



PARLIAMENT
OF AUSTRALIA

Australian Parliamentary Delegation

NATO Parliamentary Assembly
6-9 October 2023

REPORT | March 2025



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Members of the Delegation

Leader of the Delegation

- Luke Gosling OAM MP

Delegates

- Senator the Hon David Fawcett

Officials

- Joel Bateman, Delegation secretary

Introduction

The 2023 session of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly took place in Copenhagen, Denmark, from 6 to 9 October 2023. Over 240 delegates attended, from the 31 NATO Alliance nations and 20 further partner countries, including Australia. As with the preceding NATO PA session, support for Ukraine in responding to Russia's invasion was a key theme. However, the 7 October Hamas terrorist attack on Israel, which took place on the first full day of the session, was also responded to, including through an immediate resolution:

We are shocked by the appalling news reaching us from Israel.

We strongly condemn the attacks and the inconceivable atrocities against the Israeli people.

This is a new level of massive, terrorist and indiscriminate violence against Israel.

Our thoughts are with the innocent victims.

NATO PA condemns this attack and stands with Israel. Israel has the full solidarity of all NATO PA delegations.

Israel's right under international law to defend itself is unquestionable.¹

Throughout the Assembly, most speakers – regardless of their presentation's topic – expressed their strong support for Israel and highlighted Israel's right to defend itself.

Overall, the session adopted six resolutions discussed in committee meetings and adopted by the Plenary Session.

The NATO PA is structured around meetings of five committees, each of which features presentations and reports on a range of topics. Reports, including recommendations, are adopted in each and then by the plenary session on the final day. NATO PA's five committees are:

- Committee on Democracy and Security
- Defence and Security Committee
- Economics and Security Committee
- Political Committee
- Science and Technology Committee

¹ NATO PA Bureau statement on today's attacks against Israel, 7 October 2023.

Members of the Australian delegation attended meetings of all five committees at different times. Committee meetings are held concurrently, meaning that the delegation was not able to attend all sessions.

Another benefit of NATO PA sessions is the opportunity for delegates to meet with parliamentarians from other countries. The Australian delegation met informally with members of many other countries and had a formal meeting with Ukrainian counterparts.

Below is a summary of the sessions attended by members of the Australian delegation, with a focus on topics and themes most relevant to Australia and its region, grouped by committee.



Members of the delegation with Australia's Ambassador to Denmark, Kerin Ayyalaraju

Committee on Democracy and Security

Food Security and Conflict: Harvesting resilience in the face of a global crisis, Julie Dzerowicz

Russia's invasion of Ukraine has sparked a food crisis in Ukraine, but it has had global ramifications – global food security has been undermined, and the price of wheat and corn has risen dramatically since the invasion. Access to food is a right under international law, and democratic resilience depends on food security. Food insecurity could cause mass migration to Europe from Northern Africa. Russia has not only caused this crisis, but they have actively sought to spread misinformation about it – blaming the current global food insecurity on sanctions against Russia.

On top of the specific insecurity caused by Russia's invasion of Ukraine, longer-term impacts of climate change will continue to add insecurity to food production and distribution. As with all long-term trends, it is important to recognize that the impacts of this will not be spread equally and some groups will be hit harder than others. The gender impacts in particular need to be acknowledged.

Bolstering Human Security in the face of the Climate Change Crisis, Dan Jørgensen

With the energy transition underway, it is important to consider the human impacts. People affected by job losses need to be included in planning for their futures. Climate change will also create environmental refugees – particularly when people feel their children's futures are compromised, they will act and move. Developing countries face even more difficult futures because of climate impacts than developed countries will, and global solutions will need to be found to these problems. One option is taxing fossil fuel use in shipping at higher levels – an especially relevant question for Denmark, home to the biggest shipping company in the world.

In Africa, as in Russia, people are joining armies because of the pay (higher than they would make elsewhere) and regular food. People in Africa need to be helped where they are – people need to be enabled to stay in their home areas, while also facilitating education of their children. Yet currently global funding for education is decreasing. The private sector needs to get involved in funding things like education in developing countries, since it forms part of the larger adaptation and resilience that will be necessary to respond to climate change's impacts.

Panel discussion: Bolstering National and Collective Resilience to the Disinformation Threat

1. The Russian War on Truth: Defending Allied and Partner Democracies
Against the Kremlin's Disinformation Campaigns, Rodrigue Demeuse

Russia's disinformation has spread effectively because multiple techniques have worked in combination, including repetition, support of other totalitarian regimes, and the speed with which it has been propagated, meaning the information space has been occupied quickly by Russia's version of events.

The purpose of this disinformation is not to make people change their minds, but to sow distrust in the very idea of any objective truth. In doing so, this undermines the possibility of democracy as a whole.

Yet despite Russia's successful use of disinformation, it erred at the start of the invasion by sending the message, including to its own citizens, that its invasion of Ukraine was not a war – this allowed Ukraine to establish the narrative around the world.

2. Disinformation and Emerging Technologies, Flemming Splidsboel Hansen

Disinformation is information known to be false by the people spreading it. The response to disinformation will be 'a learning race', since defensive actors will always be a step behind those distributing disinformation. With the rise in Artificial Intelligence capacity, this will increasingly be a battle between machines, and this calls for stronger resilience across the NATO alliance, and emphasises the critical importance of sharing lessons learned. Countering disinformation is, and will remain, an ongoing effort.

Discussion topics in response to these two presentations included the business incentive for social media companies to encourage extremes and reactions; and whether disinformation should be defined at a democratic level.

Defence and Security Committee

Strengthening stability and security in the Black Sea region following Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine, Alec Shelbrook

The report and subsequent resolution highlighted the significance of Russia's invasion of Ukraine and regions of Georgia, which pose a direct threat to peace and stability in the region. The Black Sea region is increasingly recognised as strategically significant,

and the resolution calls for NATO to develop a Black Sea Strategy and work closely with countries in the region on their national-level strategies.

Political Committee

The Russian War on Ukraine – A View from the Frontline, Maksym Suprun

Maksym Suprun, Commander of Ukraine's 66th Mechanised Brigade, outlined the situation on the frontline. He focused on Russia's willingness to continue the conflict, including high levels of recruitment (thousands each month, many of whom are joining because of the high pay being offered) and Russia's formidable resources of weaponry and vehicles. He emphasised the importance of international support for Ukraine against their sophisticated opponents. Peace negotiations will be of no interest to Russia at this time, and have limited support given Russia's brutal conduct of this war and history of aggression to its neighbours. However, morale within Russia's troops is not high as the war has lasted longer than expected. Yet the war is of more consequence to Ukraine than to Russia – it poses an existential threat to Ukraine.

The Long Road to Ukrainian Victory – The Return of War Between Industrialised Nations, Gustav C. Gressel

Putin's theory of victory has three elements: a long war of attrition, eroding the West's support of Ukraine and eroding Ukraine's economy to make it dependent on the West. Each of these works in combination with the others to magnify the impacts, and battlefield conditions favour the attrition approach.

Ukraine's strategy, by contrast, is based on the belief that Crimea is the centre of gravity of Russia's imperial ambitions, and therefore they need to cut the land corridor from Russia to Crimea. If Crimea becomes unsustainable for Russia, Putin may negotiate. However, it is uncertain if he ever will negotiate, and Ukraine also faces the question of whether the West's support will continue for long enough.

While Ukraine relies on support from the West, Russia likewise needs that of China – without China's financial, technological and industrial support, Russia's war effort would collapse. China's aim is to see the West dismantle itself through extended support of Ukraine.

The Future of NATO's Open Door Policy, Audronius Azubalis

Russia's invasion of Ukraine has prompted consideration of NATO membership as more countries recognise the benefits of joining the Alliance. The addition of further

countries to NATO – including Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Sweden and Ukraine – would increase the stability NATO has brought to Europe. NATO membership for Ukraine, in particular, would ensure that the European security framework remains strong. To enable Ukraine’s membership, NATO should work closely with the country to ensure reform objectives are met. Similarly, Georgia needs to continue its own reforms, including to avoid ‘democratic backsliding’ and showing greater support for Ukraine.

Russia, China and the Global South, Rachel Rizzo

The two dominant factors in the Global South are India and China, and they will each play a vital role in addressing climate change and the energy transition and responding to the challenges of migration. Energy and food security are particularly pronounced in the Global South and in many countries air quality is also a significant issue. India is at a tipping point – the most populous nation on earth, with a growing economy (including providing pharmaceuticals to around 200 countries). China is similarly dominant (and growing) but has been more active than India in trying to shape the Global South, and the international environment more generally. China’s approach, and its contrast to that of the West, can be seen in the saying amongst other countries in China’s region: ‘when China visits, we get a hospital. When the West visits, we get a lecture’. China’s interest is in building a multi-polar world, with themselves dominant amongst developing countries. NATO countries will need to focus on building long-term relationships with Global South countries if they want to counter China’s influence.

In discussion, delegation lead Luke Gosling MP reiterated Australia’s close ties with NATO, particularly in light of the visit from two NATO committees in November.

Science and Technology Committee

Military Technology and Innovation in a Danish Perspective, Steen Søndergaard

The technology race brings challenges, including the prospect of an adversary that is much more technologically advanced than the NATO Alliance. Furthermore, each new technology brings with it new problems – for example, the rise of Artificial Intelligence has been matched by Counter-AI technologies. To improve technological innovation,

governments, academia and industry need to work together. Historically, Danish academics have not worked closely with industry on defence-based technology, but the recent establishment of the National Defence Technology Centre might change this.

The military needs to develop its appetite and culture surrounding technology, but also greater exploration of financing approaches to technological innovation is important.

Harnessing the AI Genie – The challenge of balancing risks and opportunities of military AI systems in national governance frameworks, Iben Yde

With the rise in sophistication of Artificial Intelligence, it is crucial to set up the right framework for its use in military applications. AI is like a genie – it is inherently neither good nor bad: there is huge potential for beneficial uses of AI, but also significant risks if not used properly. Like a genie, once it's out, you can't get it back into the bottle – and AI is already out of its bottle.

Advantages of responsible use of AI in military applications include: a wide range of potential advantages, including humanitarian; taking care of the many low-risk tasks, allowing greater human focus on higher-risk areas; the capacity for responsible governance in military settings is high; and AI can make better use of the high-cost military hardware that countries buy, all of which produce a huge amount of data. However, to make the most of these advantages, countries will have to adopt a lifecycle approach to technology and be prepared to experiment and fail fast. Parliaments and governments will need to adopt principles-based, rather than specific, approaches to the regulation of technology.

Protecting Critical Maritime Infrastructure: The role of technology, Njall Trausti Fridbertsson

Maritime infrastructure, such as that facilitating communications or transporting energy, is increasingly important but this importance has been under-recognised. Critical maritime infrastructure includes ports and navigation channels, as well as undersea infrastructure such as pipes and cables. This infrastructure is particularly vulnerable, to both human attack and natural disasters, increasingly likely because of the effects of climate change. Additional complexity is added by the fact that much critical marine infrastructure is owned or maintained by the private sector. Russia, experts identify, is capable of high-level undersea operations and therefore poses a security concern to NATO countries and other Western allies. However, maritime trade

remains vital for almost every country, NATO allies or opponents, and so it remains a common interest for trade routes to remain secure.

New and developing technologies including sensors and autonomous systems will become increasingly important in safeguarding maritime infrastructure. Importantly, many of these technologies are cost-effective and could be implemented by countries without significant maritime capabilities.

The Impact of Quantum Technology on Security, Jan W. Thomson

Quantum technology harnesses the power of the micro world – in particular, where a particle can be in two places at the same time. It is an enabling technology, rather than a technology itself, which will be useful in a range of defence and security applications. Examples of uses for quantum technology include accurate timekeeping, gravitational detectors (which can see what's underground without disturbing the surface), facilitating unhackable communications and cracking codes. In 2022, global investment in quantum technology was around \$30 billion (USD), over half of which was spent by China. NATO countries are not necessarily behind China in quantum technology development, but will need to broaden their interests and 'bet on many horses'.

Novel Materials and Additive Manufacturing, Joe Weingarten on behalf of Sven Clement

Novel Materials are manufactured using nanotechnology or synthetic biology. Additive Manufacturing, also known as 3-D printing, involves constructing an object from digital models. NATO has identified both as priority technology areas for their potential impact on security and military technology development. In particular, the development of Novel Materials may be a way for the Alliance to counter China's dominance in the production of rare earths and critical minerals. Similarly, Additive Manufacturing could fundamentally alter the approach to weapon production, transportation and storage during times of war.

Economics and Security Committee

Rebuilding Transatlantic Economic Relations and Resilience, Faik Oztrak

There is tension between globalisation and a recent focus on national security, along with growing recognition of the impact on local communities on completely open international markets. A range of issues, including climate change and energy considerations, has forced nations to reassess their approach to international relationships. On top of this, recent aggression from Russia and China's interest in

expanding its influence have raised questions about the international economic order – in particular, through the supply chain crisis following the COVID-19 pandemic.

Plenary session

Address by Michal Szczerba, President of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly

NATO must defend again and again Ukraine's right to self-defence and self-determination. Sanctions must be upheld against Russia, and all crimes must be punished – Russia must be held accountable for its illegal actions.

Mr Szczerba argued for the integration of Ukraine into NATO and the European Union, and welcomed the newest member of NATO – Finland, with Sweden to join soon.

Address by His Excellency Mr Søren Gade, Speaker of the Folketing

Mr Gade welcomed all delegates to Denmark, and emphasised the NATO is the cornerstone of Denmark's defence policies and approach.

Address by Her Excellency Mette Frederiksen, Prime Minister of Denmark

Putin was expecting NATO and other allies to express support for Ukraine after he launched Russia's war, but did not expect such support for Ukraine in practical and military terms. NATO must prepare for the wars of the future, which may not look like those of the past. With rising global tensions, it is important to build relationships across countries – we need all the friends we can get. NATO was too naïve about Russia for too long, and cannot do the same regarding China.

Address by Volodymyr Zelenskyy, President of Ukraine

The only thing that can produce peace is a rules-based international order, and NATO is an important part of that framework. Mr Zelenskyy expressed Ukraine's support for Israel, and drew parallels between the terrorism in Israel and Russia's actions in and towards Ukraine. He emphasised again that 'we must bring to justice all terrorists and all who support them'.

Address by His Excellency Ambassador Mircea Geoana, Deputy Secretary General of NATO

Mr Geoana argued that 'the rightful place of Ukraine is as a full member of this Alliance', and highlighted NATO's position that Russia's war is not just against Ukraine, but against the entire rules-based international order. He also argued for the building

of stronger relationships in the Indo-Pacific Region to help counter threats in that part of the world.

Address by Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya, Leader of Belarusian democratic forces and recipient of the Women in Peace and Security Award for 2023

Ms Tsikhanouskaya, a candidate in Belarus's disputed 2020 presidential election, spoke about her work with political prisoners in Belarus. While the formally declared winner of that election has supported Russia in its invasion of Ukraine, Ms Tsikhanouskaya has supported Ukraine and the West's involvement, arguing that Belarus should stand against Russia.

Meeting with Ukrainian delegation

The delegation had the opportunity to meet with members of the Ukrainian delegation, where they expressed Australia's ongoing support of the Ukrainian response to Russia's invasion, and noted the connection formed through Ukrainian diaspora in Australia. In return, Ukrainian delegates thanked Australia for its military and financial aid and extended an invitation for Australian parliamentarians to visit Ukraine to get a better understanding of the current situation.

The meeting discussed Ukraine's specific needs, noting Australia's contribution of Bushmasters. Other needs include drones and counter-drones and thermal vision technologies. The Ukrainian group expressed interest in the retired fleet of MRH helicopters for casualty evacuation.

Complete program for NATO Parliamentary Assembly, Copenhagen, 6-9 October 2023

Committee on Democracy and Security

Opening remarks by Ante BACIC (HR), Acting Chairperson of the Committee on Democracy and Security

Consideration of the Revised Draft Special Report Food Security and Conflict: Harvesting Resilience in the Face of a Global Crisis

Bolstering Human Security in the Face of the Climate Change Crisis by Dan JØRGENSEN, Minister for Development Cooperation and Minister for Global Climate Policy

The Importance of Demining in Humanitarian and Development Assistance by Charlotte SLENTE, Secretary General of the Danish Refugee Council

Consideration of the Revised Draft Report of the Sub-Committee on Resilience and Civil Security Fighting Impunity for Violations of International Law in Russia's Renewed Invasion of Ukraine

Consideration of the Revised Draft Report The Russian War on Truth: Defending Allied and Partner Democracies Against the Kremlin's Disinformation Campaigns

Disinformation and Emerging Technologies by Dr Flemming Splidsboel HANSEN, Senior Researcher at the Danish Institute for International Studies

Consideration of amendments and vote on the Draft Resolution [159 CDS 23 E]
Protecting Allied and Partner Democracies Against Disinformation

Defence and Security Committee

Opening remarks by Alec SHEL BROOKE (UK), Chairperson of the Defence and Security Committee

Denmark's Contribution to NATO's Revised Deterrence and Defence Posture by Troels Lund POULSEN, Minister of Defence of Denmark

The Trajectory of Russia's War of Aggression Against Ukraine by Gustav GRESSEL, Senior Policy Fellow, European Council on Foreign Relations (ECFR)

Russia and the Evolving Missile Threat to Allied Security by Douglas BARRIE, Senior Fellow for Military Aerospace, International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS)

Consideration of the Draft Special Report Ukraine's Fight for Freedom & Allied and Global Response to Russia's War

Consideration of the Draft General Report Ensuring an Allied Defence Industrial Base for NATO's New Deterrence and Defence Baseline

Consideration of the Draft Report Troubled Waters: How Russia's War in Ukraine Changes Black Sea Security

Consideration of the Draft Report Sea Change: The Rapid Evolution of Baltic Sea Security After Russia's Invasion of Ukraine

Arctic Security and the Role of Denmark by Kristian Sjøby KRISTENSEN, Head of Centre and Senior Researcher, Department of Political Science, University of Copenhagen

Political and Security Challenges in the Belgrade-Pristina Dialogue by Marina VULOVIĆ, Associate Researcher, German Institute for International and Security Affairs (SWP)

Consideration of the Draft Resolution Implementing NATO's New Deterrence and Defence Baseline

Consideration of the Draft Resolution Strengthening Stability and Security in the Black Sea Region Following Russia's Full-Scale Invasion of Ukraine

Economics and Security Committee

Opening remarks by Philippe FOLLIO (France), ESC Chairperson

The State of Russia's Wartime Economy and the Impact of Sanctions by Janis KLUGE,
Deputy Head of Research Division, German Institute for International and Security
Affairs (SWP)

Consideration of the Draft General Report Russia's War on Ukraine and Transatlantic
Energy Security Challenges

The Russian War Against Ukraine: A View from the Frontline by Maksym SUPRUN

Consideration of the draft Report of the Sub-Committee on Transatlantic Economic
Relations Rebuilding Transatlantic Economic Relations and Resilience

Consideration of the draft Report of the Sub-Committee on Transition and
Development Towards the Reconstruction of Ukraine

Consideration of the draft resolution Towards the Reconstruction of Ukraine

Political Committee

Opening remarks by Brendan Francis BOYLE (United States), Chairperson of the Political Committee

The Danish Perspective on Key Security Challenges in the Euro-Atlantic Area and Beyond, Lisbet ZILMER-JOHNS, State Secretary for Foreign Policy, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark

NATO Priorities post-Vilnius Summit, Ruben-Erik DIAZ-PLAJA, Senior Policy Adviser, Policy Planning Unit, Office of the Secretary General, NATO

The Russian War Against Ukraine: A View from the Frontline, Maksym Suprun, Commander of the 66th Mechanised Brigade (2022-2023), Ukrainian Armed Forces

The Long Road to Ukrainian Victory – the Return of War between Industrial Nations and its Lessons, Gustav GRESSEL, Senior Policy Fellow, European Council on Foreign Relations (ECFR)

Consideration of the Revised Draft Report of the Sub-Committee on NATO Partnerships The Future of NATO's Open Door Policy

Consideration of the Draft Report of the Sub-Committee on Transatlantic Relations China's Global Role in the Wake of Russia's War against Ukraine

Consideration of the Revised Draft General Report Russia's War against Ukraine: Strategic Imperatives for NATO

Russia, China, and the Global South, Rachel RIZZO, Non-resident Senior Fellow, Europe Centre, Atlantic Council

Consideration of the Draft Resolution Delivering on the Vilnius Summit Decisions: Accelerating NATO Adaptation, and Supporting Ukraine

Science and Technology Committee

Opening remarks by Agnes VADAI (Hungary), Chairperson of the Science and Technology Committee

Military Technology and Innovation: A Danish Perspective by Steen SØNDERGAARD, Director of Defence Research Centre, Danish Ministry of Defence Acquisition and Logistics Organization

Harnessing the Military AI Genie: The Challenge of Balancing Risks and Opportunities of Military AI-Systems in National Governance Frameworks by Iben YDE, Assistant Professor, Head of Centre for International and Operational Law, Royal Danish Defence College

Consideration of the Draft General Report Protecting Critical Maritime Infrastructure – The Role of Technology

The Impact of Quantum Technology on Security by Jan Westenkær THOMSEN, Chief Operation Officer, NNF Quantum Computing Programme (NQCP), Quantum Coordinator, Niels Bohr Institute, University of Copenhagen

Consideration of the Draft Special Report on Novel Materials and Additive Manufacturing

Consideration of the Draft Report of the Sub-Committee on Technology Trends and Security Developing Future Capabilities: Robotics and Autonomous systems

Sanitising the Battlefield? The Mirage of Robotic Warfare by Andreas GRAAE, Professor, Royal Danish Defence College, FAK institute for Military Technology

A Practitioner's Viewpoint on Technological Innovation and Adaptability by Rune Pilgaard NIELSEN, Military Analyst, Department of Military Technology, Royal Danish Defence College

Consideration of the Draft Resolution Enhancing the Protection of Allied Critical Maritime Infrastructure

Plenary session

Address by Michał Szczerba, President of NATO Parliamentary Assembly

Address by Søren Gade, Speaker of the Folketing of Denmark

Address by Mette Frederiksen, Prime Minister of Denmark

Address by Volodymyr Zelenskyy, President of Ukraine

Address by Ruslan Stefanchuk, Chairman of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine

Address by Mircea Geoană, the Deputy Secretary General of NATO, followed by a question and answer period

Address by General Philippe Lavigne, NATO Supreme Commander Transformation, followed by a question and answer period

Election of Officers of the Assembly

Address by Wolfgang Hellmich, Treasurer of the Assembly, and vote on the Draft Budget for the Financial Year 2024

Votes on Draft Committee Resolutions

Women for Peace and Security 2023 Award ceremony and acceptance address by Ms Sviatlana TSIKHANOUSKAYA, Leader of democratic Belarus and head of the country's United Transition Cabinet

Resolutions and reports adopted at the NATO Parliamentary Assembly, Copenhagen, 6-9 October 2023

Resolutions adopted

- Resolution 484: Implementing NATO's New Deterrence and Defence Baseline
- Resolution 485: Strengthening Stability and Security in the Black Sea Region
- Resolution 486: Towards the Reconstruction of Ukraine
- Resolution 487: Delivering on the Vilnius Summit Decision
- Resolution 488: Enhancing the Protection of Allied Critical Marine Infrastructure
- Resolution 489: Protecting Allied Democracies and Partners from Disinformation

Reports adopted

Novel Materials and Additive Manufacturing

China's Global Role in the Wake of Russia's War Against Ukraine

Ensuring an Allied Defence Industrial Base for NATO's New Deterrence and Defence Baseline

Food Security and Conflict: Harvesting Resilience in the Face of a Global Crisis

The Future of NATO's Open Door Policy

Troubled Waters: How Russia's War in Ukraine Changes Black Sea Security

Protecting Critical Maritime Infrastructure: The Role of Technology

Developing Future Capabilities: Robotics and Autonomous Systems

Sea Change: The Rapid Evolution of Baltic Security After Russia's Invasion of Ukraine

Russia's War Against Ukraine: Strategic Imperatives for NATO

The Russian War on Truth: Defending Allied and Partner Democracies Against the Kremlin's Disinformation Campaigns

Towards the Reconstruction of Ukraine

Ukraine's Fight for Freedom & Allied and Global Response to Russia's War

Russia's War on Ukraine and Transatlantic Energy Security Challenges

Fighting Impunity for Violations of International Law in Russia's Renewed Invasion of Ukraine

Rebuilding Transatlantic Economic Relations and Resilience

Luke Gosling OAM, MP

Delegation Leader

27 March 2025