

POLITICAL

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NATO Parliamentary Assembly

SUMMARY

Meeting of the Political Committee
Room 200 C, Québec City Convention Centre, Québec City, Canada

Tuesday 14 and Wednesday 15 November 2006

ATTENDANCE LIST

Chairman	Markus Meckel (Germany)
Vice-Chairman	George Voinovich (United States)
General Rapporteur	Bert Koenders (Netherlands)
Acting Rapporteur of the Sub-Committee on NATO Partnerships	Rafael Estrella (Spain)
Rapporteur of the Sub-Committee on Transatlantic Relations	Ruprecht Polenz (Germany)
President of the NATO PA	Pierre Lellouche (France)
Secretary General of the NATO PA	Simon Lunn
Member Delegations	
Belgium	Daniel Bacquelaine Mia de Schamphelaere Marie-José Laloy Philippe Mahoux François Roelants du Vivier Luc Willems
Bulgaria	Yani Yanev
Canada	Raynell Andreychuk James Cowan Joseph A. Day Cheryl Gallant
Czech Republic	Rotislav Slavotinek
Denmark	<i>not represented</i>
Estonia	Tiit Matsulevits Sven Mikser
France	Martine Aurillac Loïc Bouvard Jean-Pierre Demerliat Hélène Luc
Germany	Volker Bouffier Robert Hochbaum Holger Hövelmann Hellmut Königshaus Karl A. Lamers Hans Raidel Kurt J. Rossmanith Paul Schäfer Rainer Stinner Andreas Weigel
Greece	Andreas Loverdos Kyriakos Mitsotakis Ilias Papailias Antonis Skyllakos
Hungary	Agnes Vadai
Iceland	Ossur Skarphedinsson
Latvia	Guntis Berzins
Lithuania	Petras Austrevicius Rasa Juknevičienė

Luxembourg	Colette Flesch
Netherlands	Bart van Winsen
Norway	Marit Nybakk
	Jan Petersen
Poland	Marian Pilka
Portugal	Rui Gomes Da Silva
	Jose Lello
	Henrique Rocha de Freitas
Romania	Norica Nicolai
	Romeo Marius Raicu
	Ioan Talpes
Slovakia	Ján Kovarcik
Slovenia	Anton Anderlic
	Milan Petek
Spain	Manuel Atencia
	Roberto Soravilla
	Josep Maldonado
Turkey	Aziz Akgül
	Emin Bilgiç
United Kingdom	Bruce George
	Peter Bottomley
	Derek Conway
	David Crausby
	Jimmy Hood
	Denis MacShane
United States	Jim Bunning
	Ben Chandler
	Gordon Smith
	Tom Tancredo
	John Tanner
	Tom Udall

Associate delegations

Albania	Leonard Demi
	Pandeli Majko
	Ylli Pango
Armenia	Aleksan Karapetyan
Austria	Josef Bucher
	Walter Muruauer
Azerbaijan	Ziyafat Asgarov
	Siyavush Novruzov
Finland	Suvi-Anne Siimes
Russian Federation	Alexander Fomenko
	Victor A. Ozerov
	Andrey Zhukov
Sweden	Urban Ahlin
Switzerland	Hermann Bürgi
	Edi Engelberger
The FYR of Macedonia*	Vlado Buckovski
	Besim Dogani
	Gjorgi Orovcaneç
Ukraine	Andriy Shkil

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

Mediterranean Associate Delegations

Algeria	Mostefa Chelloufi Rabah Karaoui
Israel	Ophir Pines

European Parliament

Paulo Casaca

Parliamentary Observers

Bosnia and Herzegovina	Halid Genjac
Japan	Masataka Suzuki
Kazakhstan	Rashit Akhmetov Toktarkhan Nurakhmetov
Serbia	Dusan Prorokovic

Interparliamentary Assemblies

Assembly of the Western European Union	Michael Hancock
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Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE)	Carina Ohlsson
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Parliamentary Guest

Montenegro	Ranko Krivokapic
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Speakers

Robert Clegg Austin, Centre for European, Russian, and Eurasian Studies at the Munk Centre for International Studies, University of Toronto
Stefanie Beck, Director, Defence and Security Relations Division, Foreign Affairs and International Trade, Canada
Paul H. Chapin, Senior Counsellor, Pearson Peacekeeping Center
Robert Hunter, Senior Advisor, Rand Corporation, United States

Committee Secretary

Sarah Davies

International Secretariat

Steffen Sachs, Director
Isabelle Arcis, Co-ordinator
Olga Stuzhinskaya, Research Assistant
Tim Sweijjs, Research Assistant
Joanna Ganson, Research Assistant
André Kahlmeyer, Mediterranean Research Fellow

I. SPEAKERS

1. NATO operations in Afghanistan, the future of the Alliance, and the security situation in South-Eastern Europe, particularly in Kosovo were the key topics that were addressed by the speakers who addressed the Political Committee during the deliberations in Québec City.

A. Presentation by Stefanie Beck, Director, Defence and Security Relations Division, Foreign Affairs and International Affairs, Canada on *NATO's continuing Transformation from a Canadian Perspective*

2. In her introductory remarks, **Stefanie Beck**, Director of the Defence and Security Relations Division at the Canadian Ministry of Foreign and International Affairs, focused on the upcoming Riga Summit. Stressing that NATO is an important dialogue forum for consultations on transatlantic issues, she said that Canada shares with its NATO partners the basic values of believing in freedom, democracy, the rule of law and human rights. Canada strongly supports the "out of area or out of business" vision of NATO, she emphasised. In this context she pointed out that Canada has 2,500 soldiers deployed in Afghanistan and that Canada provides approximately 1 billion CAD in developmental aid towards the country, making it one of the five largest donor nations in Afghanistan. Turning to the enlargement of NATO, Mrs Beck noted that Canada is a strong believer in NATO's open-door-policy. She cautioned, however, that enlargement should be performance-driven, not event-driven. As to the system of common funding of NATO operations she argued that the current funding mechanisms needed to be reconsidered to meet today's demands. The Canadian Foreign Ministry official concluded her remarks by commending the NATO PA for being a vital link between legislators, governments and citizens, which can help national governments to communicate NATO policies.

3. In the discussion that followed, **Bart van Winsen** (NL) asked how the Canadian public views the NATO mission in Afghanistan and the participation of the Canadian troops. Stefanie Beck informed that there is general support for the mission, although some people might have mixed feelings. **James Cowan** (CA) noted a split in political parties over the mission. Just recently, the Canadian parliament had extended the deployment of troops to Afghanistan by two-years with the margin of seven votes. He added that Canada's leading role in Afghanistan is a dominating foreign policy issue and that the Canadian public continuously raised questions.

B. Presentation by Robert Hunter, Senior Advisor, Rand Corporation on *Global Partnerships and the Future of the Alliance*

4. **Ambassador** (ret.) **Robert Hunter**, Senior Advisor at the Rand Corporation, began his presentation by stating that NATO is placing its credibility upon its success in Afghanistan and that this mission has, overall, been successful. However, some NATO member countries are "failing" and this may endanger the whole mission. To tackle this problem, he proposed a fundamental change in the thinking about NATO, its transformation and its partnerships. To that end, the US has proposed to build global partnerships along the lines of NATO's Partnership for Peace Programme (PfP). In this context, he reminded the Committee that NATO already has partnerships with South Korea, Sweden, Finland, and Israel now. The upcoming Riga Summit would provide NATO member states with an opportunity to place stronger emphasis on Afghanistan and he suggested the appointment of a NATO civilian officer for the country. Turning to the NATO PA, he endorsed joint meetings with the WEU Assembly and the strengthening of the Assembly's relationship with the Atlantic Treaty Association (ATA).

5. In the questions session that followed Mr Hunter's presentation, **Jan Petersen** (NO) asked who should take the lead in Afghanistan. Stressing that the Alliance remains important for a vital

transatlantic relationship **Urban Ahlin** (SE) advocated a strong partnership between Sweden and NATO. **Paulo Casaca** (EP) commented that the Riga Summit should also discuss issues beyond Afghanistan, including security in the Middle East and the relationships between Lebanon, Syria and Iraq. He said he considered the developments in Iraq “ten times more important than those in Afghanistan”. In his reply, Mr Hunter encouraged the EU to become more active in the reconstruction of Afghanistan. He elaborated by saying that the EU has extraordinary skills in the civilian field. The civil-military coordination follows an effect-based approach to operations (EBAO) at NATO Transformation. On the issue of NATO relevance for the transatlantic partnership, the speaker said he hoped that the US had learned the lesson not to sidestep NATO but to use it whenever possible. On the Broader Middle East he replied that it is vital to see the Middle East as a whole and to achieve peace and security for Israel and peace, stability and a state for the Palestinians. Concerning Iran he suggested that the US should reach out to Iran and to offer them a “great bargain”, something the US administration has not yet done. Regarding Afghanistan, he said that the international community must help the Afghan people to take the right direction.

6. Bart van Winsen asked whether NATO should engage more in the Middle East and Africa in the future. **Denis MacShane** (UK) agreed that a new approach to Iran was necessary and expressed hope that the US will change its opinion on this. **Guntis Berzins** (LV) referred to the economic aspect of opium production and inquired what could be done to help Afghanistan. **Ophir Pines** (IL) said that Iran is now the real problem in the Middle East. He added that terror is no longer merely a “tactical weapon” but has become a “strategic weapon”. He raised the question if NATO could tackle the new challenge of the combination of terror and nuclear weapons. **Michael Hancock** (AWEU/IESDA) referred to the problem of informing the publics of NATO member countries about the type of the mission in Afghanistan. In this context he said that the public in the UK seemed to believe that the British troops are just in Afghanistan to protect the reconstruction efforts, but in practice it is the worst fighting since WWII. **Martine Aurillac** (FR) was sceptical that it was possible to successfully link reconstruction and stabilisation.

7. In his reply to the comments Robert Hunter stressed that the Allies also must do more militarily in Afghanistan, otherwise the civilian reconstruction will be much more difficult. With regard to the latter he iterated that the EU could and should do more in Afghanistan. Concerning future partnerships, he mentioned that NATO should continue the enlargement process by, for example, inviting the FYR of Macedonia to participate. Partnership for Peace (PfP) participation should be offered to Serbia. Regarding Iran, he considered the nexus between terrorism and high technology to be the worst problem. Commenting on the US administration’s policy towards Tehran, he said it appeared that Washington had not made up its mind whether it wanted to contain Iran or regime change. An important issue was also to stop Tehran from supporting Hezbollah and terrorism. Engaging Tehran would require recognising Iran’s security concerns and trying to address them, he said. Concerning out-of-area missions, Mr Hunter was against a NATO engagement in Africa.

C. Presentation by Robert Austin, Centre for European, Russian, and Eurasian Studies at the Munk Centre for International Studies, University of Toronto on *South-East European Security – Outlook for 2007 and beyond*

8. The presentation by **Robert Austin**, Centre for European, Russian, and Eurasian Studies at the Munk Centre for International Studies, University of Toronto focused on *South Eastern European Security – Outlook for 2007 and beyond*. Mr. Austin began his presentation by stating that the glass is half-full for South-Eastern Europe. In this context he alluded to the region’s improving investment climate and to the increase in tourism. Moreover, personal security had improved throughout the region and the process of regional integration was moving forward. That said, problems remained, including first and foremost the status of Kosovo the Canadian speaker admitted. Serbia was the key to security and stability in the region, but Kosovo could not live in

“perpetual ambiguity”, he stressed. Any solution to the Kosovo issue would be “messy”, the question was to find one that was the least “messy”. For these reasons, Kosovo should get independence as soon as possible, he concluded. NATO will still have to play a large role, a sustained US presence as well as a continuing European perspective for the region were crucial, Mr Austin said. It was important to end the “political polarisation” in Kosovo and the region, especially as the main losers of this political polarisation were the people. He concluded his remarks by emphasising that regional elites needed to have a long-term vision and some older ones should step down.

9. In the discussion that followed, **Rainer Stinner** (DE) remarked that the word “independence” is misleading for Kosovo because the international community will continue to be heavily involved in the region. He doubted that Kosovar politicians had prepared their population for this reality. Mr Austin concurred with this view, adding that independence of Kosovo would have some conditions, the key element of which would be respect for Serbian minority rights. Mr Austin did not think that Kosovo needs a High Representative similar to Bosnia. In response to a question from the **Chairman Markus Meckel** (DE), Mr Austin agreed that it is important for Serbia to develop a sense of responsibility for its history, but this has not happened yet. Just as in Germany, this sense of responsibility has to come from the inside, and cannot be inspired from the outside. **Agnes Vadaï** (HU) inquired about Voivodina's future while Michael Hancock anticipated that as it will be wholly dependent on overseas aid Kosovo would likely to become a “protectorate of Europe”. He doubted that Europe would be willing to accept this burden for an extended period of time.

10. **Alexander Fomenko** (RU) commented that the West looked upon Serbia too negatively, and pointed out that the track record of Kosovar separatists was not good either. He stated that Kosovo needed another 100 years of UN protection, and asked what the consequences of Kosovo independence would be for other countries of the region. Arguing that the international community solved problems on an ad hoc basis, Mr Austin replied that Kosovo did not set precedents for anywhere else. While **Bruce George** (UK) agreed with Mr Austin that independence of Kosovo was inevitable, he said that it was too early to grant it now. He also stated that the Russian speaker made an implied threat that other regions would rush for independence if Kosovo were to receive it, but that the Russian speaker ignored that there are also parts of the Russian Federation that are not resolved to being part of Russia. Mr Austin concluded the discussion by saying that the region is at a critical stage, and it is important to complete the dissolution of Yugoslavia. Reporting about the recent visit of the Sub-Committee on NATO Partnerships to Kosovo, **Karl A. Lamers** (DE) raised concern about the delay of the presentation of the proposal on the future status of Kosovo by the UN Secretary General's Special Envoy for the Future Status Process for Kosovo. The German Member announced that he would write a letter to Mr Athisaari to encourage him to personally explain the reasons for the delay to the people of Kosovo. Also referring to the recent visit to Kosovo, **Derek Conway** (UK) said that he came back pessimistic. While the Kosovo Force (KFOR) was doing a “superb job”, the situation in Kosovo was in many ways similar to the one in Northern Ireland. Associate members from countries of the region also participated in the discussion and **Dusan Prokorovic** (RS) said the problem is that the Kosovars do not compromise at all on the status question, i.e it is “either independence or death”. Independence of Kosovo will bring more instability in the region. In contrast, **Vlado Buckovski** (MK) said that the independence of Kosovo would be the best solution. **Ranko Krivokapic** (ME) and **Leonard Demi** (AL) also spoke. **Marian Pilka** (PL) expressed concern that the recognition of an independent Kosovo could strengthen structures of organised crime.

D. Presentation by Paul H. Chapin, Senior Counsellor, Pearson Peacekeeping Center on UN peacekeeping missions and NATO-UN co-operation

11. **Paul Chapin** began by stating that September 11 changed priorities of nations, which were now more globally engaged and focused on security issues. Arguing that the UN is overwhelmed

by the tasks it faces the speaker suggested that NATO could help in a number of ways. While the UN remained the best vehicle for preserving peace, NATO could help the UN through its more professional military assets. Both organisations are learning from each other, and must continue to do so. UN and NATO are not antithetical, rather both organisations were founded by the same people; the preambles of UN and NATO talk about the very same thing. The Canadian speaker concluded his introductory remarks by saying that UN-NATO co-operation will be essential for future security.

12. Bart Van Winsen asked what new instruments the UN could use in conflict prevention. Mr Chapin felt that the largest failing now was in early warning and early action. The international community is not willing to act on these warnings yet, leading to more problems in the future. We are also learning from places like Haiti that there are no quick fixes, and that the international community must be prepared to stay longer in post-conflict areas. In response to a question from **Raynell Andreychuk** (CA), Mr Chapin stated that there is room for both a global organization and regional organizations. The global organization ought to set standards and dispense learning, but conflicts generally need local solutions with local ownership. **Bert Koenders** (NL) asked what comparative advantage NATO could bring to the UN missions and what the Alliance could learn from the UN? Mr Chapin replied that NATO has to be careful to go too far too quickly. It was important to enhance national capacities as Canada is currently doing, he added. NATO is “kind of a SWAT team that comes to the rescue when the police is overwhelmed”, Mr Chapin said. NATO should become “force of last resort”, the force who comes in if everything else fails like it did Afghanistan

II. GENERAL DEBATE

13. The Chairman, Markus Meckel introduced a general debate among the Members of the Political Committee. In his initial statement, he briefly referred to the recent mid-term elections in the United States and the impact on the transatlantic relations; the security situation in Iraq; the proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) and the possible impact of the US-India agreement on the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT); and NATO's possible engagement in Africa.

14. Alluding to the US elections, **Gordon Smith** (US), said that no party “owned” the government. He considered Afghanistan and Iraq as not yet politically successful. He continued by saying that it will need time to build democracy and that the whole world has an interest in a success in the Middle East. As to Iran's Nuclear programme, the head of the US Senate Delegation to the NATO PA said that if the issue is not solved, it will have grave consequences on non-proliferation. As to terrorism, Senator Smith said that regardless of which party controls Congress, the fight against terrorism will remain on top of the US agenda. **Tom Udall** (US) said that the situation in Iraq had a meaningful impact on the election. He added that there is a “need for change” and that President George W. Bush's replacement of Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld reflected this. Mr Udall spoke about the coming soon Hamilton-Baker report and predicted redeployment of troops as a result of this paper. **George Voinovich** (US) stressed the United Nations' pivotal role in peacekeeping and urged the parliaments to pay more attention to the reform of this organisation. He suggested that national parliaments should pass resolutions to show their support to the reform process. In this context, he criticized the Group of 77 (G77) for opposing meaningful UN reform.

15. Mr Hancock inquired about Senator Voinovich's specific UN reform proposals and expressed concern that reform proposals have in the past too strongly favoured US policy preferences. Senator Voinovich (US) clarified that the reform recommendations had been suggested by UN Secretary General Kofi Annan, not the US, and unfortunately had been rejected by G77. On Iraq, **Loïc Bouvard** (FR) briefly recalled the different approaches during the run-up to the 2003 war. Despite differences of the past, it is now the duty of France, he said, to work together with the US

in Iraq. Mr Fomenko also spoke briefly about Iraq. **Antonis Skyllakos** (GR) stressed the principle of non-interference into other countries' affairs while Mr Pines, emphasized Israel's preference and support for democracy in the region and in Iraq.

III. PRESENTATION OF COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Consideration of the draft General Report on *Afghanistan and The Future of the Alliance* [174 PC 06 E] by Bert Koenders (Netherlands), General Rapporteur

16. Following the presentation of Mr Koenders, **José Lello** (PT), suggested including some concrete actions to be taken against the trade of drugs. Commenting on the last sentence in paragraph 26 he proposed to say that member countries are slow in responding to the request for more support to the mission in Afghanistan. Bart van Winsen, referred to the upcoming Riga Summit and inquired about concrete tools to tackle drug production. **Emin Bilgiç** (TR) said that most problems in Afghanistan are more related to social and economic issues and that Islamic countries could offer more effective solutions to the problems. He called for more involvement of the Islamic countries in restoring peace in Afghanistan. **Kyriakos Mitsotakis** (GR) was against the legalisation of drugs for medical purposes and suggested growing alternative crops. Acknowledging that Afghanistan required more than "merely" military action, **Tom Tancredo** (US) reminded the Committee that NATO could not succeed without deployment of sufficient troops. Mr Stinner suggested that NATO and partner forces in Afghanistan need "rules of behaviour" and warned that nation building might be too ambitious as a goal. Referring to the General Report's comments on the EU's role in Afghanistan, Paulo Casaca reassured the Committee that he would transmit the message to the European Parliament. He also suggested that Committee officers present their views directly in Brussels. Mr Hancock stressed the importance of transparency and urged Committee members to pay more attention to the problem of national caveats. He also suggested a possible co-operation with Iran on the drug issue. He is sceptical that Afghanistan has really established a government as there has been no law passed since the elections. Jan Petersen reminded the Committee that NATO never claimed that "victory" in Afghanistan could be reached exclusively by military means and asked Members to discuss the mission back in their national parliaments. He and Mme Andreychuk stressed the critical role of the UN in Afghanistan. The Canadian Senator added that it would be easier to identify a time frame for a military intervention than for the reconstruction and development of a country like Afghanistan. **Rafael Estrella** (ES) informed that Spain is contributing to the Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) in Herat.

17. In his reply, Mr Koenders agreed that there are no simple answers to the questions he raised in the report. He again stressed the need for balance of military and assistance to Afghanistan. While he called upon participants to remain realistic he wondered whether there was a lack of political activities to tackle the challenges and whether the issues were being addressed in appropriate manner. The Rapporteur concluded that further discussions of the Afghanistan mission in national parliaments remained of great importance. Moreover, the Assembly should make clear to the EU that there is a defined strategy towards Afghanistan. On the Iran-Pakistan relations, Koenders said that despite the fact of Pakistan being a very risky country, there are still some issues one could agree on. For Pakistan, he underlined, Afghanistan is a tool for dealing with India. As to drug production, the Rapporteur repeated that there is no simple solution and that the government did not have a policy at all. On the caveats, Mr Koenders acknowledged that they will continue to hamper the mission. That said, he cautioned that NATO as an organisation could not afford to have troops in Afghanistan overstretched and that it is "simply unacceptable" that only a limited number of NATO Allies is willing to send troops to the south and east of the country.

The draft General Report on *Afghanistan and the Future of the Alliance* [174 PC 06 E] was adopted with those amendments agreed to by the Rapporteur.

B. Consideration of the draft Report of the Sub-Committee on NATO Partnerships on *Central Asian security – the role of NATO* [175 PCNP 06 E] presented by Rafael Estrella (Spain), Acting Rapporteur

18. Following the presentation of the draft report by Rafael Estrella on *Central Asian Security – the Role of NATO*, **Rashit Akhmetov** (KZ) said that the report was too negative about Kazakhstan. He asked that Kazakhstan's reform efforts, including those referring to democratisation, be reflected in the final report. **François Roelants du Vivier** (BE) noted that the report could have placed more emphasis on energy issues. He and others emphasised the need to differentiate between the Central Asian countries. He also asked Rafael Estrella to elaborate on the lack of co-operation between NATO and the EU. Mr Mitsotakis noted a contradiction, namely that some of the Central Asian countries are co-operating in the Shanghai Co-operation Agreement and some are NATO PfP countries. Mrs Andreychuk commended the report for anticipating possible challenges rather than dealing with an existing crisis. She suggested rephrasing the subtitle "Birds of a feather" to something that would more accurately reflect the differences among the Central Asian countries. Moreover, she stressed the need to put stronger emphasis on the ways and means to assist reforms that underscore different development concepts. Mr Ahlin mentioned that several Central Asian Countries had recently made a step forward towards co-operation by agreeing on a nuclear-free-zone. Mr Bilgiç said that the peoples of Central Asia are primarily of Turkish descent. Turkey continues to support the integration and cooperation of these countries that share the same culture as Turkey. In addition, he thinks that the comments in the report related to the role of Islam and extremism are not sufficient.

19. In his reply to the comments and questions, Mr Estrella noted that the report did reflect the diversity of the region. He said that he would be willing to incorporate the suggested changes where applicable. On the EU and NATO co-operation he iterated that there was indeed no co-operation in Central Asia and not even between NATO and NATO member countries working in Central Asia. "If we give carrots, the carrots should be co-ordinated", he said.

The draft Report on *Central Asian Security – the Role of NATO* [175 PCNP 06 E] was adopted with those amendments agreed to by the Rapporteur.

C. Consideration of the draft Report of the Sub-Committee on Transatlantic Relations on *Iran - a challenge for transatlantic co-operation* [176 PCTR 06 E] presented by Ruprecht Polenz (Germany), Rapporteur

20. Following the introductory remarks by **Ruprecht Polenz** (DE), the Rapporteur of the Sub-Committee on Transatlantic relations, on his draft report on "*Iran – A Challenge for Transatlantic Co-operation*" [176 PCTR 06 E], **Andreas Loverdos** (GR) and Kyriakos Mitsotakis pointed out that Iran cannot be deterred in the way the Soviet Union was, as there are unstable actors in the Middle East. Mr Loverdos applauded the report for its three important conclusions: a military solution is not realistic; the international community needs to give Tehran good reasons to give up its nuclear programme; and direct Iran-US talks is the way forward. The Greek member called upon the US and Iranian sides to tone down the rhetoric. Referring to paragraphs 2, 4, 9, and 45, **Sven Mikser** (EE) made a couple of comments on specific points in the report and noted that Iran would be able to live without oil for some time. **Össur Skarphedinsson** (IS) raised the issue of possible military action against Tehran.

21. Mr Pines compared Iran's President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad to Adolf Hitler, saying the world should react now before it is too late. He argued that Iran has strong ties to terrorism around the world, and that we need to use every tool in our arsenal to counter this threat. Moreover, arguing that the Iranian regime is ignoring the international community, he said that Iran wanted to combine worldwide terror activities and nuclear weapons and is trying to destabilise Iraq. Mr Polenz replied by saying that he did not believe Ahmadinejad is another Hitler, and the situations are not comparable. He also pointed out that after President Ahmadinejad's statement on Israel, Supreme Ayatollah Khamenei announced that Iran would never attack another country, which was taken as a refutation of the President's statement.

22. In response to a question from **Marit Nybakk** (NO), Mr Polenz agreed that the EU needs to focus more attention on human rights in Iran, and that human rights is also a security issue. In response to Mr Stinner's question whether the West should have a "plan B" for dealing with Iran, Mr Polenz stated that it was not wise to talk about such a subject in public, but that it could be discussed confidentially in NATO. Questions should revolve around how to keep Iran's neighbours from also acquiring nuclear weapons and about missile defence. Mr Casaca also commented positively on the report.

The draft Report of the Sub-Committee on Transatlantic Relations on *Iran - a Challenge for Transatlantic Co-operation* [176 PCTR 06 E] was adopted unanimously without any amendment.

IV. RESOLUTIONS

23. Three resolutions were presented and discussed during the meeting of the Political Committee :

A. Consideration of amendments and vote on the draft Resolution on *the 50th Anniversary of the 1956 Hungarian Revolution and the Fight for Freedom* [205 PC 06 E] presented by Bert Koenders (Netherlands), General Rapporteur

24. Markus Meckel described the importance and the resolution on the Hungarian Revolution. Thanking Mr Meckel and the Committee Members for the resolution Ms Vadai said that the 1956 revolution was a major milestone in European history. The head of the Hungarian delegation to the NATO PA also thanked the Canadian delegation for the exhibition to commemorate the events in Hungary 50 years ago.

25. After brief introductory remarks by Mr Koenders **the draft Resolution on *The 50th Anniversary of the 1956 Hungarian Revolution and the Fight for Freedom* [205 PC 06 E] was adopted unanimously without any amendment.**

B. Consideration of amendments and vote on the draft Resolution on *The impact of Afghanistan on the Alliance* [204 PC 06 E] presented by Bert Koenders (Netherlands), General Rapporteur

26. Before the General Rapporteur introduced the resolution, Mr Meckel informed that the Political Committee's and the Defence and Security Committee's resolutions on Afghanistan would be merged into one resolution. The members of the Political Committee consented to this decision. Mr Koenders then moved the Resolution by stating that it was a reflection of the report discussed the previous day, and was an important signal for the heads of state at the Riga Summit.

27. There were ten amendments to the Resolution proposed :

- Accepted: Amendment 2 (Mr Pilka); Amendment 3 (Mr Pilka); Amendment 4 (Mr Pilka); Amendment 1 (Mrs Nicolai, Ms Flesch, Mr Matsulevits); Amendment 5 (Mr Pilka); Amendment 10 (Mr Lamers, M. Stinner); Amendment 8 (Mr Lamers, Mr Stinner)
- Rejected: Amendment 6 (Mr Pilka)
- Withdrawn: Amendment 9 (Mr Lamers, Mr Stinner); Amendment 7 (Mr Pilka)

28. A verbal amendment was proposed by the Chairman to change sub-paragraph 10. a. by replacing “diminishing and making more transparent” with “removing”. Mr Koenders agreed to the amendment, and members of the delegations from the United Kingdom, Canada, and Luxembourg also expressed strong support for the change. Members of the German and Greek delegations expressed opposition. After a break to caucus, the wording used by the Defense and Security Committee's Resolution was adopted as a compromise.

The draft Resolution on *The Impact of Afghanistan on the Alliance* [204 PC 06 E] was adopted as amended.

C. Consideration of amendments and vote on the draft Resolution on *The Future Status of Kosovo* [206 PC 06 E] presented by Bert Koenders (NL), General Rapporteur

29. Mr. Koenders introduced the Resolution by stating that this was the most important issue for the Alliance after Afghanistan, and it is not easy to find a unified position. The Political Committee visited Kosovo and felt disappointed in its progress. Mr Koenders stated that while the Resolution was not revolutionary, it was important to show continued support for Kosovo and the region.

30. There were fourteen amendments to the Resolution proposed :

- Accepted: Amendment 10 (Mr Ozerov); Amendment 11 (Mr Ozerov); Amendment 12 (Mr Ozerov); Amendment 6 (Mr Yanev); Amendment 14 (Mr Lamers, Mr Stinner)
- Rejected: Amendment 1 (Mr Yanev); Amendment 8 (Mr Ozerov); Amendment 2 (Mr Yanev); Amendment 9 (Mr Ozerov); Amendment 3 (Mr Yanev); Amendment 7 (Mr Pilka); Amendment 4 (Mr Yanev); Amendment 13 (Mr Ozerov)
- Withdrawn: Amendment 5 (M. Yanev)

The draft Resolution on *The Future Status of Kosovo* [206 PC 06 E] was adopted as amended.

V. ELECTION OF COMMITTEE AND SUB-COMMITTEE OFFICERS

31. Political Committee

Vice-Chairman
General Rapporteur

Ben Chandler (US)
Raynell Andreychuk (CA)

Sub-Committee on Transatlantic Relations

Vice-Chairman
Vice-Chairman

George Voinovich (US)
Marian Pilka (PL)

Sub-Committee on NATO Partnerships

Vice-Chairman
Rapporteur

Furio Colombo (IT)
Bart van Winsen (NL)

All re-eligible Committee and Sub-Committee Officers were re-elected.

VI. 2006 AND 2007 POLITICAL COMMITTEE VISITS AND ACTIVITIES PRESENTED BY SUB-COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN

32. As new General Rapporteur, Raynell Andreychuk expressed her priorities for the Political Committee for the next year, including a focus on transformation and what we mean by security. She also wants to look at new ways NATO can coordinate its missions.

33. Mr Lamers presented the activities for the Sub-Committee on NATO Partnerships. In 2007 the Sub-committee will travel to Saudi Arabia and Qatar to continue the Sub-Committee's earlier activities in the Persian Gulf. The first visit of the Sub-Committee will be to Pakistan, which holds a crucial role in the success of the NATO operations in Afghanistan.

34. Speaking for the Sub-Committee on Transatlantic Relations, Mr Polenz, the Rapporteur of the Sub-Committee, said that he plans to write the report on the impact of the "war on terrorism" upon the Allies. The Sub-Committee's trips will all be related to this report, including a visit to Italy and one to the United States.

35. Concluding the meeting of the Political Committee the Chairman thanked the members of the Committee, the Committee Staff, and the Canadian delegation for a successful meeting and adjourned the session.
