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Message from the President

It has been a while since our last Newsletter, but we wanted to delay this in order to include a report on the ATA Assembly with some photos, and tell you about our plans for next year.

Since our last issue, **Luisa Sargsyan** came on board in July, and **Lana Polyakov** joined us in August. You will get to meet them in this issue. Their contribution to the work of the ACC has been fantastic. Not only are they both excellent researchers, analysts, and writers, but their superb administrative and computer skills were invaluable in accomplishing all the work that had to be done in the lead up to and the running of the ATA Assembly in Ottawa. You have already seen evidence of Luisa's work in our new electronic news summary "In Focus" and Lana researched the background material for the Assembly, stayed on top of all the program and registration details, and has written the report. It will be hard to say good-bye to her in December when her internship comes to an end. We thank her for all her hard work, and wish her a wonderful 2008!

Pawel Osiej left us in August, but he didn't really leave us. He went to Brussels, to work as intern in the office of the ATA Secretariat, and we receive regular communications from him. He came back for the Assembly and provided much assistance in his usual enthusiastic way, while also carrying out his ATA responsibilities. We were pleased to hear that he will be staying on in Brussels as Acting Director of the Secretariat Office when the Director, Charlotte Peters, goes on maternity leave in January.

Marlene Bukowski also came back for the ATA Assembly and was a tremendous help to us. It was as if she had never left, as she picked up any work that needed to be done from binding and collating programs to registering delegates and welcoming them to the Assembly. We look forward to seeing her again next year, when the Assembly will be held in **Berlin, Germany**, and she expects to be part of the German organizing team.

It was sad to say good-bye to **Sandy Samuels** when her internship came to an end in September. She was such a willing worker who quickly became the friendly voice of the Atlantic Council to all callers. A great organizer, she straightened out the office in no time, and we can now find the files where they are supposed to be instead of in boxes. She even came back for a few days the week before the Assembly to help us put the program and registration packages together. She has been doing temporary work as she plans to visit family in Jamaica over Christmas, and then she will be looking for permanent employment in the New Year. We wish her well in her job search. She will be a real asset to a workplace.

Abdul Rahman Karim has replaced Sandy as the Toronto Community Housing intern. You will learn more about him in this issue. Immediately on his arrival, he was thrown into the deep end to represent Canada at a young researchers' forum, sponsored by the ATA and the Italian Atlantic Committee in Palermo, Italy, and he hardly had time to recover from that before he became immersed in the preparations for the Assembly.

The **53rd General Assembly of the Atlantic Treaty Association** which the ACC hosted in Ottawa, October 31 to November 2, was the highlight of our Fall season. By all reports, it was a great success. The speakers were outstanding, and the Assembly was well attended, especially by youth. Hosting it in Canada, gave a better opportunity for ACC members to attend an Assembly and have the opportunity to interact with delegates from 36 other countries. In 2008, we hope to build on the enthusiasm and momentum created by the Assembly in young and older.



Chairman
The Hon. Bill Graham
PC QC

Immediate Past Chairman
Col. Dr. Frederic L.R. Jackman
CStJ PhD OOnt.

President
Julie Lindhout
MA MEd

Newsletter Editor-in-Chief
Luisa Sargsyan, MA

Membership Information

Regular & Partner/Spouse	\$125
Regular	\$75
Senior	\$50
Young Professional	\$50
Full-time Student	\$25

**2008 Membership Renewal
Forms will be sent out shortly**

There is a full report on the Assembly in this issue, so I will not say anything more about the content, but I do wish to thank some people who contributed enormously to the success of the event. First of all, I would like to thank our Chairman, the Hon. Bill Graham, for his encouragement and very practical support, as well as his assistant, Brian O'Neil, for his hard work. Our Past Chairman, Dr. Eric Jackman, has been a staunch supporter in word and deed from the outset, and the Executive Committee of the Board has provided ongoing assistance along the way, especially Vice-President, Col. John McKenna who spent many hours on the phone and kept everything running smoothly behind the scenes in Ottawa.

I would also like to thank Director Wayne Primeau for his assistance in arranging the Excursion which met with great approval of all participants. We started with a lunch reception on Parliament Hill and for that I thank Mr. Leon Benoit, M.P., Chair of the NATO Parliamentarians, for his sponsorship. The participants all appreciated the words he spoke to us.

In addition to the office team, whose work I already mentioned above, I want to extend thanks to Theo Anderson and George Tsantrizos who helped with translation of material for the program booklet and media backgrounders. A big thank you goes to Rob Ozimkowski, a student at Carleton University, who readily assisted throughout the Assembly with anything that needed to be done.

A special thanks goes to our ubiquitous photographer, editor, marketer, webmaster, etc., Linda Lynch, who has been a tremendous asset to the whole effort. You will see the results of her work on our website. Also to Lana's fiancé, Kirill Kharlip, who brought his firm to our rescue when computer problems in the office threatened to derail our work just weeks before the Assembly.

Finally, I thank our sponsors. Without their financial support we would not have been able to achieve the program. In this regard, I especially want to thank the Ambassadors of Albania, Croatia and Macedonia for putting on a wonderful reception on the evening of November 1, which added tremendously to the friendly spirit of the whole Assembly.

You can still obtain a piece of the action, even if you were unable to attend. We have a number of the tote bags left which are imprinted with logo of the Assembly. For \$5.00 each, they make great reusable shopping bags. Folded and snapped shut, you can carry them in a briefcase, and use them when you need to. I plan to buy several to use instead of hampers as containers for the assortment of Christmas goodies I usually give to family and friends. Pick them up when you come to the office. Shipping is extra.

Next year the Assembly will be held in Berlin, Germany, and we plan to offer a package that will include a NATO Briefing Tour in conjunction with the Assembly. As soon as we know the dates of the Assembly, we will begin preparations and will keep you posted.

Introducing our staff...

Luisa Sargsyan is a Fellow with the Canadian Department of National Defence's Security and Defence Forum and Senior Research Analyst with the Atlantic Council of Canada. Luisa holds a Master's degree in International Security from the University of Denver's Graduate School of International Studies. Originally from Armenia, she became interested in international relations and global security while working towards her Bachelor's degree in Roman and German Philology. In 1998, she was offered a Policy Analyst position with the Nagorno-Karabakh Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which she held for five years, taking a six-month break in 2000 to travel to Boston and complete the Special Training Program for Young Diplomats at Tufts University's Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy. She continues taking courses with the United Nations Institute for Research and Training, and recently received certificates in Global Terrorism and Peacekeeping in International Conflict Resolution. In 2004 and 2005, Luisa took stints at the Nagorno Karabakh Office in Washington, D.C., where she learned her way around Capitol Hill, worked with members of the U.S. Administration and Congress, think tanks and international organizations, and gained valuable experience in the arts of lobbying and fundraising. At the ACC, Luisa applies her talents to research on the issues of global peace and security, contributes to ACC's reports and publications. She is the founder and Editor-in-Chief of our new bi-weekly "In Focus" Transatlantic News Digest. Luisa contributed crucially to the organization and preparation of all printed materials for the 53rd ATA General Assembly. Her professional interests include Weapons of Mass Destruction and Nuclear Non-Proliferation, International Terrorism, Conflict Resolution, post-Soviet and post-Communist countries, Transatlantic Issues, Canadian and U.S. Foreign Policies, Regional Stability and Global Security. Luisa speaks Russian, French and Armenian. She can be contacted at luisa.sargsyan@atlantic-council.ca



Lana Polyakov is a Master of Arts graduate from the faculty of Central/East European and Russian Area Studies, Institute of European and Russian Studies of Carleton University. She holds two Bachelor of Arts degrees with honors from York University in International Relations and French Studies. In 2003, Lana received a Certificate of Merit from the University of Montreal in Intensive French language training with the Government of Canada. In 2005, she received a Certificate of Completion of the 12th Trans-Atlantic Summer Academy on the topic of Weapons of Power and Tools of Management – Alliances in the Past and in the Present, Bonn University in Germany. Also in 2005, she was a Research Officer for the Immigration and Refugee Board in Ottawa specializing in Central and Eastern Europe and Russia. Lana is our former intern who participated in the Young Professional International (YPI) Internship programme; in 2005/2006 her placement was in the NATO Information Office in Moscow as the Assistant Project Coordinator where she learned first hand about NATO activities and had the opportunity to travel to many conferences and visit NATO HQ on numerous occasions. Her interests and professional experiences include international and public diplomacy, political analyses, global political issues, and think tanks. She joined the Atlantic Council of Canada in August of this year as a Special Programme Coordinator for the 53rd ATA General Assembly. Her contributions to the ACC include her fluency in French and Russian language, her public relations skills, and her level of experience in independent project development and high level conference planning. She can be reached at лана.polyakov@atlantic-council.ca



Abdul Rahman Karim is a 23 year old Canadian of Afghan descent, born in Kuwait but raised in the city of Toronto. As a recent graduate of York University, he holds a Bachelor of Arts with Honours in Global Political Studies. Abdul joined the Atlantic Council of Canada as an Intern Research Analyst as part of a 6 month internship program sponsored by the Toronto Community Housing Corporation. On October 4-7, 2007 had traveled to Palermo, Italy as the selected Canadian delegate and ACC Staff to the 2007 Palermo Atlantic Forum. He was also member of the Organizing Committee of the 53rd ATA General Assembly; his responsibilities included Media Contacts as well as planning for the Afghanistan Town Hall Discussions. Besides administrative work, Abdul will also be involved in research and writing for both newsletters as well as events. He looks forward to learning new skills while strengthening established skill sets, as he begins his professional career. Fluent in English, Pashto and Farsi, Abdul enjoys a passion for foreign affairs, music and sports. He is also very actively involved in freelance writing for a variety of publications, both online and in print. He can be reached at abdul.karim@atlantic-council.ca



53rd General Assembly of the Atlantic Treaty Association October 31 – November 2, 2007 in Ottawa, Canada



Left to Right: ATA SecGen Troels Frøling; ATA President Amb. Robert Hunter; ACC President Mrs. Julie Lindhout at the Council Meeting

The Atlantic Council of Canada, official organizer and host of the 53rd Annual Assembly of the Atlantic Treaty Association (ATA), brought together for a three day session, delegates from the non-governmental support bodies in the 26 NATO member states, the Partnership for Peace (PfP) states, Russia, China, the new Atlantic organizations which have emerged in recent years in several observer states as well as aspiring PfP states and states involved in NATO's Mediterranean Dialogue.

This year's Assembly entitled "*NATO and Global Partners: a Comprehensive Approach to Rebuilding Afghanistan and Other Challenges*" consisted of delegates and speakers from 36 different countries. Wednesday October 31st marked the first day of the Assembly. The early morning Council Meetings of the ATA, YATA, and the AAYPL were deemed very successful by their participants. The Town Hall meeting of YATA, Canadian Students, with Mr. **Ajmal Pashtoonyar**, Youth Outreach Officer of the Afghanistan

Task Force from DFAIT, was a great success as well (*please see the piece on Mr. Pashtoonyar on page 5*).

The opening ceremonies in the afternoon started with a very impressive list of speakers: a welcome address and introduction by ACC President Ms. **Julie Lindhout**, ACC Chairman the Hon. **Bill Graham**, and ATA President Amb. **Robert Hunter**. The opening addresses were delivered by NATO Deputy Secretary General H.E. Ambassador **Claudio Bisogniero**, Ms. **Colleen Sword**, Assistant Deputy Minister of DFAIT representing the Hon. **Maxime Bernier**, and the Minister of Defence of Albania Hon. **Fatmir Mediu**. The words of greeting were delivered by H.E. Amb. **Davor Božinović**, Croatian Ambassador to NATO and Croatian Coordinator for NATO Communication Strategy, and the Minister of Defence of the FYRO Macedonia the Hon. **Lazar Elenovski**.



The Assembly's first day was brought to a close with two very informative addresses: the Minister of Health of Canada the Hon. **Tony Clement** (*on the picture*) updated the audience on Canada's current position on Afghanistan and gave eye-opening examples of how security issues intersect directly with those of health and welfare. Mr. **Gary Robbins**, Director of the Office of European Security and Political Affairs of the U.S. Department of State, among other matters, praised the Canadian forces for their effectiveness in Afghanistan and expressed his condolences to the families of fallen soldiers.

The evening reception held in the beautiful Ballroom of the Château Laurier was a time to relax, enjoy the food and mingle. At the opening of the reception, ATA President Amb. **Hunter** extended his congratulatory remarks on the occasion of the 5th anniversary of the NATO-Russia Council and honoured the life of a past President of the ATA, Ambassador **Ü. Halûk Bayülken**.

Thursday November 1st, day 2 of the Assembly, was opened by H.E. **Omar Samad**, Ambassador of Afghanistan to Canada who spoke on the topic of "*Afghanistan Today*." His address was followed by the first panel of the Assembly; "*Priorities in building security in Afghanistan*." Mr. **Jonathan Parish**, Senior Policy Advisor of NATO Policy and Planning within the Office of the Secretary General gave the official NATO stance on this issue, while Mr. **Francesc Vendrell**, EU Special Representative of Afghanistan, gave his remarks from the EU perspective.

During the second panel on the present "*Lessons from Afghanistan and region*," directly linked to the previous talks, Gen. **Klaus Naumann**, Former Chairman of the NATO Military Committee, Vice President of the German Atlantic Committee, and Prof. **Sean Maloney** of the Royal Military College of Canada presented their discourses. This panel was then followed by a working lunch where each table was turned into a discussion group with a list of questions to be pondered. The answers have been recorded and summarized; they will be posted shortly on our website.

Following lunch, LGen. **Andrew B. Leslie** OMM, MSC, MSM, CD, Chief of the Land Staff, former Commander of the Task Force Kabul and Deputy Commander of ISAF in 2003, and Prof. **Sean Kay**, Chair of International Studies at Ohio Wesleyan University were the honorable speakers of the third plenary session on the topic of "*NATO's Transformation forged and tested in Afghanistan - Afghanistan's impact on NATO Alliance members and partners*."

During the fourth panel entitled "*NATO beyond Afghanistan – cooperation with Russia, Missile Defence, Energy Security, and addressing conflict through cooperation*" the Assembly started to shift gears away from Afghanistan toward other pressing issues for NATO and the international community. Mr. **Tommy Steiner**, Executive Secretary of the Atlantic Forum of Israel, delivered a very interesting speech co-authored with Prof. **Uzi Arad**, Chair of the Atlantic Forum of Israel on the topic of "*NATO Mediterranean Dialogue, NATO-Israel Relations and the Future of NATO's Partnerships*." Commander (Ret'd) USCG **Craig Corl** of the Center for Naval Analyses in Virginia spoke on the pressing, often neglected, issue of "*National Security and the Threat of Climate Change*." Mr. **Sergey Alexeevich Ryabkov**, Director of the Department of European Cooperation of the Russian MFA, whose participation in the Assembly was facilitated through the NATO Information Office in Moscow, gave a very stimulating talk, which then prompted numerous questions from the floor on the topic of "*Cooperation and Challenges in NATO-Russia Relationship*."



Cdr. (Ret'd) Craig Corl, Mr. Sergey Ryabkov, and Mr. Tommy Steiner

The last speech of the day, which also jump-started the fifth and final panel of the Assembly entitled "*NATO's global interests or global interests in NATO?*", which resumed the following day, was delivered by the Hon. **Lazar Elenovski**, Minister of Defence of the FYRO Macedonia, who delivered an eloquent discourse mentioning the importance of the role that the ATA plays in the international community, and FYRO Macedonia's aspirations for NATO accession.



On the picture: Mr. Kenneth Foxcroft, Mrs. Susan Zivkovic, Rev. Arthur MacRae, and Mr. Barry Davenport, enjoying the Reception at the Parliament

The Thursday evening reception hosted by the Ambassadors of Albania, Croatia, and FYRO Macedonia, was held in the elegant Commonwealth Room of the Parliament building. The reception was tasteful and entertaining. One of the biggest pleasant surprises of the evening was the attendance of the Hon. **Peter MacKay**, the Minister of National Defence of Canada.

The morning of Friday November 2nd, the third and final day of the Assembly, began with a Transatlantic Forum, which gave various delegates of National Associations the opportunity to share information about their activities and speak of those issues important to them. The panel on "*NATO's global interests or global interests in NATO?*" was thereafter resumed, with the first speaker of the day, H.E. Amb. **Davor Božinović**, Croatian Ambassador to NATO and Croatian Coordinator for

the first speaker of the day, H.E. Amb. **Davor Božinović**, Croatian Ambassador to NATO and Croatian Coordinator for NATO Communication Strategy.



This final panel of the Assembly was wrapped-up with a very interesting speech by the Counsellor of the Embassy of China in Canada, Mr. **Lushan Sun**, on the topic of “*Building a Harmonious World of Lasting Peace And Common Prosperity.*” Mr. Sun began his presentation with an overview of China’s foreign policy, and China’s vision of building a “harmonious world” through the theory of *harmonious development*; a theory, which he explained, stands on three major tenets: peace, development, and cooperation. He then went on to talk about China’s new security concept and security related issues. The connection between China and NATO in relation to Afghanistan was touched upon, and China’s views on the current situation in Afghanistan, as well as the Sino-Afghan relations were also well explained. As a result, Mr. Lushan’s discourse attracted many stimulating questions from the floor and produced a very interesting question/discussion session.

On the picture: Mr. Lushan Sun delivering his speech

The report of the General Rapporteur, Col. (Ret’d) **Brian MacDonald**, was delivered with his usual flare for words in which the key issues brought forward during the Assembly were summed up in a clear, concise, and eloquent fashion.

It was a great honor to have the Honorable **Sali Berisha**, the Prime Minister of Albania (seen on the right), deliver a closing address. He was followed by Mr. **Laurie Hawn**, MP, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence of Canada; Amb. **Wayne Neill**, Political Advisor of NATO Allied Command Transformation; and the remarks of the President of Romania H.E. **Traian Basescu**, delivered by H.E. **Elena Stefoi**, Ambassador of Romania to Canada.



And thus the 53rd ATA General Assembly came to an end. The closing remarks were delivered by ATA President Amb. **Robert Hunter**; and the ACC staff were applauded for their great efforts in putting this great event together.

The Friday afternoon excursion in Ottawa and area was a great roundup to the Assembly. The participants had lunch at the Parliament, which was followed by a guided tour of the magnificent building. Then two buses took the participants on a sightseeing drive throughout downtown Ottawa and its vicinity ending up at the most interesting Aviation Museum. The tour came to an end with a delicious meal at the revolving restaurant on the high floor of the Marriott hotel in downtown Ottawa, which gave the participants a 360 degree aerial view of the national capital.

The Assembly turned out a great success as it was both intellectually stimulating and highly informative. Today’s pressing political issues were discussed openly and without prejudice. Event photos, the final program, and speeches and biographies of some of the speakers, can be accessed shortly on the Atlantic Council of Canada’s website at www.atlantic-council.ca

By Lana Polyakov

Ajmal Pashtoonyar’s Presentation



Mr. Ajmal Pashtoonyar, Youth Outreach Officer on the Afghanistan Task Force of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Trade of Canada provided the Youth Atlantic Treaty Association (YATA) delegates and Canadian Students with a general overview of Canada’s role in rebuilding Afghanistan, and the commitment of the Government in the areas of security, development and governance.

The local challenges in Afghanistan reconstruction efforts were also addressed by tracing back the history of recent conflicts in Afghanistan; the nexus between Afghanistan’s regional and international security. Mr. Pashtoonyar gave the participants an informative overview of his role as the Youth Outreach Officer, and the outreach activities currently being conducted to engage young Canadians on the foreign policy priority issue of rebuilding Afghanistan.

According to Mr. Pashtoonyar, the unique aspect of engaging directly with young Canadians is to inform, collaborate, and initiate participatory dialogue on this issue, and according to him, Canada is the only country among NATO member States that is directly engaging with young people on Afghanistan through youth outreach and communication activities. The presentation was followed by questions from YATA members on different issues and challenges concerning the task of rebuilding Afghanistan and what role the young people can play today.

ACC Graduate Essay Contest

The Atlantic Council of Canada, within the framework of the 53rd General Assembly of the Atlantic Treaty Association, held its Graduate Essay contest in August-September 2007. The proposed topic was *International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) Mission in Afghanistan: Any more troops?*

With the ongoing ISAF mission in Afghanistan, there is much debate within the international security agencies and countries' governments about how to increase the number of troops of this international assistance force in order to keep the crucial process of post-conflict reconstruction in Afghanistan going to secure a more stable life in a country with shattered infrastructure. World leaders have been preoccupied with the discussions on this topic since the NATO Riga Summit in 2006. The international community is still trying to find a way on how to best secure the continuing presence of international contingents, where Canada has its stakes and concerns in terms of both domestic and foreign policy considerations.

The contestants' task was to cover the following questions: *Is the issue of sending more troops a domestic political issue for NATO member countries and how does each country look at it? What are Canada's concerns and priorities pertaining to the ISAF mission in Afghanistan? How can the Atlantic Treaty Association (ATA) / Youth Atlantic Treaty Association (YATA) increase public awareness of this issue and what impact would this have on NATO's decision-making process on the issue of larger military engagement in Afghanistan?*

The purpose of the contest was to generate fresh ideas from the students across the country, to investigate how the younger generation looks at these issues, and what solutions they can suggest to international players.

As a result, many bright undergraduate and graduate students submitted their essays that put forward many interesting suggestions and ideas. Some of the essays presented were professionally written and thoughtful pieces. However, they were not only judged based on the presentation of the ideas, but also on how well the authors responded to the questions at hand.

Congratulations to the following three winners chosen by the selection committee!



Rowan Porta

2nd year undergraduate student in Political Science
University of Victoria, BC

Matthew MacDonald

MA Candidate in Political Science
Dalhousie University, Halifax, NC

Brandon Deuille

MA Candidate in International Affaires
Carleton University, Ottawa, ON



The three students were awarded accommodation and a travel subsidy to attend the 53rd ATA General Assembly. They also got the chance to participate in discussion groups during the event and had the opportunity to contribute ideas as well as interact with many interesting conference participants. Full texts of the winning essays will be posted on our website shortly. Please, check back soon!

By Luisa Sargsyan

Conference Report: Palermo Atlantic Forum



Held from October 4-7th, 2007 in Palermo, Sicily, Italy, the Palermo Atlantic Forum gathered over 114 participants from 36 countries including NATO officials. The focus of this three-day conference was on New Perspectives of Security and Cooperation in the Mediterranean, Middle East and Asia.

Considering the current UN mandated ISAF mission in Afghanistan, naturally the main topic for discussion was the current security and reconstruction efforts in the war torn country. Every panelist agreed that security in Afghanistan could not be established through military means alone, but rather through economic prosperity and rebuilding institutions. Increasing the presence of Provincial Reconstruction Teams, facilitating greater private sector involvement, and intensifying training of Afghan security forces were deemed the biggest priorities at the present. The conference also called for an increased focus on developing alternative crops for Afghan farmers, as a means of countering the well-entrenched drug trade.

NATO's presence in Afghanistan was also situated within a greater context of NATO's transformation and evolution. New threats have emerged in the last 10-15 years, including failed states, terrorism, cyber-terrorism and energy security. Officials from NATO stressed the need for the organization to evolve militarily, from a heavy defensive force to a light, mobile counter-insurgent force. NATO is also no longer looking inward within Europe, but outward, and as a result there is a greater need to sustain and increase ties with like-minded organizations such as the Gulf Cooperation Council and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. Furthermore, NATO and national officials expressed determination that NATO and supranational organizations such as United Nations and European Union should be complimentary organizations and warned against situating these relations within a zero-sum politics context.

Recognizing that Mediterranean security was explicitly linked to tensions in the Middle East, the conference called for renewed peace efforts towards the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and expressed concern over Iran's nuclear ambitions. Regarding Europe, NATO will continue to assist the transition/accession of recent members. Finally, the conference discussions concluded that despite some concerns, the CFE Treaty commitments and Russian influence on former Soviet satellite states, the NATO-Russia Council should be strengthened to pave the way for an increasingly cooperative and mutually beneficial relationship.

In conclusion, the trip was extremely beneficial and informative to me. It was the experience of a lifetime. I extend my heartfelt gratitude to the Atlantic Council of Canada as well as the Comitato Atlantico Italiano for facilitating my attendance.

By Abdul Rahman Karim

NORAD/USNORTHCOM Civic Leaders Tour

This past August, I had the privilege of participating in a NORAD/USNORTHCOM tour for Civic Leaders which was personally hosted for five days by General Gene Renuart, Commander of NORAD and USNORTHCOM. The tour has been offered in previous years, but this was the first time that Canadians were invited.



Group Photo: The Canucks with General Renuart in front of an F-15 at Vandenberg AFB, L. to R. ACC President, Julie Lindhout, Douglas Goold, President, CIIA, Gen. Gene Renuart, ACC Past President, Col. (Ret'd) Brian MacDonald, Wynn Anne Sibbald, NORAD Public Affairs, behind her Tim Page, President, Canadian Association of Defence and Security Industries, and Shelley Whiting, Canadian Political Advisor to NORAD

It was a week packed full of travel and briefings, with very little down time. I arrived in Colorado Springs late on Sunday, August 12, and was met at the airport by Wynn Anne Sibbald, Canadian Cultural Linguist who works in NORAD/USNORTHCOM's Public Affairs Department and had the unenviable task of shepherding us around, making sure we were always at the bus on time. She drove me to Pike's Peak Lodge, the guest quarters at Peterson Air Force Base.

We started early the next morning by bringing our bags to a pickup point by 0700, and that set the pattern for the week. Efficient military staff would take our bags and make sure that they were loaded on the plane that would take us everywhere that week, and deliver them to our quarters at the next stop.

After breakfast at Headquarters, we were briefed on the organization and purpose of the dual command NORAD/USNORTHCOM. Although Canada has not signed on to the US Ballistic Missile Defense System, there was no evidence anywhere on our trip that Canadians serving with NORAD are excluded in any way from its activities. They are fully integrated,

and there is a great mutual respect between the two military forces.

Following a briefing on Ballistic Missile Defense, we boarded the bus to take us to Schriever AFB, a few miles away, for a briefing and demonstration at the 100th Missile Defense Integration Operations Center. After lunch, the bus took us to Cheyenne Mountain, where after a short delay caused by a temporary lockdown, we were taken to the Command and Control Center deep in the heart of the mountain. We went into a room with viewing windows overlooking the control room and the various stations and functions were explained to us. At one point, the windows temporarily blacked out, but a few moments later, they were clear again and the explanations continued. I found it interesting that a number of civilian agencies and staff are integrated into the NORAD/USNORTHCOM system. For example, prior to 9/11, NORAD only had the capacity to look outside the US/Canadian air space. After 9/11, NORAD acquired the ability to look inside the borders by linking with the Federal Aviation Authority (FAA) and now has FAA representatives sit inside the Control Center so that they can quickly contact the FAA for flight plan and other information on civilian planes that appear to be where they shouldn't be.

After a tour of the Technical Support Facility, we left Cheyenne Mountain to board our plane at Peterson AFB at 1530 to fly to Vandenberg AFB in California, with a fuel stop in Salt Lake City, Utah. We would get to know the inside of that plane well in the next few days.

Our plane landed at Vandenberg where a "Welcome to General Renuart and Civic Leaders" scrolled on the electronic sign, and stopped exactly at the red carpet painted on the tarmac. We shook hands with every member of the welcoming party, and had just enough time to be driven to our quarters, bring our suitcases inside, and board the bus for dinner in the nearest town of Casmalia. Local politicians and business leaders were already there to welcome us, and that too, became a pattern for the week, as the US Air Force tries to build and maintain good relations with their civilian neighbours.

Tuesday morning, we attended briefings on the Mission of the 30th Space Wing at Vandenberg, the Missile Defense Agency, which is responsible for ground-based midcourse missile defense. By 0930, we were on a bus to take us to see one of the Intercontinental Ballistic Missile launch facilities. There are three filled silos at Vandenberg AFB, which covers so much territory that it took over half an hour by bus to get to the launch site near the Pacific coast, and we passed launch sites for other missile systems along the way. All training for space and missile launching for the whole US Air Force is done at Vandenberg.

By 1115, we were back on the plane and on our way to McChord AFB near Tacoma, Washington. Immediately after arrival, we were taken to the Washington Emergency Operations Center, housed in a building designed to withstand earthquakes of up to 9 on the Richter scale. On the way to McChord, we had a beautiful view of Mt. Rainier, but at WEOC we heard a different view of that impressive mountain peak. Observers at the Center are watching Mt. Rainier very closely and are seeing signs of surface sloughing and movement similar to those on Mt. St. Helens in the last few years preceding the eruption.

We actually had about an hour of leisure time after the WEOC tour, which I used to wander around an open air museum of retired planes, near the flight line, which also allowed me to watch the constant take-offs and landings of aircraft of all sizes. No worries here about fuel costs and availability. A dinner with Senior Staff of McChord and local dignitaries in a Tacoma restaurant concluded the day.

The following morning we received a thorough briefing on the Western Air Defense Sector headquartered at McChord AFB. The briefing included a tour of the Operations Floor where every flight in the US is monitored every day, and the procedure from monitoring to interception was explained to us. When important events such as G7 meetings are held in Canada, the monitoring is extended into Canadian air space, and there have already been consultations with Canadian authorities in preparation for monitoring the Vancouver Olympics. WADS has also identified and catalogued everything in space the size of a fist and larger.



Inside a C-17 Globemaster

McChord is also the home base of an F-15 Mission, and we had an opportunity to see an F-15 up close and be told all about it by its proud pilot. A surprise addition to the schedule was a visit to a C-17 Globemaster. An incredibly young crew of two pilots and a loadmaster took us through the plane and demonstrated the various loading configurations. Three people is all it takes to fly the huge plane for distances under 16 hours. For longer flights another pilot and loadmaster are added. The plane can make a hard landing in 3500 ft on air strips only 90 ft wide in sand, mud, gravel, ice, whatever, the pilot told us with great enthusiasm. It can be unloaded in 10 minutes and loaded in 20 minutes or less depending on the type of load, and be on its way again.



After lunch, we boarded the plane again to fly to Elmendorf AFB, just outside Anchorage, Alaska. At the WADS Operation Center we were told that they conduct some kind of simulation exercise every day. Within half an hour of takeoff, we were the target of an exercise, in which we could overhear ground control through the radio in the cabin identify our location, and ask the pilot to communicate and identify himself. When the pilot did not respond, we heard the command to intercept, and within minutes two F-15 fighters from Portland, Oregon appeared on either side of our plane as seen on the picture. They escorted us sedately for a few minutes, and then with a friendly wave, peeled off and disappeared almost instantly.

We arrived in Elmendorf late in the afternoon, and had about an hour of free time before an enjoyable dinner at the Anchorage Hilton with a large number of local dignitaries. The following morning, we had breakfast with the troops who were eager to tell us about their activities and also wanted to know where we were from and what we had seen elsewhere.

For once we did not have to have our suitcases out the door at the crack of dawn, as we were staying two nights in Elmendorf. After breakfast, we had a briefing on the Alaska NORAD Region (ANR) mission. Elmendorf is a busy operational hub with a fighter squadron that has just welcomed the USAF's newest fighter, the F-22 Raptor, to augment its 39 F-15s, an airlift mission which has just replaced its Hercules planes with C-17s, AWACS monitoring, a northern search and rescue mission using smaller C-12 planes, and extensive medical facilities. After a tour of the ANR Operations center, we went to the hangars for tours of an AWACS plane, and a close look at the new Raptor whose advantages were extolled by one of the pilot trainers.

By noon, we were back in the plane to head out to Ft. Greely in the middle of Alaska. With much less space than Vandenberg AFB in California, Ft. Greely has 17 silos filled with IBM interceptors. After a briefing on what we would see, we were able to see inside a 24 metre silo holding a live interceptor, and were then taken to the facility where we could see how the interceptors are put together. A "tiny" 68 kilogram "kinetic kill vehicle" is attached to a midsection, and then covered with a cone to protect it during the launch. The tail and mid rocket sections will fall away after launching. The cone will come off, and the kill vehicle will lock on to its target and proceed to intercept. It has no warhead, but will destroy the missile with impact only.

At 1630, we were back on the plane to return to Elmendorf. The pilot took a slightly longer route to circle Mt. McKinley, the highest mountain in North America, and brought us back to Elmendorf in time for another bus trip to Anchorage for a debriefing dinner with General Renuart. This time there were no other guests.

By 0830, Friday morning we were on our way back to Colorado Springs. With a fuel stop in Spokane, and the two hour time difference, it was a little after 1800 when we touched down at Peterson AFB.

It was an incredible opportunity to see what very few civilians ever have the chance to see, and having seen, I am more convinced than ever before, that former Prime Minister, Paul Martin, was shortsighted in declining at the last moment to have Canada participate in the ballistic missile defence system.

By Julie Lindhout

ACC's Upcoming Events

Following the successful completion of the 53rd ATA General Assembly, the Atlantic Council of Canada has embarked on preparations for the upcoming events of 2008. The ACC will work on selecting potential speakers and participants for our roundtables and other events. Our tentative program so far includes some very interesting and stimulating discussions with individuals from the Canadian government and forces, and its missions abroad.

On December 12, 2007, the Atlantic Council will hold its Board of Directors meeting to discuss strategic directions for the next year.

In late January 2008, Colonel Gary Stafford, OMM, CD, Deputy Commander LFCA HQ, who has recently traveled to Afghanistan, will share his experiences as the Regional Police Advisor in the southern region of Afghanistan. He will talk about his incredible journey of training and developing the National Police Service in the country.

On April 9, the ACC is planning a Tribute dinner for Past Chairman Dr. Eric Jackman and also hopes to present the Annual Award for Exceptional Contribution to international peace and security to Brigadier General David A. Fraser, OMM, MSM, CD, BGen. was the commander of Multi-National Brigade for Regional Command South in Afghanistan's southern provinces in 2006. General Fraser received the Meritorious Service Medal in 1995 for his actions during the Bosnian civil war and the Vimy Award on August 11, 2006 for exhibiting the highest standards of leadership throughout his career. We hope that the ACC's Award will be an additional recognition of Gen. Fraser's important contributions.

On April 30, we are planning to also hold a spring conference at Trinity College in Toronto, where pressing issues of international peace and security will be discussed. The specific topic and speakers are to be determined and agreed upon.

In June, the ACC's Third Annual Golf Tournament will be the most important event of the year. This exciting event will bring together ACC's directors, members, and guests for an enjoyable day, where everyone will not only have the opportunity to show off their golf skills and enjoy the company of old friends, but will also to get a valuable update on current developments in Canada's peacemaking efforts.

The event will also try to raise much needed funds for the ACC. We hope the 2008 Golf Tournament will turn out to be as successful as it was in 2007! Watch for further details early in the new year.

Lastly, in 2008, the ACC plans to build on the tremendous youth participation at the ATA General Assembly with more involvement of Canadian youth in the important mission of promoting transatlantic dialogue and ideas through working with its young members and trying to pull the students and youth together across the country so they can take a greater part in our activities and events. Specific projects and actions in this regard will be determined progressively.

By Luisa Sargsyan

**From all of us at the ACC Office,
Greetings of the Season, and all the best in 2008!**



**Please note that our office will be closed
from December 21, 2007 to January 2, 2008, inclusive**

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