

Canadian NATO
Parliamentary Association



Association parlementaire
canadienne de l'OTAN

**Report by the Canadian Parliamentary Delegation on its
Participation to the Spring Meeting of the Standing
Committee and Visit of the Bureau**

Canadian NATO Parliamentary Association (NATO PA)

**Paris, France, and Cairo, Egypt
April 1 to 5, 2016**

Report

Introduction

The Canadian delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the North American Treaty Organization (NATO PA) is honoured to present its report on the Spring Meeting of the Standing Committee and Bureau visit, which took place in Paris, France, and Cairo, Egypt, from April 1 to 5, 2016. The Parliament of Canada was represented by Cheryl Gallant, M.P. and head of the Canadian delegation, Chris Bittle, M.P., and Sherry Romanado, M.P. The delegation was accompanied by Jean-François Pagé, Secretary of the Association.

Opening of the Meeting

Paolo Alli, Vice-Chair, opened the meeting at 10:20 a.m. The Chair was unable to attend the meeting due to important commitments in his country and conveyed his regrets.

The Standing Committee observed one minute of silence in memory of the victims of the terrorist attacks in Paris and elsewhere.

The Vice-Chair thanked the head of the French delegation, Gilbert Le Bris, for hosting the ceremonies held last year on the occasion of the Assembly's 60th anniversary and for hosting the Standing Committee today. Gilbert Le Bris praised the fact that the meeting began with a minute of silence in memory of terrorism victims. This is a threat that transcends borders and that only international cooperation can counter. NATO has managed to address numerous difficult problems in the past; Mr. Le Bris expressed his certainty that it will also be able to face this one. Finally, he welcomed all participants.

Adoption of the minutes of the Standing Committee meeting held in Stavanger, Norway, on Sunday, October 11, 2015

The Vice-Chair thanked the delegation from Norway for hosting the annual session in Stavanger in October 2015. The minutes of the Standing Committee meeting in Stavanger were adopted.

Review of the Comments by the Secretary General of NATO and Chair of the North Atlantic Council on the General Policy Recommendations adopted in 2015 by the NATO Parliamentary Assembly

The Vice-Chair called the Standing Committee's attention to the Comments of the Secretary General of NATO on the General Policy Recommendations of the Assembly. He lauded the comments, which align themselves with the constructive relations between the Assembly and NATO.

Presentation by General Gratien Maire, Major-General of the Armies, France, on French defence policy, followed by a question-and-answer period

The Vice-Chair greeted General Gratien Maire, Major-General of the Armies, and introduced him to the Standing Committee.

General Maire gave an overview of French operational commitments in Africa, the Middle East and Eastern Europe. Right now, 34,000 French soldiers are deployed as part of 25 operations at home and abroad. This is the highest level of operational commitment in decades. In addition to participating in foreign operations, the French Armed Forces defend the country's borders, contribute to the fight against terrorism and conduct nuclear deterrence activities.

France has chosen to maintain a complete army model, which requires, in particular:

- An independent assessment capability
- The ability to "enter first"
- The capacity to:
 - Deter and prevent threats
 - Understand the adversary's goals and methods
 - Anticipate and surprise
 - Strike with accuracy and depth
 - Be strategically and tactically mobile
 - Be agile, reactive and able to last the distance
 - Control information and impact perceptions

The French Armed Forces currently consist of 237,000 members, 15% of whom are women and 40,000 of whom are reservists. French authorities reviewed the defence budget after the January 2015 attacks and decided to gradually increase it by €3.8 billion by 2019.

Stressing France's desire to work with other NATO and EU allies, General Maire invited Allied governments to reaffirm their cohesion, solidarity and shared stances at the Warsaw Summit, learn about the many challenges the Alliance faces and show their determination to take these on. In this regard, the Allies must concentrate on problems arising to the south and east and avoid the massive pre-positioning of forces and resources suited to a single type of threat.

Review of the report on gender considerations within NATO PA presented by Angélien Eijsink (NL), Vice-Chair of NATO PA

The Standing Committee decided to move on to point 7 of the agenda, which was the review of the report on gender considerations within NATO PA, presented by Angélien Eijsink (NL), Vice-Chair of NATO PA.

Ms. Eijsink thanked the Bureau for entrusting her with this report, for which she presented the main conclusions. She noted the two objectives cited in Resolution 1325 (2000) of the UN Security Council (UNSCR 1325): to recognize the existence of gender-based violence and address this problem, on the one hand, and to strengthen women's

active role in peace for the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts, on the other hand.

Ms. Eijsink observed that the Assembly has already taken significant measures to consider the gender perspective in its publications and activities; as an example, she cited the Assembly's 2010 adoption of a resolution on the application of UNSCR 1325 and the Standing Committee's studies on the civil aspects of security dedicated to the application of UNSCR 1325 at the national level.

She acknowledged that objective reasons, as well as certain differences between the Assembly and similar interparliamentary assemblies, may explain this state of affairs, but are no excuse.

Her report to the Standing Committee proposes seven recommendations in three areas.

The Assembly should consider including in its Regulation a provision stipulating that delegations must, to the extent possible, consist of both men and women (Recommendation 1);

- When the choice may be made between speakers with equivalent qualifications, the Assembly should make an effort to invite women speakers (Recommendation 2).

Regarding the systematic consideration of gender issues, the report urges the Assembly to:

- Address the issue of gender in the area of defence and security as part of the Assembly's regular activities (Recommendation 3);
- Review the mandate of committees so as to include the gender aspect in the attribution of all committees (Recommendation 4);
- Better promote its work on the issue (Recommendation 5);
- Develop partnerships with other organizations handling similar matters (Recommendation 6).

Regarding the control and monitoring, the report suggests that the Secretary General present to the Standing Committee an annual report on the situation as regards consideration of gender within the Assembly (Recommendation 7).

Ms. Eijsink invited the Standing Committee to voice its opinion on these recommendations. Although these would not be subject to a vote at the meeting, she did hope the Standing Committee would want to see that action is promptly taken, beginning with the review of the Regulation. She also suggested that the NATO Special Representative for Women, Peace and Security be consulted on this topic.

The Vice-Chair expressed regret that the delegation for his country includes only one woman, but observed that the previous head of the delegation, a woman, became the EU High Representative.

Mr. Le Bris called attention to a number of positive points in France, including the proportion of women in the Armed Forces (15%) and the appointment of a woman to the head of the Defence Committee of the National Assembly. He praised the objectives set by Ms. Eijsink in her report and observed that change is sometimes very slow in

coming. Success will only be achieved when qualified women are no longer held back by their gender.

It is especially important to target women at a time when the Armed Forces are finding it increasingly difficult to recruit members. She expressed support for all the report's recommendations and urged the delegations to adopt them, but especially to follow up on the recommendations concretely.

Ms. Eijsink thanked all participants for their contributions and their determination. She drew four elements from the discussion:

- The importance of setting specific objectives
- The request for guidelines on amending the Assembly's Regulation, a matter that may be examined at the annual meeting in Istanbul
- The need to opt for a balanced approach and to take into account the constraints that smaller delegations face
- The request by several delegations to consider instituting a quota

Presentation by Philippe Errera, Director General of International Relations and Strategy for France's Ministry of Defence, on the strategic environment, followed by a question-and-answer session

Philippe Errera began by reviewing the security situation and identified three main types of threats.

First, the terrorist threat is growing and is taking on new forms. No country should be considered safe. Although Daesh is losing ground in Iraq and Syria, it is making headway elsewhere—particularly in Libya—and its draw on young people is not weakening.

Second, Moscow's behaviour since 2014 has revived the spectre of intrastate conflict in Europe and is complicating political resolution of the Syrian conflict. Given its nuclear policy in particular, the Russian threat is not necessarily greater than during the Cold War, but its behaviour appears to be more irresponsible. There are grounds for maintaining sanctions, but the doors should not be closed on dialogue, so as to avoid reinforcing the perspective of Russian authorities when they depict the West as an aggressive block.

Third, Mr. Errera said he was concerned by a certain weakening in compliance with the international standard, a weakening evidenced by China's provocations concerning maritime boundaries in the South China Sea and the use of chemical weapons in Syria.

In addition, there are the risks inherent to the exploitation of migrant populations by certain states and by Daesh, the much faster dissemination of advanced military capabilities, the development of A2/AD means, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and cyber threats.

Mr. Errera presented NATO's top three priorities as flexibility, adaptability and sustainability. NATO must be able to show 360-degree flexibility. To do so, it must strengthen its deterrence and defence stances and adopt a clearer declaratory policy on nuclear matters. However, caution must be taken to avoid concentrating exclusively on

territorial state defence on the eastern flank. Adaptability refers to the necessity for the Allies to pursue the path of capacity development and transformation. French authorities consider intelligence and special operations as priority sectors. Finally, we must ensure that NATO's adaptation is sustainable, as the current deterioration in security to the east and south will likely continue. Governments must therefore keep the commitments they made at the Wales Summit concerning defence spending levels and ensure these levels are maintained for the long term. This also requires better management of the NATO budget, an area in which the Assembly might be able to play a useful role, in Mr. Errera's opinion.

Mr. Errera concluded by insisting on France's firm commitment to NATO, as evidenced by its active participation in reassurance measures on the eastern flank of the Alliance, its many political initiatives and its support for NATO's role in the migration crisis jointly with the European Union. General strengthening of the strategic partnership between these two entities is, in fact, one of France's uppermost priorities.

Assembly Activities in 2016

Lord Jopling (UK), Vice-Chair, took the chair and invited the Secretary General to present the report on the activity program for the Assembly in 2016.

The Secretary General emphasized the fact that the main study topics are the same as at the last meeting of the Standing Committee in Stavanger, at the annual session. The vast majority of reports and visits concern the challenges the Alliance is facing along its eastern and southern flanks. However, the program also involves several other priority subjects.

NATO's response to problems in the East, the Political Committee (PC), Defence and Security Committee (DSC) and Economics and Security Committee (ESC) will focus on implementing the political, military and economic aspects of decisions finalized by the Allies at the Wales Summit in 2014 and decisions expected from the Warsaw Summit. The two other committees will publish reports on related matters. Moreover, the Chair is working on a document on collective defence and on NATO deterrence, based on what his predecessor, Sir Hugh Bayley, had accomplished.

The Secretary General cited two other points related to the foregoing. First, since the Polish delegation is unable to hold a parliamentary meeting before the Warsaw Summit, he asked NATO and the Atlantic Treaty Association about whether Assembly members can participate in activities organized around the summit. Second, he requested the opinion of the Standing Committee on the proposal to adopt, at the spring session in Tirana, a declaration of the Assembly on the Warsaw Summit.

The Secretary General briefly reviewed the activities of the draft program on problems in countries south of the Alliance. These activities, which concern all committees and the Mediterranean and Middle East Special Group (GSM), are as follows: seven visits, a joint Rose-Roth/GSM seminar in Morocco and a second Rose-Roth seminar in Venice.

Two additional Rose-Roth seminars will take place in 2016: one in the Ukraine in June and the other in Kosovo in October. With respect to training programs, Mr. Jopling related the success of the program for new Assembly members, which was given in

March. He announced that other programs are planned, this time for the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia¹ and Tunisia.

The draft program consists of 36 activities broken down as follows: 10 must take place in NATO member countries (including four in the United States, in addition to the Transatlantic Parliamentary Forum session), seven in northern Africa and the Middle East, one in eastern Asia, and two in eastern and southeastern Europe.

As regards to Georgia's invitation to NATO PA to participate in the observation mission for legislative elections to be held in October 2016, the Secretary General reiterated that the Assembly participates in such activities on an exceptional basis only. However, he pronounced himself in favour of a positive response to the invitation, given that Tbilisi wishes to join NATO. The Assembly has already participated in electoral observation missions in Georgia, and the Georgian delegation is unanimously in favour of participating in the NATO PA.

Mr. Jopling went on to discuss the Sub-Committee on Transatlantic Defence and Security Co-operation's (DSCTC) planned visit to Cyprus. The proposal was first submitted to the Standing Committee at the Stavanger session but has since been extended to Greece and Turkey. The DSCTC further specified that it intended to visit both parts of the island. Such a visit must be explicitly approved by the Standing Committee, since it would be the first visit by a delegation of the Assembly to that country.

In conclusion, the Secretary General noted that changes made since the Stavanger session to the proposed study topics for reports focus more on the terrorist threat and WMD—and rightfully so. Changes to the activities helped tighten up the program for 2016 without impacting the fundamentals.

The Vice-Chair submitted the following projects and proposals for approval by the Standing Committee, specifying that the Bureau views them favourably:

- revised version of the draft activity program in its entirety;
- adoption, at the spring session in Tirana, of a declaration by the NATO PA on the Warsaw Summit;
- the DSCTC's plan to visit Cyprus, with stops in Turkey and Greece;
- acceptance of Georgia's invitation to participate in the observation mission for legislative elections to be held in October 2016.

Ms. Ameline applauded the proposal for adopting a declaration on the Warsaw Summit at the spring session in Tirana. She spoke in support of the project to visit Cyprus, provided the activity is organized consensually. Moreover, she suggested that the Assembly adopt a strong declaration on the need to build a global strategic partnership with countries immediately south of the Alliance, in close cooperation with the UN.

Membership of The Vice-Chair noted that the document goes over the next steps of the process for Montenegro becoming a NATO member and the country joining the Assembly further to the decision to invite Podgorica authorities to begin membership

¹ Turkey recognizes the Republic of Macedonia under its constitutional name.

negotiations, a decision made in December 2015 by the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of Alliance member countries.

The Standing Committee approved the suggestion to follow established practices and invite members of the Montenegro delegation to attend the next meeting as observers, during which a decision will be made regarding the size of that delegation, once the membership process has been completed.

The Vice-Chair welcomed Lyn Sachs, Chair of the International Board of Auditors for NATO (IBAN), and asked the Secretary General to present the document.

The Secretary General informed the Standing Committee that the 2015 budget was almost entirely spent. The balance—representing about €19,000, €7000 of which constituted returns on investment—represents just 0.3% of the budget.

The Treasurer said he was satisfied with the financial situation of the Assembly and specified the parameters of the audit conducted by IBAN.

Before giving the floor to Ms. Sachs, the Vice-Chair expressed his gratitude to Sir Hugh Bayley, whose work helped the Assembly members better understand transparency and accountability matters within NATO.

Lyn Sachs said that IBAN issued an unqualified audit opinion concerning the Assembly's two series of financial documents for fiscal 2015 and the full compliance of activities and information appearing in the financial statements to the relevant authorities. An unqualified audit opinion means that the financial statements faithfully reflect the Assembly's financial position, that its underlying transactions are in all respects consistent with the budgetary provisions and with the relevant rules and regulations, and that the commitment of funds was duly authorized.

Ms. Sachs then summarized NATO's progress in terms of transparency and financial accountability. She identified progress in several areas. First, 20 audit reports for fiscal 2013 and another 20 for fiscal 2014 were made public, and many more will be made public beginning in fiscal 2015. Various financial framework documents were also published. Second, improvements were made to the turnaround times for presenting audit reports. Third, the format of the financial statements has been standardized. Fourth, the number of projects funded by the NATO Security Investment Programme (NSIP), and the accounts of which are not yet closed, fell from 3,000 (totalling €3 billion) to 1,000 (totalling €1 billion). Fifth, IBAN is highly active in conducting performance audits, which currently account for one-quarter of its activities.

Nevertheless, a number of problems persist. First, 25% of audit reports are qualified: in other words, the statement of accounts therein presented errors. For example, the financial statements for the Allied command and communication centre show that the corresponding funds (some \$2 billion over 10 years) were accounted for but not capitalized. Second, she deplored what she considers a transactional approach to financial management: exemptions to the obligation to launch a tender call were granted for 15 out of 16 acquisitions.

In Ms. Sachs' opinion, to solve such problems, the Allies must institute a general financial picture that brings together various financial statements that are currently

dispersed. To begin, it would be wise to gather the financial statements of all projects funded by the joint financing regime, such as military commands or the new NATO headquarters. Thereafter, the position of Financial Director should be created at headquarters.

In response to questions from Cheryl Gallant (CA), Ms. Sachs said that by adopting a template the presentation of audit reports would be more consistent. The proposal to create a financial director position was examined for the first time in 2012 and has just been reopened by a joint initiative of Spain, the Netherlands, Canada and the United Kingdom.

On April 3–5, 2016, Cheryl Gallant, Vice Chair of the Canadian NATO Parliamentary Association, participated in a visit to the NATO Parliamentary Assembly's Bureau in Cairo.

During the visit, meetings were held with His Excellency Abdel Fattah al-Sissi, President of the Arab Republic of Egypt; Dr. Ali Abdel Aal, Speaker of the House of Representatives; Admiral Mohab Mameesh, Chairman of the Suez Canal Authority; Sameh Hassan Shoukry, Minister of Foreign Affairs; General Sedki Sobhi Sayyid Ahmed, Minister of Defence; and several members of Egypt's House of Representatives.

The main purpose of these meetings was to strengthen ties between the NATO Parliamentary Assembly and the Egyptian government in order to better understand and counter the terrorist threat.

Respectfully submitted,

Jean Rioux, M.P.
Chair of the Canadian NATO Parliamentary Association

Travel Costs

ASSOCIATION	Canadian NATO Parliamentary Association (NATO PA)
ACTIVITY	Spring meeting of the Standing Committee and Bureau visit
DESTINATION	Paris, France; Cairo, Egypt
DATES	April 1 to 5, 2016
DELEGATION	
SENATE	
HOUSE OF COMMONS	Cheryl Gallant, M.P. Chris Bittle, M.P.

Sherry Romanado, M.P.

STAFF

Jean-François Pagé

TRANSPORTATION 15,524.55\$

ACCOMMODATION 5,442.99\$

HOSPITALITY 0\$

PER DIEMS 1,857.87\$

OFFICIAL GIFTS 0\$

MISCELLANEOUS 24.99\$

TOTAL **22,850.40\$**