



Atlantic Council of Canada: 2011 NATO Tour in Reflection

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President's Address

The long-anticipated NATO Tour, September 24-October 1, 2011 has come and gone. As usual, it was extremely informative, and I am pleased to present this report so that the participants can review what they learned, and those who wanted to come but were unable to do so, can share in the rich program that was presented to us.

We visited NATO Headquarters in Brussels, where we also met with the Canadian Delegation to NATO, headed by Ambassador Yves Brodeur. We travelled to Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers in Europe (SHAPE), in Mons, Belgium, and were given a wonderful history lesson on Waterloo when we visited the Waterloo Monument on the way back to Brussels. We met with the Canadian Delegation to the European Union, and visited the European Parliament. We travelled to Paris where we started with a visit to the École de Guerre, one of Europe's oldest and most prestigious colleges of higher military education. We met with the Canadian Permanent Representative to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), Ambassador Judith LaRocque, and received briefings at the OECD. Our tour concluded with a visit with the Canadian Ambassador to France, Mr. Marc Lortie, who gave us an excellent overview of the political situation in France.

As you will see from the comprehensive thematic review presented by Editor, James Bridger, several key issues surfaced throughout the week. We started with a briefing on NATO's New Strategic Concept (NSC), but many of the issues addressed in the NSC are also issues identified by the EU and OECD. This gave us several European points of view, while the Canadian diplomats presented Canadian perspectives on the same issues.

Alongside the thematic overview, you will read reports by the other young members of the tour, who zero in on

their specific areas of interest and research. One of the richest aspects of the tour is that the interests and knowledge of the participants adds a very important dynamic to all the discussions and questions at the briefings and during the social times. Our Chairman, the Hon. Bill Graham, was a tremendous source of information and patiently answered the many questions directed to him by the other participants.

I would like to thank not only the speakers, but also those who were the organizers behind the scenes, Judith Windsor at NATO Headquarters, LCdr, French Navy, Laurence Blanchard at SHAPE, Susanne Connolly of the Canadian Delegation to EU, Lt Gabrielle Foy at the École de Guerre, Ashleigh Searle, of the Canadian Delegation to the OECD, and Chantal Chastenay, at the Canadian Embassy to France.

The combination of different participants and new developments makes each tour a unique experience, even though we visit some of the same institutions. I look forward to organizing the 2012 tour which will have a similar format. I hope that this time we will be able to visit the AWACs base in Geilenkirchen, which was closed to visitors this year because of the heavy operational demands of the Libyan campaign. Next year's itinerary will be available on our website by February.

Our participants represented Canada well at NATO, as we will continue to do next year and beyond.



Mrs Julie Lindout outside the French l'École de Guerre, Paris, France

Tour Overview

By: James M. Bridger

A study group headed by the Honourable Bill Graham recently returned from the Atlantic Council of Canada's annual NATO Tour, an enthralling weeklong excursion to both Brussels and Paris. The delegation combined insight from a variety of fields, bringing together ACC interns and members of the business, military, and diplomatic communities. The tour offered participants the unparalleled opportunity to hear and engage with key personalities at a variety of military and political institutions.

The first evening in Brussels was spent at a barbeque hosted by Ambassador Martin Trenevski, the head of the Republic of Macedonia's mission to NATO. Over a delicious meal, the group learned about the progress the small country has made towards meeting the Alliance's standards and the obstacles to membership that still lie ahead. The following morning the delegation departed for NATO Headquarters, where they were briefed on the Alliance's current operations and future challenges. Jonathan Parish, a Senior Planning Officer with the Public Diplomacy Division, explained NATO's current security concerns—including weapons proliferation, terrorism, failed and failing states, and cyber attacks—as they pertained to the Alliance's New Strategic Concept. Ongoing challenges, such as the difficulty of consensus building in the ever-widening alliance and the need for cost effective "smart defence," were also discussed.

H.E Yves Brodeur, Permanent Representative of the Canadian Delegation to NATO, briefed the group on Canada's position in the Alliance, focusing particularly on its shifting role in Afghanistan. The delegation



The 2011 NATO Tour Group outside of SHAPE, Mons, Belgium

was then informed about NATO's efforts to broaden its global partnerships through the Mediterranean Dialogue and Istanbul Conference Initiative. The Alliance's relationship with Russia and Ukraine was also a topic of spirited discussion.

The following day was spent at Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe (SHAPE), the Alliance's military command center located in Mons, Belgium. At this impressive complex, the group was briefed on the structure of NATO, as well as its ongoing operations in Libya, Afghanistan and Kosovo, aerial surveillance missions and naval patrols in the Mediterranean and Horn of Africa were also discussed. The delegation was then met by an officer from the EU's military attaché to SHAPE, who detailed the European Union's efforts to establish a standing military force as well as the intricacies of NATO-EU cooperation. Following this, the group was treated to an informative question period with high-level military representatives from both NATO and the EU. On the way back to Brussels, the delegation stopped at the historic site of Waterloo and were provided with an interactive tour of the battle by group member, Colonel

George Petrolekas.

The EU dimension of transatlantic security and economic cooperation was further illuminated the following day with a trip to the Canadian Mission to the European Union. Frank presentations about the Eurozone debt crisis and Canada's relationship with the EU spurred vigorous discussion among the delegation. It became clear that while both Canada and NATO maintain close and productive relations with the EU, the partnership is not without its irritants and challenges. The day was rounded out with a tour of the European Parliament, providing an inside look at its structure and functions.

The next day the group departed "The Capital of Europe" for "The City of Lights." After arriving in Paris, the delegation received a briefing from the staff of l'École de Guerre—the French war college. The delegation was enlightened as to the school's purpose, which is to instill a high level of military professionalism and spirit of cooperation among the multinational officers trained at the institution.

The school's program, curriculum, and participating nations were all topics of interest for the group, which was once again treated to an honest and informative discussion.

The final day of the tour began at the Canadian Delegation to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), where the group was briefed on the Organization's history and activities, as well as the unique role played by Canada. At OECD headquarters the delegation participated in two excellent presentations. The first dealt with failed and fragile states, and the difficulty associated with delivering effective aid. The amount of research that the OECD has put into better addressing this important issue quickly became clear, as did the creativity behind their policy proposals. The second presentation speculated on the economic outlook of the Eurozone and wider global economy. Though the topic had been discussed throughout the week, the speaker provided a refreshingly unorthodox view on the possible implication of a Greek default. Our final meeting was with H.E. Marc Lortie, the Canadian Ambassador to France. Mr. Lortie illuminated the power struggles and divergent visions emerging within both the French political system and the EU itself.

The 2011 NATO Tour was great success—a fortuitous combination of good company, beautiful weather, and absorbing discussion. The participants had their pressing questions answered, but came away with many new areas of inquiry as well. For this author, it was the opportunity of a lifetime.



The Honourable Bill Graham signs the guest book at the French École de Guerre

Reflections on NATO- Macedonia Relations and the OECD

By: Galena Poposka Trenevskva

It was a great privilege to be a part of the ACC tour group and to experience the inner workings of the world's largest defense alliance—NATO. The feeling for me was even stronger since my father is head of the mission from the Republic of Macedonia to NATO. While I have learned much through his work, this trip gave me the opportunity to also learn about Canada's relationship with the organization. We visited the Canadian mission and had a meeting with H.E. Ambassador Yves Brodeur. This helped me understand the role that Canada is playing in the international community, as well as the changes its military has to undergo because of budgetary cuts. Ambassador Brodeur spoke candidly about Canada's contributions to the Alliance, focusing on Ottawa's training mission in Afghanistan and its role in Libya.

During the trip I had the honour of meeting Ambassador Kolinda Grabar Kitarovic, Assistant Secretary General of Public Diplomacy—the first woman ever to be appointed as an Assistant Secretary General and a veteran proponent of European integration. I was lucky enough to get the chance to ask the Assistant Secretary General a few questions about Atlantic Councils around the world, as well as her opinion on a few issues facing NATO.

At a social event hosted by the Macedonian mission, there were diplomats and officers in attendance who provided the delegation with an opportunity to learn more about Macedonia's achievements and efforts to become full member of the Alliance. Macedonia joined the Membership Action Plan in 1999 and at the April 2008 Bucharest Summit it was recognized that the country had made committed efforts to meet the Alliance's common standards. Macedonia was a key partner in supporting the NATO stabilization operation in Kosovo, most notably by providing support to refugees fleeing from Kosovo to Macedonia. Another important area of cooperation is Macedonia's contribution to the International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan. As soon as a mutually accepted solution over the name issue is reached with Greece, Macedonia will be invited to join the Alliance as a full member.

In Paris, we had the pleasure of visiting the Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), where we received several briefings. What interested me most was the presentation by the

Economics Department which focused on Greece and its economic crisis. With a national debt bigger than the country's economy, Greece's credit rating has been downgraded to the lowest in the Eurozone, raising the possibility that the country could default on its debts. We were told how the current economic outlook in Southern Europe could be interpreted as a poor reflection of the Euro's credibility.



Barbeque reception at the home of H.E Ambassador Martin Trenevski, Macedonian mission to NATO

While my understanding of Greece's economic troubles is limited, the briefing provided me with a new appreciation of the fragilities inherent in an age of unprecedented economic and political cooperation. During this trip, I met a lot of wonderful people that were a part of the group that share my interests and they have inspired me to continue my studies after I graduate in this field.

Finally, I would like to express my gratitude to the Atlantic Council, as well as its president, Mrs Julie Lindhout, for giving me the chance to go on this trip and the opportunity to attend briefings at some of the most important organizations of our time.

Legitimacy, Libya and Canadian Challenges

By: Daniel Cunningham

The Atlantic Council of Canada's NATO tour provided me with an incredible opportunity to hear and engage with key personalities at a variety of military and political institutions. The information we received was unclassified and widely available, but the opinions and attitudes of the people who met us offered

valuable insight into the usually opaque world of massive intergovernmental organizations. Hearing from diplomats, generals, spokespersons, and researchers was an unparalleled chance to get a glimpse of the policy formation process.

While at NATO Headquarters in Brussels, we were told about the importance of legitimacy for the Alli-

ance's activities. Through our briefing I came to understand that despite the impressive capabilities and international presence of the Alliance, its leadership deeply believes in the importance of operating within the parameters of the UN Charter and UN resolutions, meaning that NATO would likely not engage in any future military operation lacking the baptism of the UN Security Council

As the tour progressed, I became acutely aware of how consensus-building benefits

relations between NATO members and non-members. Speaking with a

Ensuring a broad and comprehensive defence capability is essential to NATO's future role and to Canada's place in the Alliance

representative from the Public Diplomacy Division, we heard it stressed that the work of NATO's Partnership for Peace program was integral to receiving Arab states' acquiescence to NATO action in Libya. Similarly, the Mediterranean Dialogue was credited with fostering a meeting of minds that led to the general acceptance of Operation Unified Protector.

NATO's post-conflict role in Libya was a question that weighed heavily for me. While Operation Unified Protector now seems an unqualified success, recent experience in Iraq and Afghanistan have made political and military leaders keenly aware that the peacebuilding that comes after the end of major combat operations is just as important as what precedes it. After close to eight months of intervention, NATO partners have made it no secret that they are relieved to be concluding operations. However, due to the concerns about arms proliferation, chemical weapons, the rule of law as well as Libya's simple proximity to the Alliance's southern flank, we can expect some form of continuing NATO involvement in Libya for the near future.

The tour also visited the Canadian delegation to NATO, where we met with His Excellency Ambassador Yves Brodeur, who spoke to us about Canada's role in Libya, and the transitions which both the Canadian Forces and NATO command structure will be undergoing in the future. His talk was particularly illuminating, as it gave us a Canadian perspective on the issues raised by other NATO staff.

The head of our tour group, ACC Chairman, the Honourable Bill Graham, explained some of the complexities a country like Canada faces in reducing military spending, most notably

what equipment will be needed in future conflicts. Vehicles, planes, and weapons that were thought to be no longer necessary at the end of the Cold War suddenly became critical to success in operations in Afghanistan and Libya. Ensuring a broad and comprehensive defence capability is essential to NATO's future role and to Canada's place in the Alliance, as well as its responsibilities nationally. It is an issue that will likely occupy an important place on NATO's agenda, as many other NATO nations are cutting back spending and specializing their militaries.

I would like to thank the Atlantic Council of Canada for arranging this opportunity, and for the active engagement of our members that makes the NATO tour possible. The multitude of briefings we received on our trip were the product of hard work on the part of the Atlantic Council staff and leadership. Each component of the tour resulted in a deeper understanding of NATO and Canadian engagement with international institutions. The tour was an eye-opening experience which will continue to inform my studies and professional goals.



Daniel Cunningham and Ambassador Trenevski at NATO Headquarters. Brussels, Belgium

NATO's Evolving Role in Afghanistan

By: Kavita Bapat

The NATO Tour gave me a unique opportunity to converse and engage with political and military specialists, diplomats, and key figures in the international security realm. The topic I was most interested in discussing was NATO's endeavors in Afghanistan and the surrounding region. Much of the dialogue at NATO Headquarters focused on the importance of NATO-led security sector reform (SSR) projects in Afghanistan and the Middle East.

Before NATO's new approach, SSR did not include important elements such as the literacy of security officials and training in how to shoot and clear weapons. The new approach also shows the importance of embedded partnering, wherein ISAF personnel work within Afghan National Army (ANA) and Afghan National Police (ANP) units on a day-to-day basis. In addition to building up leadership capacity within the Afghan security sector, NATO's long-term initiatives include the development of the state's educational and judicial services.

Another Afghanistan-centric briefing outlined the importance of NATO's broadened role that now extends beyond simple territorial defence and security, stress-

ing the importance of nesting the military campaign within a civilian framework. The fundamental objective for NATO is to increase the ca-



Kavita Bapat at the OECD. Paris, France

capacity of the ANA and ANP to deal with internal threats. There is optimism regarding the increasing independence of the Afghan security sector. While the September attack on the US Embassy in Kabul revealed certain state weaknesses, it was claimed the impact would have been far more severe a year ago, as this time Afghan security forces were able to respond to the crisis with minimal aid from the foreign troops.

With regard to the regional dimension of the security issues, NATO's role is mainly political. The Alliance will continue the challenging task of working with Pakistan as per the official Tripartite Agreement—a framework for public diplomacy and political consultations that links Kabul, Islamabad and NATO. Despite mutual suspicions, there has recently been an increased understanding from Pakistani officials that the country can only gain from cooperation in Afghanistan. It was also stressed that official NATO policy is to remain engaged in the region for the long-term.

The delegation was informed that after 2014, NATO will focus more on

reconstruction and development projects. Rather than try to turn the military into a development agency, NATO's objective is to make ISAF forces understand the environment in which they are operating and foster more forward-looking military thinking. Even now, the Alliance's main focus has been aiding institutional areas that civil society cannot readily reach. Various NATO officials commented that the civil focus in Afghanistan will be a topic of paramount importance at the upcoming May 2012 NATO Summit in Chicago.

The perspectives and insight given by NATO officials highlighted important foreign policy concerns in Afghanistan and the South Asian region with great depth and analysis. I feel privileged to have participated in the NATO Tour, an excursion which not only allowed me to learn more about NATO and its activities, but also enabled me to further develop my experience and interest in foreign policy issues on an international scale.



Galena, James, and Daniel take over the presidency of the OECD

The Euro-Zone Crisis and its Effect on NATO

By: Colin Simkus

The Atlantic Council of Canada's 2011 delegation to Brussels and Paris was a phenomenal experience for me, and I am grateful to have had the support from the ACC in order to attend. I was most impressed and surprised by the degree of factors that impact NATO's operational and strategic outlook. For instance, in this time of austerity, more pressure than ever before is being placed on NATO to reduce its overall cost-profile. From hearing the presentations, I am confident that NATO has a plan to reduce unnecessary costs, and it was refreshing to see how the Alliance is taking initiative to look at its cost-profile holistically, and reduce its "tooth to tail structure." The importance of budgets and financing, even for something as seemingly detached as national and international security, is something I will not soon forget. The impact of financial realities is why I am also happy that we also got an opportunity to speak to people from the economic side of affairs, and to discuss the current economic turbidity which is impacting a number of Alliance members.

The economic events currently impacting Europe stem from a significant increase in public debt products issued by various European countries, such as Greece, Portugal, Ireland, and Italy, in order to finance both social services and economic expansion. However, as a number of countries fell into recession, corporate profits decreased, unemployment rose and government revenues fell. Altogether, we saw that the European Commission, and the

European Central Bank (EBC), and the IMF) – together known as "the Troika" – were working together to deal with the debt-servicing issue. A number of countries have taken strong steps, in conjunction with the Troika, to make sensible budget cuts, but they were still left with very sizable and expensive debts, and they currently have a reduced ability to repay these debts. This is because, as the global credit crisis unfolded, and as the economic condition in these particularly indebted economies looked more precarious, the risk premiums that lenders sought increased. Thus it became more and more expensive for these states to either re-finance or service their debt at favourable interest rates.

Because many European banks, particularly in France and Germany hold large amounts of the sovereign debt issued by the more heavily indebted countries, there is fear of a contagion effect if the fiscal solidity of those banks is called into question. While we were in Europe, EU leaders were working to rally political support behind an enhanced *European Financial Stability Facility* (EFSF), which is meant to help the indebted sovereign countries re-finance themselves more easily. As events continue to unfold, a broad consensus will likely involve some debt write-downs, some further austerity measures, some revenue-capture initiatives, and some inter-member financial support. The hope is that these measures will be met with success, thereby allowing the indebted countries to enhance their strategic investments in collective security for the future, alongside other NATO members.

The importance of budgets and financing, even for something as seemingly detached as national and international security, is something I will not soon forget.

Themes Explored on Tour

By: James M. Bridger

Throughout the NATO tour, there were several key issues that were raised time and again. The New Strategic Concept, EU-NATO relations, and the need to expand global partnerships factored into nearly every briefing. A thematic organization of these concepts highlights how much we learned on the tour and how interconnected the institutions of global governance have become.

New Strategic Concept

The first briefing we received addressed NATO's New Strategic Concept (NSC): why it was needed, what it entailed, and how it has been implemented in practice. The world was a very different place when the Alliance's previous strategic concept was released in 1999. The Cold War had been won without a direct confrontation, but the violent collapse of Yugoslavia required NATO to engage in its first military intervention. The 1999 Strategic Concept was thus notably Balkan centric, more focused on the European doorstep than developments occurring across the globe.

The terrorist attacks of 9/11, so the mantra goes, changed everything.



The 2011 Tour Group at the Canadian delegation to the OECD

NATO's collective defence principle, Article Five of the Washington Treaty, was evoked for the first time. Not against Russia, as it had been envisioned, but against a remote terrorist-harboring state in Central Asia. The Alliance's role had gone global.

As we were told during our first Public Diplomacy meeting, the NSC was needed to provide NATO with the tools required to address the 21st century's myriad security challenges. The 2010 document also took into account the changing composition of the Alliance, which had enlarged from 16 members in 1999 to 28 states today. While enlargement has undoubtedly strengthened NATO, it has also made consensus-based decision making more difficult. We were reminded that Estonia and Latvia view the Russian spectre in a much different fashion than France or Germany. Though collective defence remains the Alliance's top priority, its conception of member state security has shifted dramatically in the last decade.

The Danger of Failed and Failing States

It has now been recognized that weak states threaten not only their own people, but the wider region as well. Organized crime, drug trafficking, and terrorist groups are all able to flourish in the absence of central authority. In the case of Somalia, instability has been projected thousands of kilometers out to sea, crippling local economies and hampering global trade.

Reflecting the seriousness of this challenge, NATO's counter-piracy mission—Operation Ocean Shield—



Combating Somali Piracy: High-tech tools for an ancient problem

was discussed at length by several speakers. The Public Diplomacy Division noted that NATO, and other maritime forces, are fighting only the symptoms of a failed state, not its root causes. While building up Somalia's indigenous maritime security capacity is a recognized solution, the Canadian Delegation to the Alliance lamented that the plan suffers from a lack of political will and resources, given NATO's more pressing commitments. The EU's attaché to SHAPE similarly noted that the European Union—also engaged in counter-piracy—has not yet agreed on a long-term comprehensive plan to improve regional maritime security.

The difficulty faced in assisting failing states was further illuminated during our briefing at the OECD. It was noted that 30% of all official development assistance goes to fragile states, but that much of this is ineffective. The Organization's proposals call for funneling aid through government institutions—as opposed to NGOs—so that local capacity can be developed. It was noted, however, that corruption and a lack of transparency can impede this approach. When no central

government exists, as is the case in Somalia, the international community needs a new set of aid-delivery tools, a challenge that NATO and the EU continue to struggle with.

Nuclear Proliferation

Nuclear deterrence was one of NATO's founding pillars, but the changing nuclear environment has now sown seeds of discord within the Alliance. The NSC concept calls for NATO to "seek its security at the lowest possible level of forces," but we were told frankly that as long as there are nuclear weapons, the Alliance will continue to maintain a massive nuclear deterrent. Certain member states—such as Denmark, the Netherlands, Germany, and Belgium—are vocally committed to the idea of a nuke free world, calling for the weapons to be removed from European soil, putting them at odds with NATO's nuclear members, the US, UK, and France. These divisions, it was argued, undermine the Alliance's burden of risk sharing that existed during the Cold War.

The whole notion of conventional deterrence has been challenged by the rise of 'rogue' aspiring nuclear powers such as Iran and North Korea. If nuclear materials slip from these countries to non-state actors, then the once-deterring threat of massive retaliation becomes severely weakened. NATO's response has been to construct a missile shield, but this too has been fraught with controversy. From a Canadian perspective, there is little strategic gain in funding a project that will protect European members only. Though the Alliance claims that the proposed missile shield is directed against states like Iran, it continues to be a major thorn in NATO-Russian relations.

Cyber Warfare

Threats to the prosperity the world derives from the 'global commons' was a recurring theme espoused by NATO officials. Just as Somali pirates have disrupted integral sea lanes, cyber criminals—whether they be independent or state-backed—have maliciously attacked another avenue of exchange that had previously been taken for granted. The commonly referenced watershed moment for cyber warfare was the 2007 attack launched against Estonia. The electronic strikes crippled the country's news services, banking system, and government web services. Thankfully, Estonia's hospital system and power grid were not attacked, but the possibility remains that cyber warfare may cost real lives.

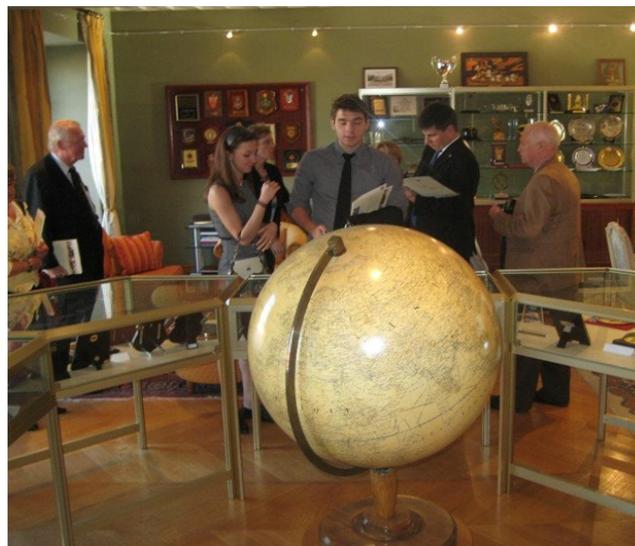
Cyber Security expert Richard Clarke paints a grim picture, noting that "information can be stolen and instructions can be given that could: move money, spill oil, vent gas, blow up generators, derail trains, crash airplanes, send a platoon into an ambush or cause a missile to detonate in the wrong place. Financial systems could collapse, supply chains could be halted, satellites could spin out of orbit and airlines could be grounded."

A great difficulty faced in combating cyber attacks, we were told at NATO headquarters, is determining their true origin. In the Estonian case, it was known that the attacks were launched from Russian territory, but no hard evidence could be found

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NATO officials. Just as Somali pirates have disrupted integral sea

linking it back to Moscow. Partly due to this lack of a "smoking gun," NATO has decided not to develop its own offensive cyber warfare capabilities. The Alliance does not want to risk the escalation from cyber to conventional war, an opinion that was shared by the Canadian Delegation. It was recently revealed that the US considered using cyber attacks to disable Libya's air defence systems, but was worried about the precedent it would set for cyber warfare-capable states such as Russia and China. While an offensive strategy is currently off the table, it was noted that NATO needs to develop a unified command and control policy to better protect its members from cyber incursions.



Treasure room of the French École de Guerre

NATO-EU Relations

Sharing 21 member states, there is much common ground between NATO and the EU in regards to security, democratization, and human rights. It was noted by the Canadian Delegation to the EU, however, that the two organizations also have different interests, objectives and priorities. Common members are thus forced to divide limited resources between the two. In order to increase efficiency and spheres of responsibility, officials from both NATO and EU stressed the need to

avoid overlap while working in the same theatre.

It was only in 2009 that the EU moved towards becoming a unified foreign policy and security actor, with the establishment of the EU External Action Service (EEAS). While the project still remains in its infancy, the European Union has been involved in several small peace-keeping missions in Africa, police training in the Balkans and Afghanistan, and counter-piracy patrols off the Horn of Africa. Officials on both side of the divide were generally optimistic about EU-NATO cooperation, though it was noted that non-common members—namely Turkey and Cyprus—have blocked closer integration at several turns.

The issue was raised during the SHAPE briefings that it may be an inefficient use of resources for both NATO and the EU to maintain their own separate counter-piracy flotillas off the Horn of Africa—operations Ocean Shield and Atalanta respectively. While member state composition overlaps, it was noted by the EU Cell at SHAPE that certain countries “feel more comfortable” participating in either the NATO or EU context.



History comes alive as Gen (Ret'd) George Petrolekas explains Wellington's strategy at the Battle of Waterloo

Representatives from both parties stated they were content with the current level of cooperation. In private however, a French naval officer from NATO expressed bewilderment about the duplicate command structures of Ocean Shield and Atalanta.

Canada's relationship with the EU was discussed at length during the meeting with Ottawa's Delegation to the Union. While Canada and the EU share a similar global outlook, it was noted that both parties risk taking their relationship for granted. The productive partnership continues to move forward through the negotiation of an ambitious free trade agreement and classified information sharing treaty. There are however, several points of irritation between Canada and the EU, most notably European opposition to Canadian seal products, oil sands development, and territorial claims to the North West Passage.

NATO Partnership Expansion

A final issue of great importance was the expansion of NATO's global partnerships through the Mediterranean Dialogue, Istanbul Cooperative Initiative and Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council. These programs have brought the Alliance into contact with a diverse array of actors. Individually tailored strategies of engagement are required, the Public Diplomacy Division informed us, as relations with Finland and Turkmenistan, for example, cannot be managed in the same way.

Over the past year, NATO's relations with the



Partnership in action: French and Qatari flight crews prepare a Mirage jet for Libyan operations

Arab world have been at the forefront of the Alliance's agenda. An officer from the Political Affairs and Security Policy Division explained that the Alliance and its intentions were misperceived by many in the Middle East and that recent efforts had been focused on promoting better mutual understanding. This strategy now appears to be bearing fruit. Both Morocco and Israel participated in Operation Active Endeavor—NATO's counter-terrorism naval patrol of the Mediterranean—while Qatar, the UAE, and Jordan all contributed to Operation Unified Protector in Libya. Aside from improving interoperability with its Middle Eastern and Mediterranean partners, NATO has also sought to push for greater military transparency in the region and democratic control of the armed forces.

The Alliance's relationship with Moscow, managed through the NATO-Russia Council, has been marked by both cooperation and confrontation. A policy officer specializing in Russian relations informed us that the two parties had been working together in Afghanistan to open up transport routes, engage in counter-narcotics operations and supply helicopters to the ANA. Moscow has also worked alongside NATO during



Overlooking SHAPE (cameras were not allowed inside)

Mediterranean and East African naval patrols. The biggest point of contention between the Alliance and Russia is missile defence. Moscow has continuously objected to the stationing of interceptor missiles in the Czech Republic and Poland, stating that it wants its own hand in Eastern European missile defence—a proposal NATO's Baltic members refuse to accept. The Alliance is trying to explain that the system is designed to protect members from rogue states and is not directed against Russia; regardless, it does not appear that the two sides will see eye to eye for the foreseeable future. Moscow's diplomatic and military support of Georgia's break-away republics, South Ossetia and Abkhazia, also continues to be a thorn in NATO-Russia Relations.

Common Themes in NATO's Contemporary Challenges

From the shores of Somalia to internet cafes in Shanghai, it is clear the majority of chal-

enges faced by NATO are now "out of area" threats. Given

that the Alliance's *raison d'être* was North Atlantic territorial defence, it has been difficult to persuade the populations of member states that global issues should be NATO is-

... the charge that NATO is becoming a "two tier alliance" has been oft spoken.

to commit NATO troops is made, the force generation process is completely voluntary. National troops come with their own caveats and restrictions, making it difficult to arrive at common rules of engagement—a problem of ISAF that was discussed at SHAPE.

The need to cut costs in an age of fiscal austerity looms over every aspect of NATO operations. We were told during the first briefing that a current priority is cutting down the size of the command structure by reducing the Alliance's "tooth to tail ratio"—the number of support staff required for each policy maker. An effort is also being made to bridge the civilian-military divide in order to avoid unnecessary overlap. A new headquarters that physically brings these two sides together is part of this plan.

Several officials spoke about the need for "smart defence," a buzz term that calls for greater cooperation, specialization and prioritization among members' military procurement. We were told how smaller states have given up full defensive capabilities in favour of a more specialized role within the Alliance. Denmark, for example, no

longer fields submarines, while the Baltic states are retiring their fighter jets. These types of reductions, we were told, involve member states giving up a degree of their defensive sovereignty over certain areas—a strategy which requires great faith and trust in NATO's protective shield. The Alliance has also sought to engage in multinational equipment procurement programs to reduce costs. This approach has been problematic in the past however: NATO was tasked with producing 110 variants of the NH90 Helicopter in order to meet member state specifications, making the program impossibly complex.

With many member states falling short of the Alliance's two percent goal for defense spending, attaching restrictive caveats to their forces' use, and looking to slash their defence budgets further, the charge that NATO is becoming a "two tier alliance" has been oft spoken. While one got a sense of the uncertainty regarding NATO's future role and capabilities, we were reminded that the Alliance had always in effect been "two tier"—the US has consistently done the heavy lifting, France and the UK play an important secondary role, while the remaining nations contribute to lesser degrees. The issue of military spending nevertheless remains of paramount importance. The Canadian Delegation to NATO noted that it will be one of the main areas of focus at the 2012 Chicago Summit.

The Atlantic Council of Canada would like to thank all participants and facilitating organizations of the 2011 NATO Tour.

Those interested in the 2012 Tour are advised to monitor atlantic-council.ca for itinerary updates.