

## **PRESIDENT'S REPORT FOR 2013**

A major issue for the Atlantic Council of Canada in 2013 was the search for new office space. It eventually took a three-stage move which was very disruptive for our organization and also incurred additional costs. In mid-July, we moved from the 7<sup>th</sup> Floor at 165 University Avenue to a much smaller area on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor, as a temporary move until the end of 2013. This required us to put a lot of our furniture into storage, and we also had to pay to run new internet cables into that area.

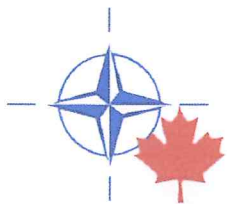
In the late fall, negotiations began with the Toronto Port Authority for space. TPA needed board approval which, unfortunately, could not happen until the first week of January, 2014. Director Karim Kanji, and his company, Sutter Hill Properties, stepped into the breach, and offered temporary location in the boardroom of the 11<sup>th</sup> Floor of 48 Yonge Street. I would like to express my thanks to Karim for this timely assistance.

Once more, we packed up everything and moved to that location at the end of December. We unpacked only what we absolutely needed and Robert Baines and I worked with cell phones and laptops. The interns worked mostly at home and came in from time to time for meetings.

At the end of the third week of January, the TPA space was ready for us. We moved all the computers and peripherals with my car to protect them, as well as most of the boxes with files. Half the interns brought them down from the boardroom at 48 Yonge Street and loaded them into the car. The other half was at 60 Harbour Street to unload the car and take everything up to the 4<sup>th</sup> floor. It took four trips to move everything safely. As always, we had an extraordinary group of interns who were not afraid to tackle whatever needed to be done!

The larger items were moved by professional movers on the weekend, and the following Saturday, the movers brought the furniture from the storage lockers. Again we had the assistance of several interns. We finally had all our own furniture again and were able to set up computers on every desk. The internet was connected by the end of the first week, but the phones were not connected until mid-March. It was awkward and expensive to work just with cell phones.

One of the reasons for the delay was that we were investigating whether we should move to a VOIP system, to see if that might be a cost-effective way to expand our capabilities. In the end such a system proved to be more costly than the combination of phone and internet we had before without adding significant capability, and we received a quote for a complete phone system that would provide more lines and be considerably less expensive than what we paid before. We also increased our band width again to improve the speed and transmission capability of the internet.



Although the final stages were completed in 2014, I am including the information in this report in order to keep you updated.

In spite of the turmoil, we accomplished a lot in 2013. The output of articles on the website increased significantly, partly due to the maturation of our Junior Research Fellowship program which we introduced in 2012. This enables young people outside the Toronto area, even from abroad, to contribute articles which are first edited by one of the in-house interns, and then come to me for final edit and approval. I would like to point out here that approval does not mean endorsement of everything expressed in the articles. We like to present different points of view as long as they are legitimate viewpoints expressed in polite language. We do print a disclaimer at the end of each article.

We also greatly increased our output via social media. Just before the holiday break, in December we had 943 likes on Facebook, 1650 followers on Twitter, 140 followers on LinkedIn, and 210 subscribers on Youtube. Each medium is managed by one of our interns. One of the interesting features introduced in 2013 was a regular Twitter chat on a particular security and defence topic.

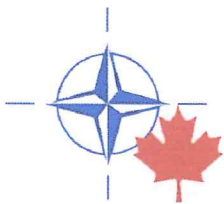
We had two very successful conferences, one in the Spring on Energy, and one in the Fall on Afghanistan after 2014. We expect to do more follow-up on these two topics in 2014. In fact we already partnered with the Energy Collaboratory at the University of Ottawa to put on a two-part energy symposium in Ottawa at the end of January, and expect to have a follow-up Roundtable on Afghanistan in Toronto in May. At the request of representatives of the Afghan community, the meeting will be a small meeting of experts so that there will be a good discussion on what Canada can do to assist Afghanistan in the future, and we hope to produce a report.

In addition to a regular series of Roundtables, the ACC managed a NATO sponsored research project on "Defence Matters". Past President, Col. Brian MacDonald, and Director Paul Chapin, were the principal researchers and produced a paper in September which is available on our website. The ACC hosted two sessions in Toronto and one in Ottawa. Other organizations hosted similar events in Montreal, Ottawa, and Calgary.

We enjoyed a successful Tribute Dinner in the Spring at Trinity College, and also organized a Commonwealth Dinner in August at Hart House. However, we decided to forego a Gala dinner in the fall because it was too difficult to organize in our restricted office circumstances.

On the international front, the Southeastern European Business Forum, organized on March 1, at the Ontario Investment and Trade Centre was very successful with nine countries participating.





The NATO Tour in 2013 was a departure from our regular visit to Brussels. Instead, we visited Albania, Macedonia, and Turkey. In both Albania and Macedonia, we met with our Atlantic Treaty Association counterparts, met with government officials, and visited military bases. In Turkey, we only had enough time to meet with our Consul in Istanbul and were briefed by him on various issues of interest. The tour was most enjoyable and informative. The tour was preceded by a visit to Trenton AFB, so that tour participants would have some information on Canadian capabilities before going abroad. This visit provided an opportunity for several people who were not able to go on the main tour to join us, and was much appreciated.

The tour planned for this fall in the same timeslot, leaving the last Saturday in September and returning the following Saturday, has been postponed to 2015. We will be spending more time in Turkey so that we will be able to travel to Ankara to meet government officials and Turkish Atlantic Council members, and visit the NATO LANDCOM Headquarters in Izmir. I am also following up an invitation received from a Ministry of Foreign Affairs official in Montenegro to make that country the second country of the trip. Montenegro has an active Atlantic Council. We will also try to schedule a preliminary visit to a Canadian base. When the new NATO Headquarters in Brussels is completed, as expected in the Spring of 2016, we will arrange a more traditional tour again to include Brussels.

On the organizational front, we made some significant changes in 2013. There was some reorganizing of the Board of Directors, and established a Council of Patrons, an Advisory Council and an Academic Advisory Council, and we welcomed a new Chairman, then Senator, The Hon. Hugh Segal, a long-time supporter of the Council, who in July 2014 took up the post of Master of Massey College, University of Toronto.

In addition, the membership agreed to the establishment of a Trust Fund and the board appointed directors to a Trust Committee. Approximately \$11,000 was donated to the Trust which according to the provision of the arrangement meant that 70% or \$7600 has been transferred to a separate bank account. We would like to do another drive following this meeting to raise additional funds and then have a meeting of the Committee to decide on investment of the funds. This past year, we had one person make a monthly donation for ten months for a total of \$1000. This worked very well for him and also for the ACC, and I would encourage those of you who are not in a position to make large donations to consider this method. I would be happy to process any instalment amount.

Finally, it was decided that we would start using the name NATO Council of Canada, so that our name would more accurately reflect the purpose of our organization. The intent was to try it for the first half of 2014, and vote for the final adoption at the 2014 AGM when we also need to approve a new by-law for registration under the new act governing federally



incorporated charities. So far, the name change has elicited mostly favourable comments. We think it is also resonating better with potential sponsors in the security and defence industry. Please keep in mind that our legal name is still The Atlantic Council of Canada, and therefore, we currently use the terminology, NATO Council of Canada, operated by the Atlantic Council of Canada.

Respectfully submitted on September 11, 2014

Julie A. Lindhout  
President.