

Canadian NATO
Parliamentary Association



Association parlementaire
canadienne de l'OTAN

Report of the Canadian NATO Parliamentary Association

Bureau Meeting and Spring Session

Luxembourg, Luxembourg

From May 19 to 22, 2023

Report

The Canadian NATO Parliamentary Association has the honour to report on its participation in the 2023 Spring Session of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization Parliamentary Assembly (NATO PA or the Assembly), which took place in Luxembourg from 19-22 May 2023.¹ The Canadian delegation comprised the following members:

- Ms. Julie Dzerowicz, M.P., Head of the Canadian delegation;
- The Honourable Pierre-Hugues Boisvenu, Senator;
- The Honourable Gwen Boniface, Senator;
- The Honourable Rebecca Patterson, Senator;
- Ms. Rachel Blaney, M.P.; and
- Ms. Cheryl Gallant, M.P.

The delegation was accompanied by Céline Ethier, Association Secretary, and James Lee, Association Advisor.

THE NATO PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY

Established in 1955, the NATO PA is an interparliamentary organization that brings together legislators from the national parliaments of the 31 member countries of NATO,² as well as 10 associate member countries and some others.³ It is institutionally separate and independent from the official NATO structure, but serves as a liaison between NATO and member parliaments.⁴ The NATO PA aims to strengthen parliamentary awareness, as well as 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 Committee on Democracy and Security;
- the Defence and Security Committee;
- the Economics and Security Committee;
- the Political Committee; and
- the Science and Technology Committee.

Each of these committees has one or two sub-committees. NATO PA committee members draft reports and resolutions for consideration during NATO PA sessions. These draft reports and resolutions are informed by evidence provided by defence and

¹ Canadian-NATO Association, "[Canadian Parliamentarians attend the NATO PA's 2023 Spring Session in Luxembourg](#)," *News Release*, 29 May 2023.

² The 31 [member countries of NATO](#), which have joined in a number of rounds over the years, are as follows: Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Iceland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, the United Kingdom, the United States (1949), Greece, Türkiye (1952), Germany (1955), Spain (1982), the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland (1999), Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia (2004), Albania, Croatia (2009), Montenegro (2017), North Macedonia (2020) and Finland. (2023)

³ The [associate delegations](#) are from: Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova, Serbia, Sweden, Switzerland and Ukraine.

⁴ See the NATO PA website "[Our Mission](#)."

security experts and the outcomes of fact-finding missions conducted throughout the year.

THE 2023 SPRING SESSION

The 2023 Spring Session was hosted by the Parliament of Luxembourg and chaired by NATO PA President, Joëlle Garriaud-Maylam (France). Almost 250 parliamentarians from NATO countries – including for the first time Finland, which joined NATO in April 2023 – and 16 partner countries and parliamentary bodies participated in the session, along with experts and observers.

Participants discussed a range of topics, including the following:

- NATO’s adaptation to today’s fast changing security landscape;
- Russia’s illegal invasion of Ukraine;
- NATO’s defence and deterrence posture, and the need for adequate defence spending and equitable burden sharing;
- Energy security in Europe and North America;
- China’s economic, military and political cooperation with Russia;
- The defence industrial bases of NATO countries;
- Security in the Black Sea region; and
- The state of democracy in Belarus.

The program included meetings of the Bureau⁵ and the Standing Committee,⁶ as well as an “extraordinary” joint meeting of the Standing Committee and the Ukraine–NATO Interparliamentary Council (UNIC).⁷ Each of the five thematic committees also met, and the program ended with a Plenary Session.

Delegates also met with counterparts of their respective political groups from across the NATO Alliance: Conservatives, Christian Democrats and Associates; Alliance of Liberals and Democrats; and Socialists. These meetings allow NATO parliamentarians from similar political parties to forge relationships and discuss issues of mutual interest.

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSIONS

A. Standing Committee and Ukraine-NATO Interparliamentary Council

The Ukraine-NATO Interparliamentary Council (UNIC) was created in 2002 to monitor NATO-Ukraine relations and discuss any issues of concern. It is composed of representatives from each of the NATO PA’s five committees and leading members of Ukraine’s Verkhovna Rada (parliament), and meets each year in both Brussels and Ukraine.⁸

⁵ The Bureau of the NATO PA is composed of the President, five Vice-Presidents, the Treasurer, and the Secretary General.

⁶ The Standing Committee of the NATO PA is comprised of Heads of National Delegations, Bureau members, Chairpersons of Committees and Sub-committees, and Rapporteurs.

⁷ The Ukraine-NATO Interparliamentary Council is the Assembly’s bilateral group for relations with the *Verkhovna Rada* (parliament) of Ukraine.

⁸ NATO PA, [Ukraine](#).

The Standing Committee of the NATO PA met jointly with UNIC for the first time at the Spring Session in Luxembourg. This meeting involved some 50 parliamentarians from NATO countries and Sweden, as well as 10 from Ukraine. Generally, they discussed increasing Allied support for Ukraine, as well as expectations for the upcoming NATO Summit in Vilnius in July 2023. The NATO PA President, Joëlle Garriaud-Maylam, stated that:

We are gathered here in Luxembourg at an important time, as Ukraine's resistance grows ever stronger. Our session provides an opportunity to send a clear message of support to Ukraine...Our support, like your fight for freedom, will be unwavering. Our efforts will be relentless, and we will continue to stand by Ukraine, united and determined, for as long as it takes for you to prevail.⁹

B. Standing Committee

The Standing Committee met on Friday, 19 May 2023. It received updates on various administrative matters, adopted draft amendments to the NATO PA's rules of procedure and discussed plans for upcoming activities. It also adopted financial statements and reports that would be considered at the Plenary Sitting, and accepted an offer from the Chamber of Deputies of Luxembourg to fund a staff position at the NATO PA secretariat to work on building democratic resilience within NATO.

In addition, the Standing Committee considered, debated and adopted two draft declarations that would later be voted on by the entire Assembly at the Plenary Sitting. The first draft declaration, entitled *United and Resolute in Support of Ukraine*, was presented by Michal Szczerba (Poland), Vice-President of the NATO PA. The second draft declaration, entitled *A New NATO in an Age of Strategic Competition: Accelerating NATO's Adaptation at the Vilnius Summit*, was presented by Linda Sanchez (United States), Vice-President of the NATO PA.

Canadian Participation:

The Canadian delegation was represented at the Standing Committee – and at its joint meeting with UNIC – by Julie Dzerowicz, M.P., Senator Rebecca Patterson and Rachel Blaney, M.P. Ms. Dzerowicz intervened during the discussions with UNIC, and in the Standing Committee during consideration of the draft declarations.

C. Committee Business

The NATO PA Committees met, at times simultaneously, over the course of two days (20-21 May 2023). During these meetings, participants heard from parliamentarians from Luxembourg and from Ukraine and from military and academic experts on topics of interest to the Alliance. Members also debated and adopted draft reports.

⁹ NATO PA, [Strong message of solidarity with Ukraine on the first day of NATO PA Spring Session](#), 20 May 2023.

1. Committee on Democracy and Security ¹⁰

This committee met on 21 May 2023 and heard from three speakers on a range of issues:

- Franz Fayot, Minister of Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Affairs and Minister of the Economy of Luxembourg who spoke on *Luxembourg's Approach to the Development and Security Nexus*.
- Irene Fellin, the NATO Secretary General's Special Representative for Women, Peace and Security, who spoke on *Children and Armed Conflict: Lessons from Ukraine*.
- Oleksandra Matviichuk, Director of (Ukraine's) Center for Civil Liberties, a co-winner of the 2022 Nobel Peace Prize, who spoke on *Russian Violations of Human Rights and Humanitarian Law in Ukraine*.

Draft reports were presented and debated,¹¹ after which the Committee discussed its studies and activities for the remainder of 2023.

Canadian participation:

Senators Gwen Boniface and Rebecca Patterson, as well as M.P.s Julie Dzerowicz and Rachel Blaney, were present and participated in the discussions.

In her role as Special Rapporteur, Ms. Dzerowicz presented the initial draft of her special report *Food Security and Conflict: Harvesting Resilience in the Face of a Global Crisis*, and responded to comments from delegates. During the discussion, Senator Patterson suggested that the report include a paragraph on water security and the need to protect water supplies during conflict. Ms. Dzerowicz also intervened during the meeting at several points. Among other interventions, Ms. Dzerowicz suggested the addition of case studies to the draft report on Kremlin disinformation; underscored the importance of strengthening humanitarian action and ensuring justice for victims of crimes in Ukraine; thanked the Turkish delegation for Türkiye's role in negotiating the Black Sea Grain Initiative with the United Nations, Ukraine and Russia; and mentioned the Canadian House of Commons Standing Committee Agriculture and Agri-Food's April 2023 report on global food insecurity.¹²

2. Defence and Security Committee ¹³

The Defence and Security Committee met on 20 May 2023 to hear from three speakers:

¹⁰ A more detailed summary of the meeting can be found at NATO PA, "[CDS Meeting Summary – Spring Session – Luxembourg](#)," 23 June 2023

¹¹ The Committee on the Democracy and Security's reports included: [Fighting Impunity for Violations of International Law in Russia's Renewed Invasion of Ukraine](#), [The Russian War on Truth: Defending Allied and Partner Democracies Against the Kremlin's Disinformation Campaigns](#), and [Food Security and Conflict: Harvesting Resilience in the Face of a Global Crisis](#).

¹² In April 2023, the House of Commons Standing Committee on Agriculture and Agri-Food tabled a report entitled, [Feeding the World: Strengthening Canada's Capacity to Respond to Global Food Insecurity](#).

¹³ A more detailed summary of the meeting can be found at NATO PA, "[DSC Meeting Summary – Spring Session – Luxembourg](#)," 23 June 2023.

- François Bausch, Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Defence and Minister for Mobility and Public Works of *Luxembourg*, who spoke on *Luxembourg's Support for Ukraine and Contribution to Allied Adaptation*.
- Stacy A. Cummings, General Manager, NATO Support and Procurement Agency, who spoke on *Allied Procurement in Light of NATO's Revised Deterrence and Defence Posture*.
- Professor Dr. Carlo Masala, Chair for International Politics; Director, Metis Institute for Strategy and Foresight; Director, Center for Crisis Early Warning; and Co-Director, Center for Intelligence and Security Studies – Bundeswehr University, Munich, who spoke on *Future Perspectives of Russia's War of Aggression Against Ukraine*.

The Committee also considered the initial version of two draft reports¹⁴ and discussed upcoming studies and activities for the remainder of 2023.

Canadian Participation:

Senator Pierre-Hugues Boisvenu (Vice-President of the Sub-Committee on Future Security and Defence Capabilities) and M.P.s Julie Dzerowicz and Cheryl Gallant participated in this meeting.

Senator Boisvenu intervened during the consideration of the draft report entitled *Ensuring an Allied Defence Industrial Base for NATO's New Deterrence and Defence Baseline*. The report noted that there would be both European and North American offices for NATO's new Defence Innovation Accelerator for the North Atlantic (DIANA). Arguing that most people would assume a North American NATO office would be in the United States, Senator Boisvenu suggested the report specify that DIANA will, in fact, be in Halifax. M.P. Dzerowicz intervened during the consideration of the draft report on Russia's War on Ukraine to note that Canada had made important contributions to training Ukrainian forces through its Operation Unifier. She also asked questions about Luxembourg's spending on non-traditional defence activities, such as the development of emerging technologies, and about the possible role of third parties in any future peace negotiations between Ukraine and Russia.

3. Economics and Security Committee ¹⁵

The Committee met on 20 May 2023 and heard from three speakers:

- Philippe Glaesener, Senior Vice-President, Space and Defence, SES, who spoke on *Supporting Evolving Government Needs with Integrated Secure Sovereign Space Systems*.

¹⁴ The reports discussed by the Defence and Security Committee included: [Russia's War in Ukraine](#), [Ensuring an Allied Defence Industrial Base for NATO's New Deterrence and Defence Baseline](#), [Sea Change: The Rapid Evolution of Baltic Sea Security After Russia's Invasion of Ukraine and Troubled Waters: How Russia's War in Ukraine Changes Black Sea Security](#).

¹⁵ A more detailed summary of the meeting can be found at NATO PA, "[2023 – ESC Meeting Summary – Spring Session, Luxembourg](#)," 23 June 2023.

- Professor Julian Hinz, Bielefeld University and Kiel Institute for the World Economy, who spoke on *Economic Consequences of Sanctions, Russia's War on Ukraine, and Rising Political Tensions*.
- Stacy A. Cummings, General Manager, NATO Support and Procurement Agency, who spoke on *Allied Procurement in Light of NATO's Revised Deterrence and Defence Posture*.

The Committee's rapporteurs presented their draft reports and the studies and upcoming activities for the remainder of 2023 were discussed.¹⁶

Canadian Participation:

Senators Gwen Boniface, Rebecca Patterson and M.P. Rachel Blaney represented the Canadian delegation. During the presentation on space systems, Senator Patterson posed a question related to cyber security challenges. During the consideration of the draft report on *Russia's War on Ukraine and Transatlantic Energy Security Challenges*, Senator Patterson also noted that the report's discussion of energy did not, but should, include Canada, a country with vast resources, strong trade ties to the United States, and an emerging hydrogen industry.

4. Political Committee ¹⁷

The Political Committee met on 21 May 2023 and heard from three speakers:

- Tom Koller, Director of Defence, Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs of Luxembourg, who spoke about *The New Strategic Landscape and NATO Adaptation*.
- Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya, the Opposition Leader of Belarus and the Head of the United Transition Council, who spoke on *The Struggle for a Democratic Future of Belarus in the context of Russia's War on Ukraine*.
- Roland Freudenstein, Vice President of GLOBSEC and Head of GLOBSEC Brussels, who spoke on *Central and Eastern Europe – Leading the way in EU Security*.

The Committee's four rapporteurs presented their respective draft reports (including one for the Mediterranean and Middle East Special Group).¹⁸ The Committee then discussed its studies and activities for the remainder of 2023.

Canadian Participation:

¹⁶ The Economics and Security Committee's reports included: [Russia's War on Ukraine and Transatlantic Energy Security Challenges](#), [Rebuilding Transatlantic Economic Relations and Resilience](#), and [Towards the Reconstruction of Ukraine](#).

¹⁷ A more detailed summary of the meeting can be found at NATO PA, "[2023 – PC Meeting Summary – Spring Session Luxembourg](#)," 4 July 2023.

¹⁸ The reports discussed by the Political Committee included: [Russia's War Against Ukraine: Strategic Imperatives for NATO](#), [China's Global Role in the Wake of Russia's War Against Ukraine](#), [The Future of NATO's Open Door Policy](#).

Senators Boisvenu and Patterson, as well as M.P.s Dzerowicz and Gallant attended the meeting. During the presentation on Belarus, Cheryl Gallant M.P. asked about Russia's stated intention to station nuclear weapons on Belarussian territory, while Julie Dzerowicz M.P. asked about countering Russian disinformation in Belarus.

5. Science and Technology Committee ¹⁹

The Science and Technology Committee met on 20 May 2023 and heard presentations from two speakers:

- Bryan Wells, NATO's Chief Scientist, who gave a presentation on Synthetic Biology: Opportunities and Risks for International Security.
- Colonel Guy Hoffman, Luxembourg's National Armament Director, who gave a presentation on Luxembourg Defence in Space and Cyber.

During the meeting, the Committee Rapporteurs presented three draft reports²⁰ and committee members discussed their studies and activities for the remainder of 2023.

Canadian Participation:

The Canadian delegation was represented at this meeting by Rachel Blaney, M.P., and Cheryl Gallant, M.P.

The delegates actively participated in the discussions, with M.P. Gallant posing questions related to human-defence interfaces, cyber command training, nuclear weapons and autonomous systems in a nuclear context. M.P. Blaney asked at what point sharing common datasets for training autonomous systems might pose a risk to Allies, and underlined the importance of collaboration on regulation.

D. Plenary Sitting ²¹

The Plenary Sitting of the 2023 Spring Session was held on 22 May 2023.

NATO PA President Joëlle Garriaud-Maylam delivered the opening address.

Delegates heard from a number of distinguished guests, including: the President of the Chamber of Deputies of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg; the Prime Minister of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg; the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defence of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg; the Minister of Defence of Ukraine; the Head of the Ukrainian Delegation to the NATO PA; and the Deputy Secretary General of NATO. Delegates then participated in question-and-answer sessions with three of the presenters.

The plenary then turned its attention to the two draft declarations that had earlier been amended and approved by the Standing Committee. Ms Linda Sanchez (United States)

¹⁹ A more detailed summary of the meeting can be found at NATO PA, "2023 – [STC Meeting Summary – Spring Session Luxembourg](#)," 23 June 2023.

²⁰ The draft reports discussed by the Science and Technology Committee were: [Novel Materials and Additive Manufacturing](#), [Protecting Critical Maritime Infrastructure – The Role of Technology](#), and [Developing Future Capabilities: Robotics and Autonomous Systems](#).

²¹ For a more detailed summary of the meeting see NATO PA, "[2023 – Plenary Meeting Minutes – Spring Session Luxembourg](#)," 29 August 2023. The full Plenary Sitting is also available at [this NATO PA page](#).

presented the first of the draft declarations, *A New NATO in an Age of Strategic Competition: Accelerating NATO's Adaptation at the Vilnius Summit*. Following debate, the draft declaration, as amended, was adopted.²² Next, Mr. Michal Szczerba (Poland) presented the second draft declaration *United and Resolute in Support of Ukraine*. Following debate, the draft declaration, as amended, was adopted.²³

The Assembly then moved on to other business. The President of the NATO PA proposed rules changes to confirm the number of seats Finland would have in the PA, and to officially adopt the Republic of Türkiye's name change. These proposals were adopted. Following statements by the heads of the Finnish and Swedish delegations, the Treasurer of the NATO PA presented the 2022 audited financial statements, and a report on the 2022 surplus, both of which were adopted.

After thanking the Delegation of Luxembourg to the NATO PA, and her colleagues in the Luxembourg parliament, the President of the NATO PA closed the Session.

Canadian Participation:

All Canadian delegates were present at the Plenary Sitting. During the Sitting, M.P. Dzerowicz questioned the Prime Minister and the Defence Minister of Luxembourg about NATO's 2% of GDP defence spending guideline. She also asked the Deputy Secretary General of NATO to comment on the need to speak in a collective voice to counter Russian and Chinese disinformation, and on what NATO needed to do to ensure arms control and non-proliferation.

OTHER MEETINGS

While in Luxembourg, the Canadian delegation held a bilateral meeting with Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya, the Opposition Leader of Belarus, who is now living in exile in Lithuania, and who spoke to the Political Committee during the Spring Session. They discussed the challenges to achieving democracy in Belarus, a country bordering Ukraine that is allied to Moscow and whose regime the NATO PA has referred to as a co-aggressor in the war against Ukraine.²⁴

The Canadian delegation also held a bilateral meeting with the observer delegation from Kosovo. They discussed the challenges facing that country and its strategic region following Russia's illegal invasion of Ukraine. The Kosovo delegation stated that Kosovo eventually wished to join NATO, and that, in the shorter term, it wished to upgrade its current observer status at the NATO PA to associate member status.²⁵

Prior to the 2023 Spring Session, Canadian delegates met virtually with Canada's Ambassador to NATO, David Angell, who explained key issues on the NATO agenda and Canadian priorities for the July 2023 Vilnius Summit.

²² See NATO PA, [A New NATO in an Age of Strategic Competition: Accelerating NATO's Adaptation at the Vilnius Summit](#).

²³ See NATO PA, [United and Resolute in Support of Ukraine](#).

²⁴ Canadian-NATO Association, ["Canadian Parliamentarians attend the NATO PA's 2023 Spring Session in Luxembourg," News Release, 29 May 2023.](#)

²⁵ Ibid.

Respectfully submitted,

Julie Dzerowicz, M.P.
Chair of the Canadian NATO Parliamentary Association

Travel Costs

ASSOCIATION	Canadian NATO Parliamentary Association
ACTIVITY	Bureau Meeting and Spring Session
DESTINATION	Luxembourg, Luxembourg
DATES	From May 19 to 22, 2023
DELEGATION	
SENATE	Hon. Pierre-Hugues Boisvenu Hon. Gwen Boniface Hon. Rebecca Patterson
HOUSE OF COMMONS	Julie Dzerowicz Rachel Blaney Cheryl Gallant
STAFF	Céline Ethier James Lee
TRANSPORTATION	\$ 69,100.19
ACCOMMODATION	\$ 7,702.48
HOSPITALITY	\$ 0.00
PER DIEMS	\$ 5,317.94
OFFICIAL GIFTS	\$ 0.00
MISCELLANEOUS	\$ 0.00

TOTAL

\$ 82,120.61