Report of the Canadian Parliamentary Delegation respecting its participation at the Joint Meeting of the Defence and Security, Economics and Security, and Political Committees and Officers of the Committee on the Civil Dimension of Security and the Science and Technology Committee

Canadian NATO Parliamentary Association (NATO PA)

Brussels, Belgium
February 13 to 15, 2016

Report

Introduction

The Canadian Delegation to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization Parliamentary Assembly (NATO PA) has the honour to present its report on the Joint Meeting of the Defence and Security, Economics and Security and Political Committees, held in Brussels, Belgium on 14–16 February 2015. Canada was represented by Mrs. Cheryl Gallant, M.P., Head of the Canadian Delegation, Senator Raynell Andreychuk, Senator Daniel Lang, Senator Joseph A. Day, Steven MacKinnon, M.P., Pierre Paul Hus, M.P., and Anthony Rota, M.P.

The main purpose of the annual joint committee meetings in Brussels, which also include the officers of the Committee on the Civil Dimensions of Security and the Science and Technology Committee, is to provide delegates with an update on the Alliance's activities and operations from senior bureaucrats and military officers working at NATO headquarters. Canadian delegates were also briefed by Canada's Permanent Representative to NATO, Ambassador Kerry Buck and the Military Representative of Canada to NATO, Vice-Admiral Bob Davidson.

The meetings in Brussels were conducted under the Chatham House rule.

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSIONS

EU Responses to Terrorism

The point was made that NATO is a collective defence alliance. Therefore, each member state is responsible for maintaining its own internal security. However, NATO can and does support the European Union's (EU's) counter-terrorism efforts. For example, to assist the EU in responding to the Syrian refugee crisis, the NATO Standing Maritime Group 2 provides FRONTEX (the EU's border security agency) intelligence it collects on human smuggling operations in the Aegean. FRONTEX then uses this intelligence to intercept smuggling vessels and return passengers to Turkey to be properly processed.

When a member of the Canadian delegation intervened to question what rules of engagement NATO Standing Maritime Group 2 has been given with respect to rescuing those aboard smuggling vessels in distress, they were told that those four nations (Canada, Germany, Turkey and Greece) whose ships were participating in the NATO operation are still bound by their national obligations to uphold maritime laws pertaining to vessels in distress.

Increasing intelligence sharing while protecting privacy rights is a central challenge in responding to the terrorism threat posed by returning foreign fighters, some of whom are exploiting migrant flows to re enter Europe undetected. What is required is a comprehensive approach. For example, there are 700 Europol analysts working hard on linking up their respective nations' criminal intelligence data, it was suggested this effort should be extended to the sharing of analysis.

Questions were also raised about the functionality of existing information sharing systems such as the Schengen Information System (SIS), which does not yet provide the means for a systematic examination of each person crossing the border into Europe. While the SIS, in theory, provides a capability to instantaneously examine multiple databases pertaining to EU citizens, it does not address third country nationals. Here too, a systematic check is required, particularly for false or stolen passport records.

In this connection, increased information sharing and linkage between key EU databases was advocated. Privacy protection rules requiring collected personal data to be used only for the original purpose for which it was collected are an impediment. For example, until recently, this principle stood in the way of sharing biometric (fingerprint) data collected by EU member states from asylum seekers and irregular migrants under the EURODAC program. Because the purpose of the EURODAC fingerprint collection is limited to determining which European country has responsibility for considering an asylum claimant's application, until recently, this biometric data could not be shared with EU police agencies to compare with biometrics stored in their own criminal record databases, despite it making sense to do so as a means to spot false documentation. New regulations have enabled comparison with the Visa Information System (where permitted) and, under strict conditions and only for the purpose of preventing terrorism or serious crime, existing criminal records databases. At present, EUROPOL and national law enforcement agencies are still not permitted to conduct systematic checks of EURODAC data, nor can this data be shared with third countries.

Increased information sharing between the United States and Europe was also advocated, with one official suggesting that the former continues to over-classify its intelligence. They argued that the principle of protecting sources and methods receives too much weight in decisions to share intelligence with third parties.

There was some pushback on the notion of increased data sharing, however, with one delegate suggesting that such "big data" approaches do not solve the problem of failure to act on available warning information.

Regarding the issue of European efforts to counter radicalization to violence, a member of the Canadian delegation raised a question about the root causes of this radicalization. One response suggested that the root cause was the sectarian policies of countries such as Iraq, where power is not distributed equally among Shia and Sunni. Another respondent pointed to the role of Salafism and the "environment of intolerance" it creates as being part of the problem. They suggested that Saudi Arabia's funding of imams and mosques world-wide that promote intolerance are also problematic and that, with 20 million Muslims in Europe, more efforts need to be made to train imams in the European context. Finally, the respondent said that it would be unfair to those who wish to promote more enlightened forms of Islam to suggest that religion plays no role in terrorism.

NATO's Political Agenda towards the Warsaw Summit

The threats NATO currently faces are complex, if not intractable. Some of these problems, such as that posed by terrorism, will take generations to defeat. This is also a

multiple-front challenge, with issues currently emanating from the east and south. Between short-term crises and longer-term challenges like that emanating from Russia's annexation of Crimea and aggressive tactics in the Baltic region, it was suggested that NATO could be overwhelmed.

Additional resources provided to confront the relatively straightforward collective defence challenge from the east will help Allies deal with that issue, but not with those issues arising from the south. Whereas the eastern flank threat requires NATO to prepare to fight on its own territory – something that one official described as is "in our genes" to do – there is no simple solution, no readily available "off-ramp" to address threats from the south.

Thus, it was argued that NATO must maintain a balance in how it responds to the differing challenges presented from these two regions. To confront eastern flank challenges, NATO will be required to:

- Determine what is required to establish deterrence in the current context;

- Prepare for hybrid warfare.

- Accept new NATO members while seeking dialogue with Russia.

- Create a strategy to deal with Russia over the long-term, including communication of "red-lines" in times of crisis.

With respect to adapting deterrence to the current context, key questions that will be raised at the July 2016 NATO Warsaw Summit include the number of forward-deployed forces necessary to create an effective "tripwire" against attack on the eastern flank. NATO's initial idea was to emphasize the creation of a rapid reaction capability backed by troops dedicated to reinforcement but also available to respond to other contingencies. Respectively, this tripwire is a "Spearhead Force" comprising a 5,000-strong Very High Readiness Joint Task Force carved out of a 40,000-strong NATO Response Force, both falling under the command of Supreme Allied Command Europe (SACEUR).

However, given Russia's recent aggressive behaviours, Central and Eastern European NATO members favour a maximalist approach to the tripwire force that would see permanently stationed troops on their territories. Though the United States' $US 3.4 billion European Reassurance Initiative illustrates that there is growing acceptance that a stronger forward deployment is necessary, there is now a need to look at how to multinationalize this forward deployment and make it sustainable.

As part of its efforts to address southern flank issues, NATO must rely on partnerships with regional players wherever possible. In this connection, building the defence capacity of partners such as Iraq, Tunisia and Jordan, to NATO's south is essential. Building defence capacity in a non-permissive environment such as Libya, however, raises a different set of questions that NATO will be required to confront in the upcoming months.

Though NATO does not formally participate in international coalition operations in Iraq and Syria, individual members play a significant role. NATO supports these member states by backfilling key assets these members commit to coalition efforts, such as Airborne Warning and Control System (AWACS) aircraft.

Allied Defence Budgets – Implementing the Wales Defence Spending Pledge

In assessing the defence budgets of NATO members, it is important to recognize that there is no shared understanding of what a defence budget is. Thus, to capture defence procurement a member state may make outside of its defence budget, NATO's Policy and Planning Division considers defence expenditures as a whole. It also examines what is actually being accomplished with spending, whether the expenditure is simply more money being directed towards national defence requirements alone or if it is investment that counts towards NATO burden-sharing?

In respect of burden-sharing investment, NATO does not need more personnel but, rather, more key categories of equipment and capabilities that are maintained in a high state of readiness. NATO needs to be capable of high-intensity combat against a peer-state competitor. What worked in Afghanistan will not work against an attack from the east. NATO must be able to handle more than one challenge, which requires a higher readiness, with fully manned units that are fully equipped and fully trained with stores, parts and ammunition stocked. It is important to remember the wording of the Wales Summit declaration, which called on Allies to display the political will to provide required capabilities and deploy forces "when they are needed," which is a reference to a requirement for readiness.

Achieving the goal of manning the NATO Response Force to 40,000 personnel will not be enough on its own: NATO needs to do further work on moving these forces and on reinforcing them. It has only recently had to think about how to do reinforcements on its own territory, which requires obtaining authorities from implicated nations to transit military equipment – including armed aircraft and other potentially hazardous material – through their jurisdictions. In this connection, it was noted by one delegation that NATO headquarters required two months to negotiate the deployment of 2,100 forces participating in a recent Baltics-focused exercise.

Another participant pointed out that the United States is essentially alone among the allies, in its ability to manoeuvre at the divisional level, with other NATO members being limited to brigade-level endeavours at best. When a Canadian delegation member asked how to reconcile these comments about needing to fight at the divisional level while preparing for hybrid warfare challenges, such as small units of soldiers fighting out of uniform, the member was informed that NATO must be prepared for high-intensity combat as well as the small-scale skirmishes of hybrid warfare.

An important outcome of the Wales Summit was the decision to get back into civil defence issues such as continuity of government, food, water, and cyber capabilities in the face of attack. Paying attention to these issues, which are all national responsibilities, contributes to NATO resilience. At the Wales Summit, NATO agreed to set reasonable standards to achieve acceptable levels of resilience. In preparation for the Warsaw Summit, NATO members will need to work out what these standards

should be and how to measure conformance with them. The Canadian delegation received assurances that NATO is not about to become a regulator but, rather, members would be held to account on resilience issues because of the potential risk to operations.

Prospects for NATO-Russia Relations Ahead of the Warsaw Summit

The current crisis in relations between NATO and Russia is even more complicated than issues encountered during the Cold War because of the broad array of international instruments that Russia no longer respects, such as the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty and the Vienna Document 2011. Any predictability that these instruments created has been eliminated. For example, the Vienna Document and its associated confidence building regime was not created with any thought that snap exercises, such as those now being continuously carried out by Russia, would become the norm, not the exception.

Even during the Cold War, there were "no go" areas, such as nuclear policy, that could not be broached by the leader without consultation with the Politburo and Duma. Under President Vladimir Putin, there is no such debate and nuclear war is no longer unthinkable. There were big crowds at this year's May Day parade in Moscow and the biggest cheers were reserved for the Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles. For Russia, the importance of nuclear weapons is more than prestige. Threatening to use them, the intimidation, is part of their propaganda.

To reduce risks in the face of Russia's lack of transparency and military activities, including constant exercises and air incursions, NATO must seek dialogue. However, NATO must back any dialogue it has with Russia with a strong defence and deterrent posture, including nuclear weapons. In its own planning, NATO has no choice but take into account Russia's declaratory policy on use of nuclear weapons.

Until 2013, the Black Sea region was not even on NATO's radar. The Alliance's presence in the region, including its ballistic missile defence capabilities, and the declarations it has made on the issue at past summits are important. However, NATO has a long way to go in addressing the problem presented by Russia's complex strategy in this region and elsewhere.

Moscow's withdrawal from the Conventional Forces in Europe Treaty, its neglect of international obligations with respect to Crimea and Ukraine, its force buildup in Kaliningrad Oblast [an exclave between Poland and Lithuania] and efforts to strengthen its nuclear forces are all of concern to NATO.

NATO must demonstrate its cohesion in the face of these threatening behaviours through implementation of its Readiness Action Plan and its determination to confront Russia and its allies. At the same time, it must remain open to negotiated change, including updates to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe's (OSCE's) Vienna Document and a ceasefire in Syria.

Earlier on, the Canadian delegation noted that Russia's support for Syria creates challenges on NATO's southern flank. Others expressed the view that Russian-Syrian cooperation undermines Turkey and Europe more broadly and that Russia's

"weaponization" of refugees is tantamount to its use of "little green men in Crimea" in undermining NATO. However, even if Russia and NATO have differing objectives regarding Daesh, the most urgent matter is to obtain a ceasefire in Syria.

Force Readiness for Current and Future Operations

When they met in Brussels on 10–11 February 2016, NATO defence ministers discussed the implications of a recent RAND Organization report entitled Reinforcing Deterrence on NATO's Eastern Flank. Drawing on the results of a series of wargames held in 2014 and 2015, the report concluded that, given current NATO force deployments and capabilities, Russia could overrun the Baltic States within 60 hours. In light of the report's findings, SACEUR was tasked to report back on the need to augment NATO's forward presence in the Baltics.

With respect to anti-access/area denial (AA/AD), Russia's military build-up in Kaliningrad is concerning. Included in this buildup are batteries of S-400 surface to air missiles, which could be used to deny NATO military access to airspace over the region. Concerns were also expressed about the potential permanent deployment of mobile Iskander missile systems that can launch ballistic and cruise missile variants. Iskander-M missiles are tactical-range, nuclear-capable multiple independently targetable re entry vehicle (MIRV) ballistic missiles that can deliver multiple nuclear warheads over a battlefield in a single launch. Iskander-K missiles are cruise missiles that may have a range sufficient to place all of the major cities of Europe in danger.

Russia's build-up in Kaliningrad Oblast [an exclave that borders Poland and Lithuania] enables it to drive a wedge between Lithuania and Poland by invading a small area of northeastern Poland often referred to as the "Suwalki Gap." Moving NATO reinforcements into this region would be nightmarish, according to one official. There are 88 political agreements in place that have to be considered prior to undertaking any movement of military troops or equipment. This is hard enough in a permissive environment, let alone working in an anti-access/area denial (A2/AD) situation where cyber attacks are underway, observed one presenter.

NATO needs to work out how to combine with local forces in a crisis, how much authority to pre delegate to SACEUR and what kind of command structure is needed, it was argued. In respect of command structure requirements, SACEUR has been trimmed back considerably in recent years because NATO was mainly dealing with brigade-level deployments. But this structuring does not take into account the possibility that the Very High Readiness Joint Task Force is not enough to stop an invasion. Thought needs to be given to what would happen on Day 3, on Day 4, and so on, said an official.

Transportation infrastructure, such as air and sea ports as well as roads, is also of concern because it is fundamental to rapid reinforcement. NATO has established a common fund to address this issue and, under the European Reassurance Initiative, the United States will contribute money towards this fund.

Regarding hybrid warfare, questions were raised about NATO's vulnerability to the "little green men" of Ukraine. In this regard, the recent cyber attacks against Greece are of concern and underscore the importance of developing resilience in the face of such

tactics. Parliamentarians were told to expect a pledge to achieve an enhanced cyber defence capability at Warsaw.

Beyond the ongoing issue of intelligence-sharing, NATO lacks formalized indicators and warnings for hybrid threats. Knowing what it is looking for in the hybrid warfare context is essential, because NATO will need to be in a position to make decisions on the basis of fragmentary information alone. And, given the need to work closely with the EU, this hybrid warfare inclusive assessment and early warning framework must be developed collaboratively.

On 10 February 2016, NATO and the EU signed an agreement to share information on cyber incidents. It was argued that the two organizations now need to develop intelligence sharing arrangements on other forms of crisis that are happening in the hybrid context. Russia's disinformation campaign alleging the rape in Berlin of a German-Russian girl by men associated with the Syrian migrant flow is just one example of a hybrid challenge that requires agile intelligence sharing.

Once agreement is reached on indicators and warnings for hybrid threats, NATO will be in a better position to develop graduated response plans and then exercise these graduated response plans with real-life scenarios that engage diplomatic and military elements.

NATO and United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325

United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (UNSCR 1325), which called on member states to adopt a gender perspective in considering issues of armed conflict and peacekeeping, was passed in 2000. Since then, not a lot has been accomplished towards implementation globally, according to one presenter.

However, NATO has a lot to be proud of with respect to implementation, even if there remains much to be done before all the Resolution's principles are fully realized. It is the biggest coalition, world-wide, that actively promotes UNSCR 1325.

NATO must sustain the investments it has made and the knowledge it has acquired on this issue. For example, NATO should refine its knowledge about the impact of conflict on women and ensure that inclusive security frames its thinking. Mainstreaming gender is just another way of saying that gender analysis should routinely be part of all planning.

The percentage of women in senior decision-making positions in NATO decreased in 2015; down from 10.5% in 2014 to 10.3% in 2015. Nonetheless, there is talk that a woman might be chosen to oversee NATO Allied Command Transformation.

Retention of women is a big issue, parliamentarians were told. NATO members need to create a professional working environment where there is zero tolerance for harassment. The Canadian Minister of National Defence's continuous references to "his men and women" sets a great example. It underscores the use of all resources to hand.

In countering violent extremism and radicalization, there is a clear link to the gender angle on issues such as the recruitment of women. For example, research has shown that there are different triggers for men and women that attract them to Daesh.

The UNSCR 1325 framework also adds value to NATO countries' thinking on the refugee crisis. Needs assessments should include gender analysis from the outset.

One presenter emphasized that if equal rights are the foundation to our system, then we must reflect that in practice.

Information Warfare

NATO's Public Affairs strategy comprises the following objectives: "awareness" through 24/7 media monitoring; "analysis" to better understand who NATO's audience is, what they are hearing and how to counter disinformation they may be receiving; "projection of alternative narratives" that are based on our values and which dispel myths; and "alignment" within the NATO Public Affairs organization, within NATO and with other partner organizations.

NATO has a web portal for public outreach called "Setting the Record Straight" and it engages media directly in Georgia, Moldova, Montenegro, Russia and Ukraine providing interviews and appearing on television talk shows. It also cooperates with the EU on responding to Russian disinformation.

Satellite imagery is important. NATO's provision to the media of images showing the build-up of Russian forces along the Ukraine border was a turning point in international media perception.

However, NATO does not possess its own intelligence satellites. This means there is no guarantee that NATO would be able to immediately back up an assertion with photographic evidence. To provide media outlets with the evidence they seek, NATO's Public Affairs Office (NATO PAO) must thus appeal to member nations to declassify and share satellite imagery. Even though it is easier to obtain the same imagery directly from commercial satellite firms, NATO PAO tries to avoid using this method because journalists viewed declassified imagery as having greater credibility.

NATO PAO cannot conduct its own opinion polls and some members forbid the commissioning of such polls, which makes it hard to measure the impact of its work.

NATO PAO has very few channels to reach the Russian public, but its spokesperson appears quite often on Russian talk shows. Significant resources are needed to continuously monitor Russian media in order to rebut the distortions. As a result, NATO PAO is required to balance its investment in reaching the Russian intelligentsia with maintaining the Alliance's base of supporters.

Russia's narrative stays broadly constant but with shifts in focus. For example, its campaign against Ukraine is in abeyance and the focus is now falling on NATO, as illustrated by Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev's 13 February 2016 speech before a security conference in Munich which suggested that a "new Cold War" had begun and that NATO's deployments in Eastern Europe and the Balkans are aimed at Russia and destabilizing. Lately, Russia is also focusing on Montenegro, suggesting that it is "being dragged" into NATO against its will.

NATO's Role in Deterrence, Non-Proliferation, and Disarmament in Europe Today

Over the years, NATO has had to adapt its deterrent posture. In the Cold War, deterrence meant having personnel and heavy tanks forward-deployed and a very sizable nuclear force in Europe. Contemporary deterrence has to be more flexible and adaptable. It is about rapid reinforcement (enabled by the Readiness Action Plan, the NATO Response Force and forward presence), persistent and rotational presence (supported by ongoing exercises), and infrastructure for reinforcement (including, possible basing).

In short, the NATO defence ministers have concluded that speed, strength and resilience will be key themes for the Warsaw summit.

Meaningful dialogue with Russia cannot be achieved in the absence of deterrence and strength. Parliamentarians were reminded that the arms control breakthroughs of the seventies were preceded by a build-up of military strength that created the stability that enabled arms control dialogue.

NATO's Deterrence and Defence Posture (DPPR) was reviewed in 2012. While the DPPR might come up again at the Warsaw Summit, there is a stronger case for reopening the Strategic Concept. For example, Russia's military build-up in the Kaliningrad region forces NATO to consider missile defences that include defence against cruise missile threats. Missile defence in this context places a premium on early warning. Thus, to spot Russian missile launches, NATO will also need permanent, forward-deployed monitoring assets, including assets such as U.S. Army Joint Land Attack Cruise Missile Defense Elevated Netted Sensor System (JLENS) blimp.

Roundtable Meeting with NATO Ambassadors

The Canadian NATO Parliamentary Association Chair intervened to commend the speed of NATO's response to the international plea for help on the refugee crisis. At the same time, she voiced concern over Russia's use of refugees as part of its hybrid warfare campaign against NATO and urged NATO to continue its counter-propaganda efforts in this regard.

Conclusion

The annual joint committee meetings in Brussels offer Canada's delegates the opportunity to have in-depth discussions with senior officials at NATO and the EU as well as with parliamentarians from NATO member-states on current defence and economic priorities pertinent to the Alliance.

Respectfully submitted,

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

Travel Costs

ASSOCIATION	Canadian NATO Parliamentary Association (NATO PA)
ACTIVITY	Joint Committee Meetings
DESTINATION	Brussels, Belgium
DATES	February 13 to 15, 2016
DELEGATION	
SENATE	Hon. Raynell Andreychuk, Senator Hon. Joseph A. Day, Senator Hon. Daniel Lang, Senator
HOUSE OF COMMONS	Mrs. Cheryl Gallant, M.P. Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus, M.P. Mr. Steven MacKinnon, M.P. Mr. Anthony Rota, M.P.
STAFF	Mr. Jean-François Pagé, Association Secretary Ms. Holly Porteous, Analyst
TRANSPORTATION	$ 58,987.46
ACCOMMODATION	$ 11,049.31
HOSPITALITY	$ 336.50
PER DIEMS	$ 5,537.76
OFFICIAL GIFTS	$ 0.00
MISCELLANEOUS	$ 150.64
TOTAL	$ 76,061.67