

**STANDING  
COMMITTEE**

204 SC 05 E  
Original: English



**NATO Parliamentary Assembly**

**THE SECRETARY GENERAL'S REPORT ON  
PRIORITIES AND ACTIVITIES**

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

|   | <b>Page</b> |
|---|-------------|
| <b><i>I. INTRODUCTION</i></b>                                       | 1           |
| <b><i>II. SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES IN 2005</i></b>                     | 1           |
| <b><i>III. SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES PLANNED FOR 2006</i></b>           | 4           |
| <b><i>Appendix. THE AIMS OF THE NATO PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY</i></b> | 9           |

## ***I. INTRODUCTION***

1. A key role of the Standing Committee is to review Assembly activities in their entirety. Although the Committees are sovereign in terms of the subjects they choose to address, the Standing Committee is the only body which can look at the total picture and identify unnecessary duplication and any gaps in coverage. It cannot dictate changes but it can request that Committees adjust their subject coverage.

2. Regarding activities, it is the responsibility of the Standing Committee to approve all activities, in particular those which involve the creation of new relationships.

## ***II. SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES IN 2005***

3. During the Standing Committee meeting in Reykjavik in early April, the Standing Committee discussed the Assembly's priorities and activities for 2005. Concerns were expressed about "gaps" in coverage or the relative emphasis being given to particular topics.

4. The key subject areas where proposals were made concerning their coverage by the Assembly were:

- The future of NATO
- Improving the operational effectiveness of NATO forces
- The potential lifting of the European Union's arms embargo on China
- Dealing with Iran's nuclear programme
- Moldova
- Belarus
- Russia

5. Regarding the future of NATO, it was agreed that the many aspects of this subject would be addressed in the reports of the PC and DSC as appropriate, and this has been the case.

6. Questions regarding NATO operations and missions – national caveats, improving the usability of NATO forces, and developing a new approach to funding NATO operations - are all being addressed in detail by the DSC. The PC also intends to address some aspects of these topics.

7. The debate about the potential lifting of the European Union's arms embargo on China is addressed in the report of the ESC's Sub-Committee on Transatlantic Economic Relations which focuses on China. The Political Committee's General Report also makes reference to this issue.

8. The problems posed by Iran's nuclear programme have been addressed in detail by both the PC and the STC in recent years. Currently, this subject is dealt with in the report of the PC's Sub-Committee on Transatlantic Relations which addresses security in the Persian Gulf. On present plans, both the PC and STC intend to address Iran in detail in 2006.

9. On Moldova, a visit took place in 2004 by the Sub-Committee on Democratic Governance, and two members of the Moldovan Parliament participated in the 2005 New Parliamentarians Programme. It was under consideration as a location for a visit by the President and the Bureau, but this will be reconsidered in view of the fact that a Rose-Roth seminar is scheduled there in 2006.

10. On Belarus, the Standing Committee agreed that direct contacts with the current regime should be avoided, but that some way should be found to indicate the Assembly's concern about the situation there, and its support for those who are still striving to establish a pluralist, democratic country. It was therefore decided to accept an offer by the Lithuanian delegation to hold a seminar

in Vilnius to which selected Belarussians would be invited. This seminar took place in late September, and Belarus features as a separate item on the Standing Committee agenda.

11. Regarding Russia, the Standing Committee agreed that no joint Committee meetings should take place there this year in view of the already crowded Assembly calendar and the general dissatisfaction expressed by participants about the value of dialogue within that format.

12. The Standing Committee also expressed deep concern about Russia's failure to implement its border agreement with Lithuania, and to sign and ratify border agreements with Estonia and Latvia. The Standing Committee authorized the Assembly's President to write to the Russian President, Vladimir Putin, to voice those concerns. No response was received.

13. No joint meetings are planned for Russia in 2006, but a Rose-Roth seminar will take place in southern Russia

14. Table 1 summarizes the subjects addressed by the Committees and Sub-committees during 2005.

**Table 1: Committee and Sub-Committee Report Subjects 2005**

| <b>Committee/ Sub-Committee</b>                 | <b>Subjects</b>   |
|---|---|
| <b>Civil Dimension of Security</b>              | Minorities in the South Caucasus  |
| <b>Special Report</b>                           | Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear Detection – a Technological Overview   |
| Democratic Governance                           | NATO and Kazakhstan   |
| <b>Defence and Security</b>                     | NATO's Out-of-Area Operations   |
| Future Security and Defence Capabilities        | NATO's Role in Balkan Security  |
| Transatlantic Defence and Security Co-operation | Progress on the Prague Capabilities Commitments   |
| <b>Economics and Security</b>                   | Policy Implications of the Risk Society (Economic mechanisms for addressing resource scarcity, environmental degradation, and technological risks to society) |
| East-West Economic Co-operation and Convergence | Economic Transition in the Middle East and North Africa   |
| Transatlantic Economic Relations                | China's Economic Emergence: The Implications for the Trans-Atlantic and Global Economies  |
| <b>Political</b>                                | The Future Role of NATO. NATO and "Post-Conflict" Operations  |
| NATO Partnerships                               | NATO-EU Security Co-operation   |
| Transatlantic Relations                         | NATO and Persian Gulf Security  |
| <b>Science and Technology</b>                   | The Security of WMD-related material in Russia  |
| <b>Special Report</b>                           | Climate Changes in the Arctic: Challenges for the North Atlantic Community  |
| Proliferation of Military Technology            | The Security Implications of Nanotechnology   |

15. During the course of 2005, Committee and Sub-Committee activities took place in the following locations:

|            |  |
|------------|--|
| <b>CDS</b> | Kazakhstan, the United States, Azerbaijan  |
| <b>DSC</b> | The United States, Brussels (February meetings), Kosovo and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia <sup>1</sup> , Serbia and Montenegro, Norway and Sweden, and Canada. |
| <b>ESC</b> | Brussels (February meetings), Paris (OECD), China, Latvia, Morocco, and the United Kingdom   |
| <b>PC</b>  | Brussels (February meetings), the United States, Abu Dhabi, Austria and Bosnia and Herzegovina, Ukraine, and Spain and Portugal  |
| <b>STC</b> | Russia, Germany and a visit to French Guyana is planned for December   |

16. Other Assembly groups met as follows:

|                          |   |
|--------------------------|---|
| <b>GSM</b> <sup>2</sup>  | Jordan, Italy, Qatar  |
| <b>UNIC</b> <sup>3</sup> | Ukraine (in conjunction with the PC Sub-Committee on NATO Partnerships) |
| <b>NRPC</b> <sup>4</sup> | Slovenia and Denmark (in the context of the sessions)                   |

17. **Rose-Roth Seminars** took place in Croatia, Serbia and Montenegro and Armenia. A further special seminar on Decentralization in Kosovo, organized in conjunction with the Italian Parliament took place in Rome, Italy on 28 October. The **Parliamentary Transatlantic Forum** will take place in the United States on 5-6 December. The **Standing Committee** took place in Iceland, and the **Sessions** in Slovenia and Denmark.

18. In addition to these meetings, members of the **Standing Committee** visited Afghanistan with SACEUR in March. The meeting with the Standing Committee and the Permanent Representatives to the North Atlantic Council was postponed until 11 April.

19. The Assembly also undertook **election observation mission to Afghanistan** from 16 to 21 September to cover the legislative elections on 18 September.

20. Presidential visits, to which members of the Bureau are invited, have included Poland, Afghanistan, and Israel and the Palestinian Authority, Ukraine and the United States

21. The sixth **New Parliamentarians Programme** took place in July with the Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces (DCAF) again providing financial support for this event. The Assembly also organized, in conjunction with NATO, a Defence Institutions Building Training Program for senior Georgian officials and parliamentarians which took place from 27 June to 1 July in Brussels. A training programme for parliamentarians and parliamentary staff from Armenia took place in Brussels in October, and a similar programme for Serbia and Montenegro is scheduled for November. These programmes are supported by DCAF and the Norwegian Foreign Ministry.

22. Presenting these meetings regionally, 22 took place in NATO member nations (of these, six in North America), four took place in the Balkans, five in the "broader Middle East", one in Russia, two in Ukraine, two in the Caucasus, two in Afghanistan, and one each in China and Central Asia, and by the close of the year one to South America.

<sup>1</sup> Turkey recognizes the Republic of Macedonia with its constitutional name.

<sup>2</sup> Mediterranean Special Group

<sup>3</sup> The Ukraine – NATO Interparliamentary Council

<sup>4</sup> The NATO – Russia Parliamentary Committee

23. This large range of meetings enabled to the Assembly to address a very broad range of subjects. The list below is not comprehensive but provides a good indication of the scope of the Assembly's subject coverage.

- The Transatlantic relationship
- The role and relevance of the Alliance
- Alliance operations in Afghanistan and Kosovo
- The war in Iraq and its consequences for the Alliance
- Terrorism
- The proliferation of weapons of mass destruction
- Alliance capabilities
- NATO enlargement
- Deepening and Broadening Partnerships
  - The European Union
  - Russia
  - Ukraine
  - The South Caucasus
  - The Balkans
  - The Southern Mediterranean and the Middle East
- Examples of other current topics
  - Belarus
  - China
  - The Northern Region
  - Climate change
  -

### **III. SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES PLANNED FOR 2006**

24. Assembly activities planned for 2006 will follow a similar pattern to those of 2005, as can be seen from Tables 3 and 4. Table 3 also shows the subjects that are likely to be addressed by the Committees and Sub-Committees during 2006.

25. It must be stressed, of course, that the subjects and locations of certain meetings will be adjusted during the course of the Copenhagen session. A special meeting of the Bureau and the Committee chairmen will take place in order to identify possible gaps in coverage, areas of duplication, and options for joint visits. The Committees themselves will also clearly have their say. Consequently, updated versions of Tables 3 and 4 will be presented to the Standing Committee.

26. On present plans, a major theme, particularly for the DSC and the PC will be the relevance of the Alliance to current security challenges and its ability to remain the primary forum for continuing consultation among Allies on key strategic issues. Both Committees will address this central issue through their respective dimensions. They will also assess, when it is made available, the internal study set in hand by the NATO Secretary General to assess what further changes are needed to ensure NATO's effectiveness, as well as the military transformation that is already underway. Of particular interest will be the measures that address the question of NATO's political centrality and the problem of ensuring that NATO's military capabilities match its political aspirations.

27. The major themes for the Assembly's five Committees will be a continuation from 2005 with several minor adjustments in emphasis:

28. The ESC plans to strengthen its focus on China, including a return visit in the latter part of 2006. A Presidential visit to China is also foreseen.

29. The PC plans to continue its focus on the Gulf, particularly the problem with Iran, and the potential for new Alliance partnerships in the Gulf. It is important that these activities are

coordinated with the work of the Mediterranean Special Group in order to avoid unnecessary duplication of effort.

30. The CDS will continue to address the South Caucasus, but rather less intensely than in 2005 in order to devote attention to co-operation in the Black Sea region. However, the DSC will pay more attention to the South Caucasus while decreasing its emphasis on the Balkans.

31. Despite these and other shifts of focus in the work of the Committees, in terms of regional focus, the Assembly's priorities will continue to be:

- **The Balkans:** the "Adriatic Three", the countries recognized to be next-in-line for membership, continue their preparations through the implementation of their Membership Action Plans; for Kosovo, 2006 should be a key year for the negotiations on final status. Representatives of the Kosovo Assembly will be associated with certain Assembly functions; Bosnia and Herzegovina will move closer to full autonomy, and together with Serbia and Montenegro will continue to press for membership of NATO's Partnership for Peace (PfP), conditional still on full cooperation with the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY). The Assembly will continue to assist the various parliaments in the region through its various activities. Again, coordination among the respective Committees will be important. A Rose-Roth Seminar for the region is planned for Albania.
- **The South Caucasus:** The DSC and CDS are planning visits to the region, and a Rose-Roth seminar on security and stability in the south Caucasus is planned for southern Russia. A Presidential visit to the region is also foreseen. Two parliamentary training programmes are also expected to focus on the region.
- **Central Asia:** Thus far, Assembly activities have been limited to a joint Committee visit to Uzbekistan, and more recently a CDS visit to Kazakhstan which led to that country being granted Parliamentary Observer status. A Presidential visit to the region is foreseen, and the PC is considering making a visit to Central Asia. Because of the unfavourable democratic and human rights situation in several of these countries, their relationship with the Assembly is kept under review by the Standing Committee.
- **The Southern Mediterranean and the Middle East.** This "region" is now well covered by the combined efforts of various Committees and principally by the Mediterranean Group. It should be noted that Iran features more prominently during 2006 reflecting concerns expressed by the Standing Committee at its first meeting in 2005 and the ongoing concerns about developments there.
- **Afghanistan.** Visits by Assembly members during 2006 should be foreseen.
- **Belarus:** following the seminar in Vilnius on the internal situation in Belarus, Assembly policy towards that country will be determined by the Standing Committee in Copenhagen.
- **Russia:** The Assembly will continue to work at improving relations with the Russian Federal Parliament. A seminar on the situation in the Caucasus is planned for southern Russia to be organized in conjunction with the Russian parliament.
- **Ukraine:** Likewise, the Assembly will render all possible assistance to the Ukraine Verkhovna Rada in carrying out the reforms necessary to qualify for a Membership Action Plan. Several Committees are considering making a joint visit to Ukraine, and the Standing Committee will be asked to approve Assembly involvement in monitoring parliamentary elections which will take place at the end of March.

- **Moldova:** During 2005, members of the Standing Committee expressed the view that more attention should be devoted to Moldova. A Rose-Roth seminar is now planned to take place there in 2006
- **NATO and the European Parliament.** Further comment on the development of relations between the Assembly and the European Parliament must await the consideration of a paper assessing relations with the European Parliament [208 SC 05 E] by the Standing Committee in Copenhagen.
- **Election monitoring:** it has become Assembly policy that the Assembly does not itself organize election monitoring, except under exceptional circumstances. However, Assembly members are able to participate in election monitoring in cooperation with the OSCE PA for certain agreed elections. As noted earlier, Ukraine will be one such occasion in 2006.



**TABLE 2: COMMITTEE AND SUB-COMMITTEE PROPOSED REPORT SUBJECTS AND VISITS 2006**

| <b>Committee/<br/>Sub-Committee</b>             | <b>Subjects</b>  | <b>Visits</b>   |
|---|--|---|
| <b>Civil Dimension of Security</b>              | 1. Bosnia, 10 years after Dayton<br><i>or</i><br>2. Central Asia: anti-terrorism efforts and the challenges to democratisation | Bosnia and Herzegovina ( <i>if report 1.</i> )<br>The Hague – ICTY ( <i>if report 1.</i> )<br><br>Kyrgyzstan ( <i>if report 2</i> ) |
| <b>Special Report</b>                           | NATO and civil protection  |   |
| Democratic Governance                           | Regional cooperation in the Black Sea Region   | Turkey<br>Azerbaijan or Armenia or Romania<br>Ukraine (with ESC and STC)  |
| <b>Defence and Security</b>                     | NATO Transformation: Operational Aspects   | Washington DC and San Diego<br>Brussels (February meetings)   |
| Transatlantic Security and Defence Co-operation | Transatlantic Relations and Changes in US Forward Deployment   | Bulgaria and Romania<br>Allied Command Transformation   |
| Future Security and Defence Capabilities        | NATO's Role in South Caucasus Security   | Georgia<br>Azerbaijan   |
| <b>Economics and Security</b>                   | Trends in Global Energy Markets and their Strategic and Economic Implications  | Brussels (February meetings)  |
| <b>Special Report</b>                           | African Development and G-8 Commitments  |   |
| East-West Economic Co-operation and Convergence | The Transition Crisis in Ukraine   | Ukraine (with CDS and STC)<br>Canada or Poland  |
| Transatlantic Economic Relations                | Economic Development in China's Western Regions  | Western China<br>Geneva (WTO)   |
| <b>Political</b>                                | Tackling today's key security challenges – the role of NATO  | Brussels (February meetings)  |
| NATO Partnerships                               | NATO's changing role for Euro-Atlantic Stability   | Oman (Iran?)<br>NATO partner country (Balkans or Central Asia)  |
| Transatlantic Relations                         | Iran – a challenge for transatlantic co-operation  | United States (Washington DC & other location) <i>Washington DC with STC?</i><br>Italy or Greece                                    |
| <b>Science and Technology</b>                   | Climate Change: New Approaches and Developments after Kyoto  | Ukraine (with ESC and CDS)  |
| Proliferation of Military Technology            | The Nuclear Policy of Iran   | United States (Washington DC and Boston or Monterey) <i>Washington DC with PC?</i><br>Vienna (IAEA) and/or Geneva                   |
| <b>Mediterranean Special Group</b>              |  | Israel and Palestinian Authority (Spring Visit – April / May)<br>Naples seminar (Mid-June)<br>Mediterranean seminar (location tbc)  |

**TABLE 3 : OTHER ASSEMBLY MEETINGS AND ACTIVITIES**

| <b>Event</b>                            | <b>Date</b>                   | <b>Location</b>   |
|---|-------------------------------|---|
| Sessions                                | 26-30 May                     | Paris   |
|   | 13-17 November                | Quebec  |
| Standing Committee                      | 24-26 March                   | Gdynia, Poland  |
| Rose Roth Seminars                      | March (2 <sup>nd</sup> half): | Albania or other location in the Balkans or Budapest (on the Balkans)   |
|   | 29 June – 1 July              | Sochi or other location in Southern Russia (on the South Caucasus)  |
|   | September/October             | Moldova   |
| NATO-Russia Parliamentary Committee     | 26 May                        | Paris (during the spring session)   |
|   | 13 November                   | Quebec (during the annual session)  |
| Ukraine-NATO Interparliamentary Council | Dates tbd                     | Kiev (with CDS, ESC and STC)  |
|   | Dates tbd                     | Brussels  |
| Annual Study Visit                      | August/September              | Romania   |
| Transatlantic Parliamentary Forum       | Early December                | Washington DC   |
| Presidential Visits                     | Dates tbd                     | The South Caucasus  |
|   | Dates tbd                     | Central Asia  |
|   | Dates tbd                     | China   |
|   | Dates tbd                     | Iraq  |
| Election Monitoring                     | 26 March                      | Ukraine: parliamentary elections  |
|   | September                     | Other options could include the Belarus Presidential elections.   |
| Hearings at the European Parliament     |                               | Programme to be determined  |
| Possible Special Meetings               | Dates tbd                     | Seminar on Belarus  |
|   | Dates tbd                     | Visits to Afghanistan   |
| New Parliamentarians Programme          | Mid-July                      | Brussels  |
| Parliamentary Staff Training            | Dates tbd                     | Three programmes in Brussels. On present plans, programmes will take place for Armenia, Azerbaijan, and the Balkans |

## Appendix

### ***THE AIMS OF THE NATO PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY***

32. The aims of the NATO PA are directly related to the role of members of parliament in the field of defence and security, taking due account of the Assembly's inter-parliamentary character.

33. The aims of the NATO PA can be defined as including the following:

- to foster dialogue among parliamentarians on major security issues;
- to facilitate parliamentary awareness and understanding of key security issues and Alliance policies;
- to provide NATO and its member governments with an indication of collective parliamentary opinion;
- to provide greater transparency of NATO policies, and thereby a degree of collective accountability;
- to strengthen the transatlantic relationship.

34. These have been longstanding goals of the Assembly. Since 1989, the following have been added:

- to assist in the development of parliamentary democracy throughout the Euro-Atlantic area by integrating parliamentarians from non-member nations into the Assembly's work;
- to assist directly those parliaments actively seeking Alliance membership;
- to increase co-operation with countries who seek co-operation rather than membership, including those of the Caucasus, Central Asia and southern Mediterranean regions;
- to assist in the development of parliamentary mechanisms, practices and 'know how' essential for the effective democratic control of armed forces.

35. The changing nature of security and NATO's transformation have given a new salience to the role of parliaments in defence and security. The traditional parliamentary tasks - oversight of defence and the armed forces, including authorising expenditure and deployments "overseas", building consensus, ensuring transparency, and generating and sustaining public support - are well established in member countries, albeit with different degrees of application and emphasis. Today, these tasks are carried out in a more demanding environment. The new roles and missions for armed forces, the widespread need for defence reform and restructuring, and the pervasive influence of the revolution in information technology, particularly with regard to the media, all suggest a higher profile for parliamentary involvement.

36. Furthermore, the commitment of candidate and partner countries to establish the mechanisms and priorities for democratic control of armed forces has also meant greater attention be given to parliamentary practices.

37. The increasing scope and intensity of the Assembly's activities during the past decade reflects these developments.

---