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NATO PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY

**COMMENTS
of the
SECRETARY GENERAL OF NATO,
CHAIRMAN OF THE NORTH ATLANTIC COUNCIL**

on the

**POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS
ADOPTED IN 2005
by the
NATO PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY**

**DECLARATION 333
ON
UZBEKISTAN**

NATO has expressed repeatedly its concern by the events in Andijan last May and continues its efforts to engage Uzbekistan in a political dialogue on this and other issues.

Since the events in Andijan, the Allies have been reviewing NATO's practical cooperation with Uzbekistan on a case-by-case basis. They intend to continue this practice until Uzbekistan resumes its political dialogue with the Alliance.

At the same time, NATO Allies and Partners have held extensive discussions on the role of common values in our Partnership. The need to promote the respect of these common values was last reiterated at the EAPC Foreign Ministerial meeting in Brussels on 8 December 2005. The Ministers agreed to continue the discussion on how to ensure that the political dialogue and practical cooperation in the Partnership framework reflect and support these common values.

**DECLARATION 334
ON
DARFUR**

NATO has responded positively to two AU requests for logistical assistance to its mission to Sudan and thus plays its role, within means and capabilities, in supporting the AU expand its presence effectively in Darfur.

On 16 September 2005, following an AU request, NATO agreed to continue to offer support to the AU for staff capacity building until 31 March 2006, as well as in the coordination of strategic airlift during further troop rotations of AMIS II forces until the end of May 2006.

Throughout NATO's operations, the coordination of strategic airlift would be done together with the EU. Thus far, NATO/EU ad hoc arrangements put in place to support the AMIS II deployment have proven highly effective.

In all its efforts, NATO emphasizes the need to work in full consultation, transparency and complementarity with the EU, the UN and all other relevant donors. Already, close cooperation between NATO and all partners, including the EU has proved to be highly complementary. Moreover, the AU remains in the driving seat to solving the conflict in Darfur. The Alliance's role is in support of the AU and responsive to AU specific requests and needs. It aims to contribute to strengthening the AU's capability to meet this challenge.

**DECLARATION 345
ON
THE DISPOSAL OF SURPLUS WEAPONS AND MUNITIONS IN UKRAINE**

With regard to Declaration 345 on the Disposal of Surplus Weapons and Munitions in Ukraine, let me first join the NATO PA in welcoming Ukraine's recent efforts to strengthen her democratic institutions and reform her defence and security sectors. The launch of an Intensified Dialogue on Ukraine's aspirations to NATO membership and relevant reforms is a clear signal to the Ukrainian people that the Alliance will do all it can to help Ukraine to undertake the necessary reforms and achieve its goal of full integration into this Alliance.

The Partnership for Peace Trust Fund Project is indeed the largest single demilitarization effort in history and I am confident that it will help Ukraine with the disposal of dangerous stockpiles of excess munitions. In this spirit, I would subscribe with the call of declaration upon Allies to increase their commitments to this Fund.

**DECLARATION 346
ON
PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS IN AZERBAIJAN**

I share the concerns about the parliamentary elections in Azerbaijan expressed in this declaration. Declaration 346 is similar to my own statement of 8 November 2005, in which I expressed concern about the reports of irregularities and encouraged Azerbaijan's government to investigate them and take corrective actions.

Solid progress in achieving democratic standards will be vital if Azerbaijan is to meet its objective of integration into Euro-Atlantic structures and institutions, and form a key commitment undertaken by Azerbaijan in its Individual Partnership Action Plan (I-PAP) with the Alliance.

I have been encouraged by the corrective actions taken by the Central Election Commission and the Constitutional Court to address allegations of irregularities, and I hope that all necessary measures will be taken to ensure that the re-runs in ten constituencies will be held in a free and fair manner. I encourage all sides to refrain from violence and regret the instances of violence that occurred during the break-up of an opposition rally on 26 November 2005.

**RESOLUTION 335
ON
THE PROTECTION AND INTEGRATION OF MINORITIES AS A CONTRIBUTION TO
STABILITY IN THE SOUTHERN CAUCASUS**

I share the views regarding the protection and integration of minorities as a contribution to stability in the South Caucasus. Strong protection of minority rights, both in legislation and in practice, can be a critical factor in promoting both internal stability and security of all citizens.

The ongoing efforts of the three states of the South Caucasus to protect minority rights and fulfil their Council of Europe obligations is a critical part of their democratic development and their efforts to draw closer to European and Euro-Atlantic structures. Protection of minority rights make up a critical part of the commitments all three states have undertaken in their respective Individual Partnership Action Plans (I-PAPs) with the Alliance. While other organizations, in particular the Council of Europe, have the expertise and mandate necessary to judge progress in this area, NATO watches their assessments carefully, and uses their expert opinions to form its own assessments of how well Partner nations are meeting their political obligations to the Alliance.

I also strongly support the Resolution's call for pursuit of peaceful conflict Resolution in the South Caucasus. NATO does not seek to play a role in mediating the conflicts in the region, as other organizations and formats are better suited to this task. But NATO watches developments in the region closely, and has made clear that peaceful conflict Resolution is a core value of the Alliance. I strongly support the efforts of the various negotiating fora to bring about a peaceful and just resolution of these conflicts at the earliest possible moment, and strongly support the right of the parties to the conflict to choose the forum and format in which they pursue peaceful dialogue.

**RESOLUTION 336
ON
NATIONAL CAVEATS**

The caveats that some nations place on their NATO-deployed contingents limit the flexibility of the Commanders to fully employ those forces, which is detrimental for the operations.

Over the past year, a concerted effort with personal appeals by myself and through the Periodic Mission Review (PMR) process was made to convince nations to reduce their national caveats to the maximum extent possible. Progress has been made, and the Autumn 2005 PMR of the Balkans Joint Operations Area notes that "*remaining national caveats are no longer having a significant operational impact.*" The document, agreed by Council and noted by Foreign Ministers on 8 December 2005, nevertheless urges nations to eliminate those which remain. Unfortunately, much less progress has been to date for ISAF, where some nations' caveats remain extensive.

Discussions will continue with nations to remove remaining national caveats to the maximum extent possible across all NATO operations, through the PMR process, force generation efforts and the Secretary General's bilateral contacts with national authorities

**RESOLUTION 337
ON
ENHANCED COMMON FUNDING OF NATO OPERATIONS**

Resolution 337 rightly draws attention to the recently agreed "*Revised Funding Policy for non-Article 5 NATO-led operations*". Common-funding support for nations providing critical theatre-level enabling capabilities will assist the force generation process in a number of areas where the provision of forces has been most problematic.

The importance attached in the Resolution to the NRF is also fully supported. It should be noted, in this respect, that already today, NRF forces deployed as part of a non-article 5 NATO-led operation are eligible for common funding in the same way as other national force contributions.

The recommendation to address specifically the additional transportation costs incurred by national militaries as a result of their participation in NATO on-call forces is very much in line with what the Strategic Commanders have recently proposed. The Senior Resource Board had already drawn attention to the fact that the revised funding policy did not, as yet, cover the strategic lift for short-notice deployments. The Board had postponed discussion of this issue until further operational/military input from the Military Committee became available. This issue is now under active consideration in both the Military Committee and the Senior Resource Board, with common funding as one of several possible solutions. It is my hope that the discussion can be brought to a positive conclusion very soon.

**RESOLUTION 338
ON
FORGING A TRANSATLANTIC POLICY TOWARDS CHINA**

As rightly pointed out in Resolution 338, China and its fast economic expansion indeed represents a land of opportunities and challenges for NATO and its member states.

While NATO as such does not have a China policy, the North Atlantic Council is one of the political fora where issues related to China and the region can be addressed.

NATO and China have engaged into a political dialogue since October 2003 which aims at dispelling possible misunderstandings, promoting a culture of cooperative security and at addressing security-related issues of common interests. The aim is also to promote transparency and to contribute to the values which form the core of our Alliance.

**RESOLUTION 339
ON
MOUNTING AN INTERNATIONAL DEFENCE AGAINST AVIAN INFLUENZA**

As this issue is not of NATO expertise, we have no substantive comment on the question of combating Avian Influenza.

**RESOLUTION 340
ON
ADVANCING THE DOHA DEVELOPMENT AGENDA**

As this issue is not of NATO expertise, we have no substantive comment on advancing the Doha Development Agenda.

**RESOLUTION 341
ON
NATO TRANSFORMATION AND THE FUTURE OF THE ALLIANCE**

I can readily endorse the thrust of Resolution 341 on the transformation and future of the Alliance.

As it suggests, there has indeed been considerable progress in adapting the Alliance's structures and procedures to the challenges and opportunities that arose with the end of the Cold War. Changes in our capabilities over that time mean that we are markedly better able to conduct prolonged crisis management operations away from NATO territory. This has in part been a matter of re-orienting the command structure but also, and probably more important, a question of making the forces themselves more deployable and sustainable. We have also made important changes over the last year to the cost shares for our common budgets and to the ways in which those budgets can be used for operational purposes. We have also managed to deepen and broaden our political consultations as a complement to NATO's military transformation. And we have achieved closer cooperation with other international organisations.

However, as the Resolution also indicates, there is much yet to do to ensure that the Alliance can successfully undertake what in the years to come could well be a growing number of diverse and demanding operations.

We will need to continue to enhance our military capabilities: to make them fully modern, more deployable, and better able to act together in difficult circumstances, potentially for extended periods of time. To this end, achieving full operational capability for the NATO Response Force next autumn will be especially important, both in practical and symbolic terms. We will also need to take a decision in the course of the next few months about how to consolidate and extend the improvements in our capabilities brought about through the Prague Capabilities Commitment.

In my view, we must also give further thought to how we use our common funds. Doing so could help us to overcome some of the continuing difficulties we encounter in generating forces for our operations as well as for the NRF, and, as the Resolution states, to increase the confidence of all Allies that the burdens imposed by our operations are equitably shared.

I fully agree with the view expressed in the Resolution that caveats on the use of national contingents, whether declared or undeclared, threaten the effectiveness of our missions

and undermine our solidarity. Such caveats need to be minimised to the greatest extent possible. Allied Parliaments can play an important role in this regard.

On a more political level, there is work yet to do to reduce the discrepancies we sometimes discover between nations' agreement to operations and their willingness to provide forces and other capabilities such operations demand. We are pursuing technical measures for this purpose, such as taking a longer-term approach to force generation and tightening the links between force planning and force generation. Essentially, however, the issue is one of political will. For this reason, I am determined to further enhance our political consultations in the run-up to possible operational decisions, so that all Allies have a shared understanding of their likely consequences. Our decisions should be based on a clear understanding of the required commitments and an assessment of the available capabilities. Again, Parliaments have a major role to play in helping us to bridge the gap between rhetorical and real commitment.

The Resolution urges governments and parliaments to "build and expand the role of the Alliance in humanitarian and disaster relief operations....". Against the background of our assistance to Pakistan, this is a matter under active discussion in NATO Headquarters. Although I do not consider NATO a humanitarian relief organisation per se, I would agree that NATO needs to be able to provide military support, within the available means and capabilities, to humanitarian relief operations, when necessary. This may be especially important when the security situation prevents humanitarian relief organisations from acting.

I strongly agree with the Resolution's emphasis on closer cooperation with other international organisations, notably the European Union. This cooperation will be increasingly important, and it is of utmost importance that we put more substance into the agreed framework of the NATO-EU strategic partnership. I also endorse the call for improved coordination with other organisations in the fight against terrorism, conflict prevention and post-conflict stabilisation. With regard specifically to the fight against terrorism, however, I would also underline the importance of ensuring that the Alliance itself makes the greatest possible contribution.

In sum, I believe the Resolution sets out clearly and convincingly key items on NATO's agenda as we look towards the Riga Summit of November 2006.

**RESOLUTION 342
ON
KOSOVO**

Resolution 342 illustrates the fact that Kosovo will continue to be an important NATO priority during 2006.

As mentioned by the Resolution, the situation in Kosovo is currently entering a new and challenging phase, after the decision taken by the United Nations Security Council on 24 October 2005 to endorse Secretary General Kofi Annan's recommendation to open future Status talks. In this regard, the Alliance joins the NATO Parliamentary Assembly in welcoming the appointment of former Finnish President Martti Ahtisaari as United Nations Special Envoy for Kosovo's future Status, and stands fully ready to assist his negotiating efforts in the coming months.

When discussions on future Status will start, it is of the greatest importance that Belgrade and Pristina approach the talks in a responsible and constructive manner. From the beginning, it is clear that concessions will have to be made by both sides, and that the Guiding Principles of the Contact Group for the settlement of Kosovo's Status must be fully respected. This is fundamental for NATO, since the future Status settlement needs to address the legitimate concerns of all parties, be sustainable, and contribute to the long term stability of the entire Western Balkans region.

The Alliance - through KFOR - will continue to provide a safe and secure environment in Kosovo during this very sensitive period, and beyond. On this account, I share the view expressed in the Resolution that an international civilian and military presence will be required in Kosovo for the foreseeable future. In the meantime, the current transformation in KFOR from a Multinational Brigade to a Task force structure will further enhance our capabilities on the ground. Furthermore, NATO's participation in Expanded Contact Group discussions will continue to prove its value as negotiations unfold during 2006.

Finally, the importance attached in the Resolution to the establishment of a stable democratic and multi-ethnic society in Kosovo is fully shared by NATO. For this reason, it remains crucial that the Standards implementation process - as well as present efforts on decentralization - continue to make substantial progress in the coming months. Standards are essential for the future of all individuals and communities in Kosovo, regardless of their ethnicity, and progress in implementation will greatly help efforts towards the integration of the whole region in Euro-Atlantic structures, once all conditions - including full co-operation with the ICTY - are met.

**RESOLUTION 343
ON
BELARUS**

I fully endorse with the views expressed in NATO PA Resolution 343 concerning Belarus.

The Allies regularly discuss Belarus 'at 26', and recently had the opportunity to speak directly to Belarusian officials in '26+1' meetings of the Political-Military Steering Committee and the Political Committee. During these meetings, the Allies expressed their strong concerns about the deteriorating political and human rights situation in Belarus, while at the same time expressing their desire to keep working-level channels of communication open in order to reduce misunderstandings and promote transparency.

The current NATO policy is one of limited, working-level engagement with the Belarusian Ministry of Defence. There is no consensus among the Allies to grant Belarus a PfP Security Agreement, so no classified information is exchanged between Belarus and NATO. However, Allies have approved a limited program of unclassified cooperation programmes with the Belarusian Ministry of Defence, with the aim of building confidence between the two sides and supporting the defence reform process within the Ministry.

NATO has made clear, however, that any further advance of the relationship will come only after the Belarusian authorities take concrete steps to improve the democratic and human rights situation in the country.

**RESOLUTION 344
ON
SECURITY OF WMD-RELATED MATERIAL IN RUSSIA**

NATO generally shares the concerns the NATO PA expresses in Resolution 344.

Safeguarding the nuclear complex in Russia and other newly independent States is considered of crucial importance by members of the Atlantic Alliance. Russia's WMD-related arsenals and stocks are indeed among the largest in the world. Let me stress that Allies cooperate with the Russian Federation both under the auspices of the NATO-Russia Council (NRC) and bilaterally, including in securing WMD and related material.

The Weapons of Mass Destruction Initiative of April 1999 tasked NATO's Senior Politico-Military Group on Proliferation (SGP) to work on a Matrix of Bilateral WMD Destruction and Management Assistance Programmes. The purpose of this Matrix is to highlight the assistance programmes from NATO Countries, non-NATO countries and International Organisations to Russia and other Countries in the field of decommissioning Weapons of Mass Destruction in order to avoid overlap between the national assistance programmes of Allies and to detect lacunae. It also aims to enhance multilateral co-ordination of Assistance. In the chemical, biological and nuclear fields, the Matrix covers: the materials; the weapon systems; the conversion of production facilities; the stockpiles; conversion/training of scientists and other staff; and the legal, administrative and customs assistance.

To meet proliferation and environmental challenges, Allies furthermore provide bilateral and multilateral assistance to Russia for weapons destruction, and for the safeguarding of nuclear and radiological materials. In this regard, many NATO 'Security Through Science' programme activities focus on the civilian side of nuclear, chemical and biological technology.

Working alongside with Partners, Allies additionally develop areas of research which include the decommissioning and disposal of WMD components, the safe handling of materials, techniques for arms control implementation, new approaches for decontamination of CBRN agents, and the detection of agents.

With the aim of strengthening mutual trust and understanding, and on the basis of common interest, reciprocity and transparency, NATO-Russia Nuclear Experts have also conducted a number of joint activities. Seminars on Nuclear Weapon Safety and Security and on Nuclear Doctrine and Strategy, as well as the development of an NRC glossary of nuclear terms and definitions are tangible examples. Mutual observation of NRC nuclear weapon states' field demonstrations dealing with nuclear weapon accident response procedures, such as Russian Exercise AVARIYA 2004 and UK Exercise SENATOR 2005 unequivocally confirm the willingness of the NRC member states for cooperation in this field.

On the other hand, the NRC Ad Hoc Working Group on Proliferation issues has had quite a productive year as well, particularly in implementing the NRC Action Plan on Terrorism. The Action Plan calls for supporting ongoing efforts to broaden and strengthen cooperation in evaluating and responding to threats posed by terrorism and by WMD and their means of delivery, including by strengthening existing non-proliferation arrangements with a view to denying terrorist access to WMD, their means of delivery and related materials, in accordance with UNSCR 1540 and by addressing chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear (CBRN) threats posed by terrorist groups. NRC Foreign Ministers recently welcomed the on-going NRC dialogue on the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and underlined the need for further enhancement of such dialogue. They also noted progress in exploring opportunities for practical cooperation on protection from nuclear, biological and chemical materials and agents, and looked forward to further work in this area in 2006.

In concluding, I concur with the recommendations to Allies to increase efforts to assist Russia in securing its stocks of WMD and related materials and to Russia to continue encouraging international cooperation by maintaining favourable conditions for access to WMD-related material storage sites that require security upgrades.

