

**DEFENCE AND
SECURITY**

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NATO Parliamentary Assembly

SUMMARY

of the meeting of the Defence and Security Committee
Hall des Ternes, Palais des Congrès, Paris, France

Sunday 28 May 2006

ATTENDANCE LIST

Chairman	Joel Hefley (United States)
Vice-Chairman	Joseph A. Day (Canada)
General Rapporteur	Julio Miranda-Calha (Portugal)
Chairman, Sub-Committee on Transatlantic Defence and Security Co-operation	Sven Mikser (Estonia)
Rapporteur, Sub-Committee on Transatlantic Defence and Security Co-operation	John Shimkus (United States)
Chairman, Sub-Committee on Future Security and Defence Capabilities	Vahit Erdem (Turkey)
Rapporteur, Sub-Committee on Future Security and Defence Capabilities	Frank Cook (United Kingdom)
President of the NATO PA	Pierre Lellouche (France)
Secretary General	Simon Lunn
Member Delegations	
Belgium	Daniel Bacquelaine Mia De Schamphelaere Yvon Harmegnies Théo Kelchtermans Philippe Mahoux
Bulgaria	Nikolai Kamov Yani Yanev
Canada	Claude Bachand Marcel Proulx
Czech Republic	Antonin Seda
Denmark	Morten Helveg Petersen
France	Paulette Brisepierre Jean-Pierre Demerliat
Germany	Rainer Arnold Ernst-Reinhard Beck Helga Daub Ursula Mogg Winfried Nachtwei Hans Raidel Kurt J. Rossmann Anita Schäfer Bernd Siebert Jörn Thiessen Gottfried Timm
Greece	Sofia Kalantzakou Andreas Loverdos Vassilios Maghinas

Iceland	Össur Skarphéðinsson Magnus Stefánsson
Italy	Giovanni Lorenzo Forcieri Mario Palombo
Latvia	Juris Dalbins
Lithuania	Rasa Juknevičienė
Netherlands	Willem Hoekzema Tiny Kox Hendrik Jan Ormel
Norway	Per Ove Width
Poland	Zbyszek Zaborowski
Portugal	Maria Carrilho Manuel Filipe Correia de Jesus Jorge Neto
Romania	Eduard Raul Hellvig Ioan Mircea Pascu Attila Verestóy
Slovakia	Jan Kovarcik
Slovenia	Anton Anderlic
Spain	Jesus Cuadrado Maria Rosario Juaneda Jordi Marsal Alejandro Muñoz-Alonso José C. Perez Lapazaran
Turkey	Roberto Soravilla Muharrem Karsli Mehmet Nessar
United Kingdom	Hugh Bayley Sir Menzies Campbell Sir John Stanley
United States	Dan Burton Dennis Moore Mike Ross Jeff Sessions John Tanner Ellen Tauscher Tom Udall

Associate delegations

Armenia	Artur Petrosyan Mher Shageldyan
Azerbaijan	Ziyafat Asgarov Gudrat Hasanguliyev Siyavush Novruzov Tahir Suleymanov
Croatia	Krešimir Cosić Marin Jurjevic Velimir Plesa
Finland	Ilkka Kanerva
Georgia	Nicholas Rurua Irakli Kavtaradze

Russian Federation

Valery Bogomolov
Rafael Gimalov
Victor A. Ozerov
Vladimir Vassiliev
Vladimir Zhirinovskiy

Sweden

Peter Jonsson

Switzerland

Endi Engelberger

Théo Maissen

The FYR of Macedonia*

Slobodan Casule

Ukraine

Andriy Shkil

Mediterranean Associate Delegations

Algeria

Mohamed Bouha
Messaoud Chihoub
Abdelkrim Harchaoui
Ahmed Issaad
Abdelhamid Latreche
Mohamed Mebarki

Israel

Danny Yatom

Jordan

Hakem Al-Kadi

Adel Shureideh

European Parliament

Angelika Beer
Paulo Casaca
Ana Maria Gomes

Speakers

Dennis Sammut, Executive Director, The London Information Network on Conflicts and State-building (Links)
John Kriendler, Professor, George C. Marshall European Center for Security Studies
General Henri Bentégeat, Chief of Staff of the French Armed Forces

International Secretariat

Zachary Selden, director
Valérie Geffroy, co-ordinator
Patrick Stephenson, research assistant
Devon L. Mans, research assistant
Csaba Kalmar, research assistant

* Turkey recognises the Republic of Macedonia with its constitutional name.

1. **Dennis Sammut**, Executive Director of the London Information Network on Conflicts and State-building, spoke about *Choices and Options for the countries of the South Caucasus*. Mr Sammut focused on the idea that closer relations with NATO and a strong relationship with Russia is not a zero sum game for the countries of the region.
2. **Vahit Erdem** (TR) reaffirmed Turkey's commitment to building a stronger link between NATO and the South Caucasus. **Sofia Kalantzakou** (GR) asked how NATO should react to the strong nationalistic rhetoric often employed in the region. Mr Sammut replied that recent statements have been less inflammatory, but that the international community should be clear that military solutions to the current problems are not acceptable.
3. **Vladimir Zhirinovskiy** (RU) underscored the economic relationship between Russia and Georgia and that billions of dollars flow from Russia to Georgia each year. Mr Sammut replied that most of that capital flow came from Georgians living in Russia.
4. **Tiny Kox** (NL) questioned the utility of involving a military alliance such as NATO in the region. Mr Sammut replied that NATO has a role to play because the countries must first feel secure before they can resolve their differences. **Mher Shageldyan** (AM) asked about the consequences to bring some but not all of the countries in the region into NATO. Mr Sammut agreed that this was a point of concern and that we should avoid creating still more divisions in the region. He added that we must avoid solutions based on political expediency and focus on long-term solutions that give all sides a sense of security.
5. **Julio Miranda Calha** (PT) presented the Draft General report, *Lessons Learned from NATO's Current Operations*. The report focused on Afghanistan as that is the main NATO operation, but also included a look at NATO's operations in Pakistan, Sudan and Iraq. Mr Miranda Calha concluded that despite the progress in Afghanistan, a tremendous amount still remains to be accomplished. The main lessons we can draw from NATO's current operations relate to the need for greater interoperability, flexibility and coordination with other international actors.
6. **Sven Mikser** (EE) discussed his recent trip with fellow NATO Parliamentarians to Afghanistan and noted the ongoing progress as well as continuing problems. Tiny Kox expressed concern about the operation and that NATO troops were being dragged into a situation that was detrimental to the interests of all involved. **Hugh Bailey** (UK) disagreed with the characterization of the African Union force in paragraph 61. He also believed that coordination between the EU and NATO is better than the report implies.
7. **Jesus Cuadrado** (ES) spoke of the Spanish presence in Afghanistan and the importance of reconstruction as well as security operations. **John Skimkus** (US) was pleased to see gains in female representation in the Afghan Parliament. He also asked what lessons have been learned about NATO's heavy lift ability to the regions addressed in the report. **Hendrik Jan Ormel** (NL) suggested the preparation of a special Committee report on Iraqi developments. **Rasa Jukneviene** (LT) asked if it would be possible to invite parliamentary representatives from Iraq and Afghanistan to the next NATO PA meeting.
8. **Mario Palombo** (IT) asked for clarification on the need for NATO troops to have 'flexibility' in Afghanistan. He said that he did not believe NATO the way that it was constructed now could fight terrorism and that there is little coordination between national intelligence agencies. **Frank Cook** (UK) noted that the role of women in Afghanistan has changed dramatically. He also urged the parliamentarians to do what they can to reduce the national caveats that currently inhibit NATO operational effectiveness. **Willem Hoekzema** (NL) noted the need to arrange a fairer way of spreading costs among members. He hoped that this point could be better addressed in paragraph 84. **Daniel Bacquelaine** (BE) noted that there is sometimes confusion between NATO

humanitarian and defence missions. When NATO adopts a humanitarian role, then occasionally Non-Government Organisations are taken for military units.

9. **Professor John Kriendler** of the Marshall Center presented his thoughts on the reform of NATO headquarters. Professor Kriendler traced the reform effort of the past few years, noting its importance to NATO's ability to adapt to the changing security environment. Despite a considerable amount of discussion, however, the reform process has been slow and limited. Some good steps have been taken, such as collocating members of the International Staff and International Military Staff, but more needs to be done to allow NATO to operate more effectively.

10. **Ana Maria Gomes** (European Parliament) asked for elaboration on the coordination problems between EU and NATO. Mr Kriendler pointed out that although the "Berlin plus" arrangement has been successful, there is still duplication of efforts between the EU and NATO and that there is an element of competition between the two.

11. **Claude Bachand** (CA) expressed concern that headquarters have become more important than the actual deployable forces and enquired whether headquarters have become greater in numbers and staff. Mr Kriendler noted that in fact the headquarters staff is asked to do more with virtually the same size staff, and that the total number of policy professionals at NATO headquarters is only a few hundred individuals.

12. At the request of the Icelandic delegation, the Committee discussed the planned closure of the United States airbase at Keflavik, Iceland. The United States has maintained the airbase since World War II, but is planning to close it in the wake of a global review of its overseas basing strategy. **Össur Skarphédinsson** (IS) outlined his delegation's position, stating that they are highly critical of both the decision to close the base and the manner in which the decision was taken. He did not believe that enough consideration had been given to either the strategic consequences or the implications for the broader Alliance. From a strategic perspective, Iceland has no military of its own, so it cannot independently defend its own airspace. **Magnus Stefánsson** (IS) added that, given the high volume of air traffic that crosses its airspace, this could present security problems for Iceland and other Allies. Mr Skarphédinsson also stated that the unilateral way in which the United States decided to end discussion and close the base was inappropriate considering Iceland's firm and long-standing position as a member of the Alliance and a friend of the United States.

13. **Joel Hefley** (US) replied that the United States would continue to defend Iceland's airspace and was looking into other ways to do so without basing aircraft in the country. But he noted that the closure is part of pattern of base closures around the world. Mr Shimkus added that we cannot constrain ourselves to Cold War models of security when considering how to distribute defence resources, and noted that in fact many communities in the United States are also coping with the effects of base closures.

14. Several members from the Baltic region including Mrs Rasa Juknevičienė and **Juris Dalbins** (LV) noted that NATO supplies air patrols for their countries and suggested that NATO should take on this obligation for Iceland. **Per Ove Width** (NO) agreed that the issue is not simply a bilateral one and that NATO should play a role.

15. Mr Hefley noted the significance of this issue and offered to transmit the concerns voiced at the Committee meeting to the Department of Defence.

16. Mr Shimkus presented the draft report of the Sub-Committee on Transatlantic Security and Defence Cooperation. The draft report focused on the changing pattern of the US overseas military presence and its effects on the Alliance. Mr Shimkus emphasized that the changes are based on a strategic re-evaluation of the current security environment. The Sub-Committee plans

to visit Romania and Bulgaria to gain more understanding of how the process affects some members of the Alliance.

17. **Andreas Loverdos** (GR) inquired whether paragraphs 22-25 of the report imply that the U.S. is withdrawing all of its forces from Germany. Mr Shimkus answered that about 70,000 US soldiers would remain in Germany.

18. **Sir John Stanley** (UK) addressed two areas not covered in the report: China and the Indian Ocean. The key issue in this matter would be the American basing posture in the vicinity of Taiwan. In addition, legal action in UK courts may result in the return of land currently used by the US air base at Diego Garcia to the natives of that island.

19. Mr Bachand noted that the Overseas Basing Commission is critical of the Pentagon's basing policy. He inquired who carried out the Global Posture Review, and also asked why its planners had not waited for the recommendations of the next Quadrennial Defence Review.

20. Mr Kox said that while the U.S. considers itself to be in a global struggle against violent extremism, his own country did not believe itself to be in such a struggle. He wondered whether it is a wise design to put troops in Eastern Europe, expressing a fear that such a deployment could destabilize the region. **Ellen Tauscher** (US) asked the Rapporteur to comment about forward deployed troops, communications, and specifically about strategic airlift.

21. **General Henri Bentégeat**, Chief of Staff of the French Armed Forces discussed France's strong support of a NATO. He indicated that France is the fifth largest financial contributor and fourth largest operational contributor to NATO. General Bentégeat described operations in three theatres: the Balkans, Afghanistan and Pakistan. The General believes that NATO can accomplish simultaneous operations and can meet today's global challenges. He reaffirmed that NATO, as a military alliance, must only take on missions that it is capable of successfully accomplishing. He concluded by noting the need for European members of the Alliance to consider investing more in their militaries.

22. Mr Miranda Calha questioned the General about the respective roles of NATO and the EU. The General recommended that roles should be properly shared between the two organisations based on comparative advantages

23. Mr Cook presented the draft report of the Sub-Committee on Future Security and Defence Capabilities, *NATO's role in South Caucasus Region*. He stressed that the report is a draft to provide some background for the members in advance of their visit to the region later in the year.

24. **Ziyafat Asgarov** (AZ) commented the need to rely on the principles of international law to solve the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. Mr Asgarov stressed that Nagorno-Karabakh is part of Azerbaijan; Armenia started a military intervention and tried to take control of Azeri territory. Furthermore, today about 20% of Azerbaijan is occupied by Armenia and about one million people to become refugees or internally displaced persons. **Mher Shageldyan** (AM) emphasized the Armenian use of the rhetoric of peace and negotiations while Azerbaijan uses war rhetoric. He drew attention to the Azerbaijani increase in military expenditures fuelled by oil income. **Nicholas Rurua** (GE) expressed Georgia's desire to assist in promoting regional stability. All three delegations submitted detailed written comments on the report that the Rapporteur offered to take into consideration when preparing the final report.

25. Mr Erdem expressed concern over paragraph 30 of the report. Mr Erdem underlined Turkey's intention to be constructive and to normalize relations with Armenia. Mr Erdem stressed that references to events that occurred during the Ottoman era should be left out of the report.
