinger, Brigadier-General of the Austrian Armed Forces, Director of the Institute for Peace Support and Conflict Management, National Defence Academy Austria, delivered a presentation entitled *Ukraine Under Pressure – Implications For Regional and Transatlantic Security*.

The Committee's rapporteurs presented their respective draft reports.¹² The Committee then discussed its studies and activities for 2019.

Canadian participation:

Senator Raynell Andreychuk, Rapporteur of the Sub-Committee on NATO Partnerships, presented the report entitled *Security and Stability in Africa – Challenges and Opportunities* on behalf of Julio Miranda Calha (Portugal), as well as the report on *NATO-Russia Relations – A Snapshot*. She further moderated the discussion that followed. The

¹⁰ The Economics and Security Committee's reports included: *The Republic of North Macedonia: Political Change, NATO Accession and Economic Transition*; *Economic Sanctions as a Tool of Foreign Policy*; and *North American and European Approaches to Digital Markets and Cyber Security*.

¹¹ A more detailed summary of the meeting can be found at NATO PA, "[Summary of the meeting of the Political Committee](#)," Sessions, 2019 Spring Session, Bratislava, Slovakia.

¹² The reports discussed by the Political Committee included: *NATO at 70: Why the Alliance Remains Indispensable*; *Security and Stability in Africa – Challenges and Opportunities*; and *NATO-Russia Relations – A Snapshot*.

following Canadian delegates also participated in the meetings of the Political Committee: Borys Wrzesnewskyj, M.P., Brad Trost, M.P., Senator Boisvenu and Senator Day.

5. Science and Technology Committee ¹³

The Science and Technology Committee heard presentations from four speakers:

- Lukas Parizek, State Secretary, Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs of the Slovak Republic, focused his remarks on The Future of Confidence- and Security-Building Measures and Arms Control in the OSCE Framework: A Perspective from the Slovak OSCE Chairmanship
- Pavel Zuna, Director of the NATO STO Collaboration Support Office, addressed NATO STO Collaborative Programme of Work Towards Maintaining the S&T Edge; and
- Helena Legarda, Research Associate, Mercator Institute for China Studies and Jan-Peter Kleinhans, Project Director IoT Security, Stiftung Neue Verantwortung (SNV) participated in a panel discussion on *China's Science and Technology Challenge*.

The Committee Rapporteurs then presented three draft reports.¹⁴ The Committee was adjourned following a discussion of future studies and activities.

C. Plenary Sitting ¹⁵

The Plenary Sitting of the 2019 Spring Session was held on 3 June 2019. NATO PA President Madeleine Moon opened the session by discussing the significance of NATO's 70th anniversary and taking stock of how the Alliance has adapted to evolving challenges. She urged parliamentarians to engage with the public to enhance understanding of NATO's role and responsibilities and to focus on building whole-of-society resilience. Noting that Slovakia was celebrating its 15th year as a NATO member state, President Moon outlined Slovakia's contributions and achievements since joining the Alliance. Lastly, she addressed the PA's key priorities for 2019: strengthening the transatlantic bond, ratifying North Macedonia's accession as the 30th member of NATO, and recognizing the essential role played by the Assembly's partners in projecting stability beyond NATO's borders.

The plenary then heard from Andrej Kiska, President of the Slovak Republic. President Kiska highlighted the importance of the parliamentary dimension in addressing current and future defence and security challenges, such as creating the political will necessary to enhance defence expenditures. He also discussed the need to improve NATO's ability

¹³ A more detailed summary of the meeting can be found at NATO PA, "[Summary of the meeting of the Science and Technology Committee](#)" Sessions, 2019 Spring Session, Bratislava, Slovakia.

¹⁴ The draft reports discussed by the Science and Technology Committee were: *NATO in the Cyber Age: Strengthening Security and Defence, Stabilising Deterrence; Artificial Intelligence: Implications for NATO's Armed Forces, and NATO Anti-Submarine Warfare: Rebuilding Capability, Preparing for the Future*.

¹⁵ For a more detailed summary of the meeting see NATO PA, Minutes of the Plenary Sitting, Bratislava, Slovakia, 3 June 2019.

to respond quickly to threats and to continue to support Ukraine and Georgia in the face of Russian aggression.

Béla Bugár, Deputy Speaker of the National Council of the Slovak Republic, was next to address the plenary. Noting that 56% of Slovaks support NATO membership, he stated that the security of Slovakia is closely tied to its status as a NATO member and that the Slovakian parliament has taken steps to reaffirm the country's Euro-Atlantic orientation. The Deputy Speaker indicated that Slovakia has committed to increasing its defence spending and will aim to achieve 2% of GDP spending on defence by 2022.

Next, parliamentarians heard from Denisa Saková, Minister of Interior of the Slovak Republic. Minister Saková expressed appreciation to NATO parliamentarians for enhancing their understanding of the changing global security environment, which, she said, was testing NATO's readiness and resilience. She suggested that key security challenges are increasingly non-military: assurance of critical government services, reliable energy supplies, the uncontrolled movement of people, and the ability to address hybrid and cyber threats. As such, she urged parliamentarians to focus on prevention, training, capacity building and intelligence sharing, both domestically and across the Alliance.

George Tsereteli, President of the OSCE PA, then addressed the Assembly. Congratulating NATO on its 70th anniversary, he urged closer collaboration between the Alliance and the OSCE to address the range of modern security threats facing the Euro-Atlantic region. He outlined some of the OSCE's priority issues, including responding to hybrid warfare, migration, terrorism, and growing populism across Europe. Mr. Tsereteli argued that key elements of the European security architecture are being undermined, which demonstrates the need for greater transatlantic cooperation.

Lastly, Alejandro Alvargonzalez, Assistant Secretary-General for Political and Security Affairs, NATO, offered the regrets of Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg who was unable to attend the session. He stressed that parliamentarians are an essential link between the Alliance and the citizens of its member countries. By holding governments to account, parliamentarians help make NATO stronger and uphold the Alliance's core values: liberty, democracy and the rule of law. Suggesting that these values were being challenged, Assistant Secretary-General Alvargonzalez underscored that strong deterrence is based on a strong defence. NATO is the most successful political and military alliance in the world, he contended, because it adapts, debates the issues of the day and identifies paths forward in solidarity. After years of defence cuts, Allies are increasing their defence budgets and NATO is working to streamline its command structure, improve logistics, and increase readiness. NATO has urged Russia to return to compliance with the INF Treaty and has created a cyber space operations centre, while also continuing to fight terrorism and assist partner countries who may be unable to meet security challenges in their region. Assistant Secretary-General Alvargonzalez closed by expressing that during NATO's 70th anniversary celebrations, a message of unity is of the utmost importance.

A question and answer period followed. Borys Wrzesnewskij, M.P., explained that Russia's campaign of territorial expansion against Ukraine had moved from land to the Sea of Azov, with significant implications for the Ukrainian industrial sector. He also said that such actions contravene the Geneva Conventions and the Law of the Sea and that

they undermine the international rules-based system. Assistant Secretary-General Alvargonzalez agreed that the situation in the Kerch Strait represented an escalation of tensions and that additional sanctions against Russia would be welcomed.

The plenary then adopted the Treasurer's *Report and Proposal for the Allocation of the 2018 Surplus and the Current Financial Year* as well as other financial statements.

In closing, President Moon thanked the Slovakian Delegation, its staff, the International Secretariat, and all others who were instrumental in the Spring Session's success.

OTHER MEETINGS

On Thursday, 30 May 2019, Borys Wrzesnewskyj, M.P., met with Slovak Ministry of Defence State Secretary Robert Ondrejcsak to discuss issues of common concern, including regional security challenges, the situation in Ukraine, and opportunities for enhanced cooperation between the two countries.

Canadian parliamentarians also met with Her Excellency Heidi Alberta Hulan, Ambassador of Canada to Austria and Slovakia, and John von Kaufmann, Chargé d'Affaires in Slovakia, on Friday, 31 May 2019 to learn more about recent developments in Slovakia. The delegation was briefed on a range of issues, including Canada-Slovakia relations, regional dynamics, and Slovakian defence and security priorities.

On 31 May 2019, delegates also received briefings from the following GLOBESEC Policy Institute representatives: Rastislav Káčer, Chairman, Robert Vass, President, Milan Solar, CEO and Vice-President, and Daniel Milo, Senior Research Fellow and Head of GLOBESEC's STRATCOM Programme. Among the issues covered were Russian hybrid warfare, China's disruptive technological capabilities, the work of the Visegrád Group (V4), and recent research produced by GLOBESEC. Later that day, Canadian parliamentarians met with Thomas Kozak, Director, Common Foreign and Security Department, and Martin Sklenar, Director, Security Policy Department from the Slovak Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs, to learn more about Slovak foreign and security policy within the EU and NATO. Delegates also met with members of the National Council of the Slovak Republic: Alojz Baranik – Chair of the US-Canada Parliamentary Friendship Group, Katarina Csefalvayova - Chair, Foreign Affairs Committee, Peter Osusky – Member of the Foreign Affairs Committee, Martin Klus, Member of the Foreign Affairs Committee, and Martin Fedor - Member of the Foreign Affairs Committee. Topics discussed included appreciation for Slovakia's contribution to NATO's Enhanced Forward Presence in Latvia and ratification of the Comprehensive Economic Trade Agreement between Canada and the EU.

Respectfully submitted,

Mr. Darren Fisher, M.P.

Vice-Chair of the Canadian NATO Parliamentary Association (NATO PA)

Travel Costs

ASSOCIATION	Canadian NATO Parliamentary Association
ACTIVITY	2019 Spring Session
DESTINATION	Bratislava, Slovakia
DATES	May 31- June 3, 2019
DELEGATION	
SENATE	Hon. Raynell Andreychuk, Senator Hon. Pierre-Hugues Boisvenu, Senator Hon. Jane Cordy, Senator Hon. Joseph Day, Senator
HOUSE OF COMMONS	Mr. Borys Wrzesnewskyj, M.P. Mr. Brad Trost, M.P
STAFF	Jean-François Pagé, Association Secretary Katherine Simonds, Association Advisor
TRANSPORTATION	\$45,428.95
ACCOMMODATION	\$11,328.21
PER DIEMS	\$4,468.74
TOTAL	\$61,225.90