
The Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia

Report of the Australian Parliamentary Delegation to the

55th Annual Session of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly, Edinburgh

14-17 November 2009

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Canberra

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Membership of the Delegation

Leader	Hon Arch Bevis MP (Australian Labor Party) Member for Brisbane (Queensland)
Deputy Leader	Senator the Hon David Johnston (Liberal Party of Australia) Senator for Western Australia
Members	Hon Fran Bailey MP (Liberal Party of Australia) Member for McEwen (Victoria) Senator Mark Bishop (Australian Labor Party) Senator for Western Australia
Secretary	Mr Richard Selth Table Office, House of Representatives

Introduction

- 1.1 This report gives an account of the attendance of a delegation from the Parliament of Australia at the 55th Annual Session of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly in Edinburgh, United Kingdom from 14 to 17 November, 2009. It also reports on related meetings in Brussels and London.
- 1.2 Chapter 2 reports on the Delegation's discussions with a range of officials and parliamentarians in Brussels prior to the Assembly, and on its participation in the Remembrance Day ceremonies in Ypres, Belgium. It also reports on meetings in London before and after attendance at the Assembly.
- 1.3 Chapter 3 reports on the proceedings of the Parliamentary Assembly in Edinburgh.
- 1.4 The membership of the Delegation is listed at p. v of this report and the Delegation's program is included as Appendix A. Membership of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly, resolutions adopted by the Assembly and addresses given at the plenary session of the Assembly are included as Appendix B and C.
- 1.5 The NATO Parliamentary Assembly was hosted by the Parliament of the United Kingdom. While the situation in Afghanistan dominated discussion, other issues included the global financial crisis, terrorism, piracy, cyber-security, climate change and energy.

Aims and objectives of the Delegation

- 1.6 The Delegation agreed on the following objective for its visit:
- To observe the 55th NATO Parliamentary Assembly Session;
 - To gain an understanding of the role and responsibilities and priorities of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly, and renew and strengthen ties with the Assembly; and
 - To exchange views and be briefed on matters related to foreign affairs, defence and security policy matters, including the ISAF operation in Afghanistan.
- 1.7 The aims and objectives of the Delegation were clearly met. In a busy program before attending the NATO Parliamentary Assembly, Delegation members had the opportunity to inform themselves about recent developments in relation to the changing role of NATO and issues facing the alliance, and also about developments in the European Union in a range of areas. The meetings in Brussels and London were a very valuable adjunct to attendance at the NATO Parliamentary Assembly.
- 1.8 The delegation was pleased to represent the Australian Parliament at the Assembly. The visit was interesting and informative, providing members with the opportunity to gain a greater understanding of issues with which Australia has a significant involvement and to exchange views with parliamentary colleagues from a range of NATO member countries.

Acknowledgments

- 1.9 The Delegation wishes to express its appreciation of the efforts of all those who contributed to the success of its visit. In particular, the Delegation wishes to acknowledge the following contributions:

Canberra

- 1.10 The Delegation received oral and written briefings from officers of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and the Department of the Parliamentary Library prior to its departure. The Delegation wishes to record its thanks to all staff who contributed to these briefings and assisted with administrative arrangements for the visit.

- 1.11 The Delegation wishes to thank the staff of the Parliamentary Relations Office, in particular Ms Lyn Witheridge, for their administrative assistance prior to departure.

Belgium

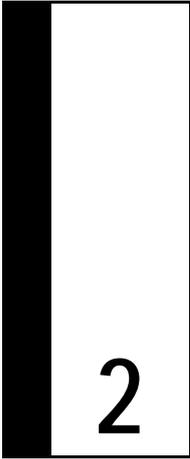
- 1.12 The Delegation wishes to thank H.E. Dr Alan Thomas, Australian Ambassador to the European Communities, Belgium and Luxembourg and other Embassy staff for their assistance throughout the period of the visit. A briefing provided by Embassy staff at the commencement of the visit was very useful in preparing the Delegation for a range of meetings in Brussels. In particular, the Delegation thanks Colonel Michael Toohey for his informed and focused advice and valuable assistance in Brussels and Flanders.
- 1.13 The Delegation thanks the secretariat of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly, led by Mr David Hobbs, for assistance with a range of matters, and also for a very helpful meeting in Brussels when the secretariat was particularly busy with preparations for the Assembly.

United Kingdom

- 1.14 The Delegation wishes to thank H.E. Mr John Dauth, Australian High Commissioner to the United Kingdom, and other High Commission staff for their assistance during the visit to London. In particular, the Delegation thanks Mr Terry Porter for his assistance with a wide range of logistical and administrative arrangements.

Conclusions

- 1.15 The Delegation was very successful in providing members with perspectives on a range of matters. All members of the Delegation have current or former responsibility for defence and security matters in Government or Opposition or as committee chairs, and found the meetings in Brussels and London and the proceedings of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly of great interest and considerable value.
- 1.16 The Delegation has recommended that a parliamentary delegation attend a plenary session of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly at least once every two years, and that where possible, related meetings and briefings of the kind which this delegation engaged in in Brussels and London be arranged in conjunction with attendance at the Assembly.



Belgium and London

- 2.1 Before attending the NATO Parliamentary Assembly in Edinburgh the Delegation had a series of meetings with officials and parliamentarians in Brussels and London. These meetings focussed on NATO, the war in Afghanistan, other defence and security matters, and developments in the European Union. The meetings gave the Delegation useful perspectives on a range of issues.
- 2.2 The Delegation also attended the Remembrance Day ceremonies at Ypres in Flanders.

Background

Australia's relationship with NATO

- 2.3 The North Atlantic Treaty Organization is an alliance of 28 countries from North America and Europe committed to protecting the security of member countries. It also provides a forum for members to consult on security issues of common concern and consider joint actions in addressing them. Twenty-one European Union (EU) member states are also members of NATO. The seven non-EU NATO members are: the United States, Canada, Norway, Turkey, Iceland, Croatia and Albania. NATO-led forces are currently contributing to efforts to bring stability to Afghanistan, Iraq, Kosovo and Darfur.
- 2.4 Australia is a 'Contact Country' of NATO, alongside the Republic of Korea, Japan and New Zealand. Contact Countries share similar strategic concepts and key Alliance values. (More recently, the term 'other partners across the globe' is also being used.) The levels of engagement between NATO and Contact Countries are different from formal engagements NATO has established through various initiatives with partner countries,

such as the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council, the Partnership for Peace, the Mediterranean Dialogue and the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative.

- 2.5 The decision by the NATO Riga Summit in November 2006 to strengthen relations with Contact Countries – including Australia – opened up the possibility of increased consultation on global security challenges between the Alliance and countries outside the trans-Atlantic area. The 2008 Bucharest Summit defined NATO’s objectives for its relationships with partners across the globe as including support for operations, security cooperation and enhanced common understanding to advance shared security interests and democratic values.
- 2.6 Australia’s relations with NATO have expanded considerably since the deployment of Australian forces in Afghanistan under the NATO-led ISAF mission. Despite closer relations Australia has not sought membership of NATO but maintains a relationship that allows effective cooperation where mutual interests align. Australia is engaging closely with NATO and non-NATO ISAF partners on the planning and implementation of the civil-military strategy for Afghanistan.
- 2.7 There have been a number of high-level contacts between Australia and NATO in recent years. In May 2004 Alexander Downer became the first Australian Foreign Minister to address the North Atlantic Council. In April 2005 Jaap de Hoop Scheffer became the first NATO Secretary General to visit Australia. At a joint press conference during that visit between the NATO Secretary General and then Defence Minister Robert Hill and Foreign Minister Alexander Downer, the Australian Government announced the establishment of a military advisor’s post in Brussels to liaise with NATO. Australia and NATO also announced the signing of an agreement on the exchange of classified information, paving the way for greater cooperation.
- 2.8 In April 2008 Prime Minister Kevin Rudd and former Defence Minister Fitzgibbon attended the NATO summit in Bucharest, the first time an Australian Prime Minister had attended a NATO summit. In December 2008 Foreign Minister Smith addressed the North Atlantic Council. In February 2009 former Defence Minister Fitzgibbon attended the ISAF Defence Ministers’ Meeting in Krakow. In October 2009 Defence Minister Senator John Faulkner attended the Informal Meeting of NATO Defence Ministers in Bratislava.
- 2.9 Australia’s growing practical cooperation with NATO as a Contact Country has been marked by a number of initiatives:

- the accreditation of a Defence Attaché to NATO and the European Union in September 2005;
 - the opening to Australia in November 2006 of a range of training and cooperative activities previously only available to NATO member and partner countries;
 - the signing of an agreement formalising a commitment to the principle of sharing classified information in September 2007; and
 - the agreement in August 2008 between the Australian Chief of Defence Force and Supreme Commander Allied Powers Europe to place an Australian Defence Force officer in the Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe in January 2009.
- 2.10 Australia participates in approximately two dozen NATO Working Groups for developing best practice in areas such as logistics, military communications and information systems compatibility. In June 2008, NATO participated in the Australian Defence Force Exercise Pitch Black, which was the first time Australian forces exercised with NATO assets in Australia.

The War in Afghanistan

- 2.11 The war in Afghanistan was launched in response to the September 11 terrorist attacks in 2001. It began in October 2001 with the United States' Operation Enduring Freedom and Britain's Operation Herrick. These were followed by the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), established by the United Nations Security Council in December 2001. In August 2003 NATO assumed command of the ISAF operation.
- 2.12 ISAF's stated mission is that, in support of the Afghan Government, it:
- conducts operations in Afghanistan to reduce the capability and will of the insurgency, support the growth in capacity and capability of the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF), and facilitate improvements in governance and socio-economic development, in order to provide a secure environment for sustainable stability that is observable to the population.¹
- 2.13 Australia's involvement in the war in Afghanistan began in October 2001 with the deployment of support aircraft and naval vessels and a detachment of Special Air Service troops. These were withdrawn in late

¹ ISAF website, 14 January 2010, <http://www.isaf.nato.int/en/our-mission/>

2002. In 2005 Australia re-engaged in Afghanistan, initially with SAS troops and later with other ADF personnel.

2.14 The NATO summit in April 2009 declared that Afghanistan is NATO's key priority. Australia is one of 43 contributors to the ISAF mission in Afghanistan, which includes 28 NATO members and 15 non-NATO contributors. Australia is the largest non-NATO ISAF contributor. It is one of the top ten contributors overall and is the largest contributor (US\$200 million) to a fund to build up the Afghan National Army.

2.15 Key NATO-ISAF priorities for Afghanistan are:

- better protecting the Afghan people;
- building the capacity of the Afghan national security forces (Afghan National Army and Afghan National Police) so they can take lead responsibility for their own country; and
- enabling the delivery of stronger governance and development.

According to NATO, progress in these areas is key to achieving a strong and stable Afghanistan, where terrorism has no safe haven and where foreign troops are no longer needed on the front line.

2.16 In April 2009 the Prime Minister defined Australia's mission statement in Afghanistan in the following terms:

- denial of Afghanistan as a training ground and operating base for global terrorist organisations;
- stabilisation of the Afghan state through a combination of military, police and civilian assistance; and
- training sufficient Afghan National Army and police forces in Oruzgan province, and developing capacity within the provincial administration, to allow Afghan authorities to take over in a reasonable time frame.

The Defence Minister, Senator Faulkner, reiterated these aims in August and the Prime Minister reaffirmed them in October.

2.17 Australia has recognised that success in Afghanistan will not be achieved through military means alone – Australia has increased not only its military contribution but also its development assistance, civilian capacity-building and training efforts.

2.18 In April 2009 the Australian Government decided to increase its civilian and military commitment in Afghanistan by:

- deploying approximately 450 additional troops including two additional Operational Mentor and Liaison Teams (OMLTs) to train and mentor the Afghan National Army, a non-ongoing Combat Team to provide security support to the afghan elections, additional Mentor and Reconstruction Task Force personnel, and an increase of up to 70 embedded personnel in a variety of operational headquarters;
- contributing approximately US\$200 million over five years to the ANA Trust Fund to support training and operations;
- deploying additional Australian Federal Police to help train the Afghan National Police;
- increasing the number of AusAID and DFAT staff in Afghanistan to assist with reconstruction, development and diplomatic efforts.

The additional commitments increased Australia's troop numbers in Afghanistan from 1,100 to around 1,550.

- 2.19 The Prime Minister also announced the appointment of Mr Ric Smith as Special Envoy for Afghanistan and Pakistan to ensure that Australia's significant commitments are integrated into the broader international effort. Australia's contribution in civilian development and reconstruction assistance to Afghanistan since 2001 totals over \$600 million.
- 2.20 Australia's military contribution to the international effort not only includes troops on the ground in Oruzgan but also provides national support to Afghanistan through a rotary wing group across Regional Command (South), an artillery detachment deployed with the UK and around 150 embedded personnel with partner forces.
- 2.21 The Australian Federal Police has been providing expertise in counter-narcotics and police capacity building in Afghanistan since October 2007. Following provision for an expanded AFP deployment in the 2008-09 Budget, Australia will have up to 22 AFP officers deployed in Afghanistan. The officers are contributing to efforts to strengthen law enforcement capacity, including in relation to counter-narcotics activity. They are deployed to Kabul, Tarin Kowt and Kandahar and are providing mentoring, strategic advice and criminal intelligence support to the Afghan Government and coalition partners.
- 2.22 DFAT has increased the number of officers in Afghanistan as well as at key posts (including The Hague and Brussels) to engage on Afghanistan. AusAID has also increased its presence, which includes contractors providing capacity-building to key ministries. AusAID deployed its second Development Adviser to the Provincial Reconstruction Team in

Tarin Kowt in January 2009. The position acts as an adviser to the Commander of the ADF's Reconstruction Task Force and works with the Dutch and US Development Advisers to Task Force Oruzgan to coordinate development and reconstruction initiatives in the province.

- 2.23 In June 2009 the Minister for Defence, Senator Faulkner, held meetings with his United States, United Kingdom and Dutch counterparts concerning operations in Afghanistan. Australian and Dutch forces work closely together in Oruzgan Province, where the Netherlands leads the ISAF Provincial Reconstruction Team. There are approximately 2,160 Dutch troops serving in Afghanistan, mostly in Oruzgan Province. The Netherlands announced in 2007 that the Dutch commitment of troops would not be renewed beyond mid-2010. This decision was reaffirmed by the Dutch Parliament in October 2009.
- 2.24 More than twenty countries have experienced troop casualties in the Afghanistan effort. Eleven Australian soldiers have been killed in Afghanistan since 2002. SAS Trooper Mark Donaldson was awarded a Victoria Cross in January 2009 for gallantry in Afghanistan.

The European Union

- 2.25 The European Union (EU) is an economic and political union established by the Treaty of Maastricht in 1993, on the foundations of the former European Economic Community. Its 27 member states have a combined population of approximately 500 million and a GDP of US\$16.5 trillion, an estimated 22 per cent of the gross world product. It includes five of the world's ten largest economies (Germany, France, the UK, Italy and Spain).
- 2.26 The EU has developed a single market with the free movement of people, goods, services, and capital. Sixteen member states have adopted a common currency, the Euro.
- 2.27 The main institutions of the European Union are the European Council, the Presidency, the European Commission (EC) and the European Parliament (EP). Political leadership comes from the European Council, which usually meets four times a year. It comprises one representative per member state – either its head of state or head of government – plus the President of the Council and the President of the EU Commission. Representatives are assisted by their foreign ministers.
- 2.28 Legislative competencies are divided between the Parliament and the Council of Ministers, while executive tasks are carried out by the Commission and in a limited capacity by the European Council and the Council of Ministers. The Council of Ministers consists of a government

minister from each member state and meets in different compositions depending on the policy area being addressed. Despite its different compositions, it is considered to be a single body.

- 2.29 The Lisbon Treaty, which entered into force on 1 December 2009, created the new position of President of the European Council, who chairs the European Council and directs its work in cooperation with the President of the Commission. The President of the Council, sometimes referred to as the EU President, is also the face of the EU internationally. The Treaty also increased involvement of the European Parliament in the legislative process through extended co-decision with the Council of Ministers.
- 2.30 The Treaty created the position of High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy. The High Representative chairs the Foreign Affairs Council and, in conjunction with the President, speaks on behalf of the EU in foreign policy matters. The High Representative will also concurrently hold the office of a Vice-President of the European Commission.
- 2.31 The European Commission, comprising one Commissioner from each member state and led by a President, is the executive and administrative arm of the EU. Currently the Commission comprises 27 members, headed by the EC President. The administrative functions of the Commission are carried out by 36 Directorates-General. The Commissioners are drawn one from each member state. The Commission is accountable to Parliament, which has the right to approve or reject the nomination of Commissioners.
- 2.32 The European Parliament is the only directly elected EU institution. The Parliament and the Council of Ministers pass legislation in a process known as co-decision, including approval of the EU Budget. The 750 Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) are directly elected by EU citizens every five years. Although elected on a national basis, MEPs sit according to political groups rather than nationality. The Parliament has steadily acquired greater influence and power under successive EU treaties. With the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty, the Parliament gains an expanded role in a number of new areas including trade, agriculture and justice and home affairs.
- 2.33 Twenty-one EU members are members of NATO while the remaining member states follow policies of neutrality. Following the Kosovo War in 1999 the European Council agreed that 'the Union must have the capacity for autonomous action, backed by credible military forces, the means to decide to use them, and the readiness to do so, in order to respond to

international crises without prejudice to actions by NATO'.² To that end, a number of efforts were made to increase the EU's military capability (see p. 11, below). EU forces have been deployed on peacekeeping missions in Africa, the former Yugoslavia and the Middle East. EU military operations are supported by a number of bodies, including the European Defence Agency, satellite centre and the military staff.

The Delegation's Program

Brussels, 9-10 November

2.34 The Delegation's program began with a briefing from Australian Embassy staff. The Ambassador to the European Communities, Belgium and Luxembourg, H.E. Dr Alan Thomas, and other Embassy staff briefed members on recent developments in NATO and the European Union, and on Australia's engagement with relevant issues.

NATO Headquarters

2.35 The Delegation met Ambassador Lawrence Rossin, Deputy Assistant Secretary General for Operations and Mr Robert Simmons, Deputy Assistant Secretary General for Security Cooperation and Partnership. Matters discussed included the Russia-Georgia conflict and the war in Afghanistan, including issues arising from the meeting of NATO defence ministers in Bratislava in October 2009.

2.36 At the time of the discussion President Obama had not announced his response to proposals for changes to the force structure and strategic approach in Afghanistan. The meeting considered aspects of the relevant issues and the implications of different approaches.

2.37 Priorities that emerged from the Bratislava meeting of defence ministers were discussed, including protecting the Afghan people, building the capacity of Afghan forces, fostering governance and development, and the need for constructive engagement with Pakistan and other neighbours.

2.38 The importance of Pakistan's role in the region was an issue that emerged repeatedly during the Delegation's various discussions in Brussels, London and at the NATO Parliamentary Assembly in Edinburgh. It was emphasised that Pakistan's own future stability and integrity as a nation-

² European Council website, 18 January 2010,
<http://www.consilium.europa.eu/showPage.aspx?id=1349&lang=EN>

state, as well as support for the IASF campaign in Afghanistan, was a significant factor driving Pakistan's efforts to deny safe haven to terrorists in its north-west region. It was also noted that the Afghan Taliban and Pakistani Taliban are quite different and that different responses to the respective threats posed by the two groups are required.

- 2.39 The complexity of managing a 43-nation coalition was noted, and the vital importance of communicating the nature and the importance of the mission in Afghanistan, both to the Afghan population and to the national communities of the coalition partners. The latter issue was raised on a number of occasions during the course of the Delegation.
- 2.40 The meeting considered other issues, including possibilities for reconciliation and reintegration with the Taliban, the progressive handover to Afghan forces of responsibility for counter-insurgency operations, the need to determine who will assume the role in Oruzgan Province currently held by Dutch forces when the Dutch commitment concludes, and consultation issues raised in Bratislava by the Australian Defence Minister, Senator Faulkner.

International Crisis Group

- 2.41 The Delegation met Mr Nicholas Grono, Deputy President of the International Crisis Group (ICG). The ICG, founded in 1995, is an independent, non-partisan source of analysis and advice to governments and inter-governmental bodies such as the United Nations, European Union and World Bank, on the prevention and resolution of deadly conflict. It provides highly detailed analysis and advice on specific policy issues in conflict or potential conflict situations around the world.
- 2.42 The ICG's global headquarters is in Brussels. It employs approximately 130 permanent staff worldwide, plus at any given time around twenty consultants and forty interns. They are located in nine regional offices and eighteen other disclosed locations worldwide, and cover more than sixty countries or situations of actual or potential conflict. Former Australian Foreign Minister Gareth Evans was President of the ICG from January 2000 to June 2009.
- 2.43 The Delegation's visit to Brussels was an invaluable opportunity to discuss a range of matters, principally the war in Afghanistan, with a senior representative of a leading international research organisation.
- 2.44 A major issue discussed was the importance of building good governance in Afghanistan. Thirty years of conflict has severely weakened, or destroyed, most of the country's institutions. Addressing governance and

the rule of law is vital in building the legitimacy of government. A sustainable, stable Afghanistan will depend on the presence of robust, representative and accountable governing institutions, including a reliable police force and local government that can deliver basic services, such as health and education.

- 2.45 Discussion also noted the need to concentrate on protecting the Afghan population, not simply fighting the Taliban, and the importance of strengthening civilian rule in Pakistan.

NATO Parliamentary Assembly International Secretariat

- 2.46 The Delegation met Mr David Hobbs, Secretary General of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly, and key secretariat staff. The International Secretariat of the Assembly is based in Brussels and provides the administrative support required for sessions, committee meetings and other Assembly activities, and conducts much of the research and analysis necessary for the substantive output of the Assembly's committees.
- 2.47 In addition to its administrative and research functions, the International Secretariat maintains a close working relationship with NATO and other international organizations. It also provides briefings on Assembly activities and concerns to visiting parliamentary groups, journalists, and academics.
- 2.48 Mr Hobbs welcomed Australia's decision to send a delegation to the Assembly after an interval of nineteen years. He and secretariat staff gave the Delegation a briefing on the Assembly and its activities, and on the annual session taking place in Edinburgh the following week. Delegation members appreciated Mr Hobbs and other staff making themselves available for a very helpful meeting when the Secretariat was particularly busy with preparations for the Assembly.

European Parliament – Andrew Duff MEP

- 2.49 During its visit to Brussels the Delegation was scheduled to meet three Members of the European Parliament for perspectives on recent developments in Europe, particularly the implications of the Lisbon Treaty. The first was Andrew Duff, Constitutional Affairs Spokesman for the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe. Mr Duff has been a Liberal Democrat Member of the European Parliament for the East of England since 1999 and Leader of the Liberal Democrat European Parliamentary Party since 2007. He is one of seven MEPs for the East of England, an area of 5.6 million people.

- 2.50 Mr Duff and Delegation members discussed a range of issues, including defence policy and the movement of labour. Mr Duff described the Lisbon Treaty as a 'historic step forward for integration'.

Dinner hosted by the Australian Ambassador

- 2.51 The Australian Ambassador, Dr Alan Thomas, hosted a dinner for the Delegation at which Mr Jeff Rathke, Deputy Director of the Private Office of the NATO Secretary General was also a guest. Mr Rathke briefed the Delegation on Secretary General's priorities, including the development of NATO's Strategic Concept and ISAF's role in Afghanistan.

EU Military Staff

- 2.52 The Delegation visited the EU Military Staff headquarters and was given a tour of the Operations Centre. Members then had a roundtable discussion with the Director General of the EUMS, Lieutenant General A D Leakey CMG CBE, and a number of his senior staff. Key topics were the EU police mission to Afghanistan and counter-piracy operations off Somalia.
- 2.53 As noted above, the Australian Federal Police has been providing expertise in counter-narcotics and police capacity building in Afghanistan since October 2007. Australian naval vessels have been involved in the multi-national anti-piracy operations in the Gulf of Aden and the waters off the coast of Somalia and the Horn of Africa. Delegation members found the discussions of great interest.
- 2.54 General Leakey and his staff briefed the Delegation on a range of EU military and civilian operations. Discussion included the importance of appropriate legal frameworks and effective inter-operability of different forces in multi-national operations.
- 2.55 The EUMS was established in 2001 and is responsible for supervising operations under the European Security and Defence Policy. It is the only permanent integrated military structure of the European Union.
- 2.56 The EUMS is attached to the office of the High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and is formally part of the General Secretariat of the Council of the European Union. It operates under the military direction of the EU Military Committee, which it assists and to which it reports. While this arrangement is not straightforward, it provides a critical link between the Council of the European Union and the military capabilities of the Member States.
- 2.57 The EU Military Committee is composed of the Chiefs of Defence of the Member States, who are regularly represented by their permanent

Military Representatives. It is the highest military body within the Council. It provides the Political and Security Committee with advice and recommendations on military matters and directs EU military activities.

- 2.58 The EUMS is led by the Director General, a three-star general, who is assisted by the Deputy Director General and Chief of Staff, a two-star general. Its main task is to perform early warning, strategic planning and situation assessment. The EUMS consists of approximately 200 military and civilian personnel.
- 2.59 The European Union has no permanent military force but draws on the forces of its Member States as required. It has conducted six military operations since 2003. The term 'EUFOR' or 'European Union Force' has been used to describe these deployments: in the Republic of Macedonia from March to December 2003, in the Democratic Republic of the Congo in 2003 and 2006, in Chad and the Central Africa Republic in 2008-09, in Bosnia since 2004, and in a naval form as EU NAVFOR, off the coast of Somalia, since December 2008.
- 2.60 The EU also conducts police missions, including its current commitment in Afghanistan, which provides support to the Government of Afghanistan in reforming the police system of the country through advising, training and mentoring.
- 2.61 The EUMS does not directly control EU military missions. In conjunction with NATO, as required, an Operational Headquarters (OHQ) is nominated. The OHQ directs the Force Headquarters, provided by a member country, which carries out the operation on the ground.
- 2.62 The EU has three options for an Operation Headquarters. Five national operational headquarters have been made available by Member States for use by the Union. These are in France, the United Kingdom, Germany, Italy and Greece. These centres can provide the EU with the necessary premises and technical infrastructure to run a multi-national military operation. The 2003 operation in the Democratic Republic of Congo used the French OHQ, while the 2006 operation used the German OHQ.
- 2.63 The second option is to use NATO facilities, as is the case for EUFOR ALTHEA in Bosnia and Herzegovina, for which Supreme Headquarters, Allied Powers Europe, near Brussels, is used.
- 2.64 Since 2007 the Operations Centre in Brussels has provided a third option for commanding operations of limited size, such as that of a battle group of some 2,000 troops. It is not a standing, fully manned headquarters but the permanent facilities, staffed by a small core team of officers, enables the EU Council to establish on very short notice a fully-fledged OHQ for a

particular operation. The core staff, as well as extra EUMS officers and staff from EU Member States provide an increased capacity to respond to crisis management situations.

- 2.65 The visit provided the Delegation with an understanding of how the creation of the EUMS has enabled the EU to deliver a comprehensive military and civilian approach to its operations, especially where the security situation requires a military presence.

European Parliament – Elmar Brok MEP

- 2.66 The Delegation met Elmar Brok MEP to discuss recent developments in Europe, in particular the implications of the Lisbon Treaty. Mr Brok has been a Christian Democrat Member of the European Parliament for Germany since 1980 and sits with the European People's Party. The EPP group is the largest in the European Parliament with 265 Members. Mr Brok is a former Chairman of the European Parliament's Committee on Foreign Affairs and has held many leadership positions in German and European politics.
- 2.67 The Delegation was scheduled to meet a third MEP but the meeting was cancelled at short notice.

Flanders, 10-11 November

- 2.68 On the completion of its program in Brussels the Delegation travelled to the Flanders battlefields of World War I, approximately 100 kilometres west of Brussels. The Delegation was accompanied by the Australian Defence Adviser to NATO and the EU, Lieutenant Colonel Mick Toohey, whose knowledge of the area and of the relevant history was of great assistance.

Tyne Cot Cemetery, Zonnebeke

- 2.69 The Delegation visited Tyne Cot Cemetery, located between the towns of Passchendaele and Zonnebeke, nine kilometres north east of Ypres. It is the largest Commonwealth war cemetery in the world, with the graves of 11,953 Commonwealth servicemen, of whom 8,369 are unidentified. There are 1,369 Australian graves, 791 of them unidentified, making Tyne Cot the war cemetery with the most Australian burials in the world. The site was captured from German forces by Australian soldiers in October 1917, during the Battle of Passchendaele, and used as a dressing station. Soldiers who died of their wounds were buried there and a cemetery developed.

- 2.70 Also known as the Third Battle of Ypres, the Battle of Passchendaele was one of the major battles of the First World War. It consisted of a series of operations from June to November 1917. Passchendaele, with its 'sea of mud', has become synonymous with the horrific nature of the great battles of the First World War. British Empire forces lost over 300,000 men in the battle, including approximately 36,500 Australians. The Germans lost approximately 260,000 men.
- 2.71 The cemetery grounds were assigned to the United Kingdom in perpetuity by King Albert I of Belgium in recognition of the sacrifices made by the British Empire in the defence and liberation of Belgium during the war. The north-eastern boundary of the cemetery is formed by the Tyne Cot Memorial, which commemorates nearly 35,000 servicemen from the United Kingdom and New Zealand who died in the Ypres Salient after 16 August 1917 and whose graves are not known.
- 2.72 Delegation members found the cemetery moving and impressive. When the deaths of individual servicemen, most recently in Afghanistan, are events of profound shock and grief for the nation, to confront the visible evidence of the scale of losses suffered on the Western Front was sobering.
- 2.73 The Delegation also visited the Tyne Cot Visitors Centre and the Memorial Museum Passchendaele 1917 in Zonnebeke.

Polygon Wood Memorial, Zonnebeke

- 2.74 The Delegation visited the Australian 5th Division Memorial at Polygon Wood, Zonnebeke. It is the only Australian memorial in Belgium and records the Battle Honours won in both France and Belgium by Australian troops. The memorial itself, a stone obelisk, stands on a long bank approached up a steep flight of steps. Beneath the memorial is a cemetery in which 2,108 Commonwealth servicemen are buried or commemorated.
- 2.75 Polygon Wood was captured by the 5th Division on 26 September 1917 during the Battle of Menin Road. It was a much disputed piece of ground and the area had changed hands several times. The battle cost 5,770 Australian lives. Three Australians won Victoria Crosses in the battle.

Last Post ceremony at the Menin Gate, Ypres

- 2.76 The Delegation attended the playing of the Last Post at the Menin Gate in Ypres on the evening of 10 November. The Menin Gate Memorial is dedicated to British and Commonwealth soldiers who were killed in the Ypres Salient of World War I and whose graves are unknown. The Memorial is located on the eastern side of the town at the location of the old city gate leading to the Menin Road, through which so many British

and Commonwealth troops passed on their way to the battlefields of the Ypres Salient. It was built by the British government and opened in 1927.

- 2.77 In 1928, a year after the inauguration of the Memorial, a number of citizens of Ypres decided that some way should be found to express the gratitude of the Belgian nation towards those who had died for its freedom and independence. The daily sounding of the Last Post – the traditional salute to the fallen warrior – was proposed. The Memorial was thought to be the most appropriate location for the ceremony.
- 2.78 From 11 November 1929 the Last Post has been sounded at the Menin Gate Memorial every night and in all weathers. The only exception was during the four years of the German occupation of Ypres from May 1940 to September 1944. The daily ceremony was instead continued in England at Brookwood Military Cemetery in Surrey. On the very evening that Polish forces liberated Ypres the ceremony was resumed at the Menin Gate, in spite of the heavy fighting still going on in other parts of the town.
- 2.79 The simple and moving ceremony is attended by large numbers through the year, but especially so around Remembrance Day. In excess of one thousand people were present on the evening of the 10th. The Deputy Leader of the Delegation, Senator Johnston, and Senator Bishop laid a wreath during the ceremony and the Delegation Leader, Mr Bevis, was given the honour of reciting the Ode for the Fallen.
- 2.80 At the entrance to the Australian War Memorial in Canberra, visitors are reminded of the Australian connection with Ypres. The Menin Gate lions originally stood on either side of the Gate before World War I, when it was simply an opening in the ramparts through which the road ran to Menin. Damaged during the war the lions lay for years among the ruins of the town. In 1936 Australia's High Commissioner in London, former Prime Minister Stanley Bruce, asked the Mayor of Ypres to donate the lions to Australia, where they were restored and placed on display.

Remembrance Day, Ypres

- 2.81 The Delegation and the Australian Ambassador attended a memorial service at St Martin's Cathedral. After the service Delegation members and the Ambassador joined local and international representatives in a procession from the Cathedral to the Belgian War Memorial, where wreaths were laid in honour of Belgian soldiers who had fallen in the service of their country.
- 2.82 The procession then continued to the Menin Gate Memorial for the Remembrance Day ceremony, at which the Leader of the Delegation and

the Ambassador laid a wreath. A crowd of several thousand was present for the ceremony, which was extremely moving. The Australian Ambassador was given the honour of reciting the Ode for the Fallen. Delegation members consider themselves privileged to have had the opportunity to attend and to represent the Australian Parliament at such a significant event.

- 2.83 Following the ceremony the Delegation and the Ambassador attended a reception hosted by the Mayor of Ypres. Both in official interactions in Ypres and in encounters with members of the general public, Delegation members were conscious of great good will towards Australia on the part of the people of Flanders.

Hill 60

- 2.84 After leaving Ypres the Delegation visited Hill 60, approximately five kilometres to the south-east. The hill's prominence in the relatively low-lying region made it an objective of both armies during World War 1, and it was continually fought over from late 1914. Underground mining began in early 1915 as British miners tunnelled towards the German lines. In November 1916 the 1st Australian Tunnelling Company took over the Hill 60 mineshafts. By then deep tunnels ran metres under the German lines and had been filled with high explosives.
- 2.85 Hill 60 marked the northern extremity of a German bulge, or salient, into the British lines. It was to straighten this line, in the lead-up to the larger operation planned for July 1917 east of Ypres, that the Battle of Messines was fought on 7 June 1917. At the opening of the battle nineteen great mines which had been excavated under the German positions at various locations along the salient line, including at Hill 60, were exploded. For the seven months before the blowing of the Hill 60 mine Australian troops had to ensure that the Germans did not find it.
- 2.86 The area has been largely untouched since 1918 and there are large craters evident at the site. At the front of the site there is a memorial to the 1st Australian Tunnelling Company.

London, 12-13 November

National Audit Office – defence procurement

- 2.87 The Delegation met Mr Tim Banfield, Director, Defence Value For Money Audit in the National Audit Office. The United Kingdom's Ministry of Defence holds approximately £90 billion (\$160 billion) of fixed assets and manages an annual budget of nearly £34 billion (\$60 billion). In

comparison the Australian Defence Department manages approximately \$54 billion of assets and an annual budget of approximately \$30 billion.

- 2.88 The UK National Audit Office undertakes a number of inquiries assessing the value for money of the Ministry of Defence's spending. This covers the ability to support current operations and the maintenance and development of military capabilities to meet future requirements. NAO focuses on aspects of operational effectiveness, support for armed forces' personnel, major equipment acquisitions, and underpinning infrastructure such as the Defence Estate and business change programs. Procurement and support of military equipment consumes approximately 40 per cent of annual defence expenditure.
- 2.89 The Delegation found the meeting of great interest and very useful in reflecting on Australia's defence procurement processes. There was detailed discussion of specific projects, possible approaches to defence procurement and also of the audit processes that monitor procurement practices and recommend improvements. Discussion included consideration of a recent major review of the Ministry of Defence's procurement process, released in October 2009.

Royal United Services Institute

- 2.90 The Delegation met Dr Jonathan Eyal, Director of International Security Studies at the Royal United Services Institute (RUSI), and a number of senior research staff. RUSI is an independent think tank engaged in defence and security research, founded in 1831 by the Duke of Wellington.
- 2.91 Discussion ranged over a wide area including Afghanistan, the role of NATO, the European Union, terrorism, Australia and the Pacific, China and India. The Delegation is grateful to Dr Eyal and his colleagues for extending the meeting well beyond its scheduled time in order to continue what was an extremely valuable discussion.
- 2.92 An issue that was raised in this meeting, as it was in a number of other forums during the Delegation's time in Belgium and the United Kingdom, was the importance of explaining the mission in Afghanistan to the communities of participating nations – delivering a coherent message about the purpose of the mission, what is being achieved and what can be expected in the future.

House of Commons Defence Committee

- 2.93 The Committee met the Rt Hon James Arbuthnot MP, Chairman of the House of Commons Defence Committee, and other members of the Committee. Discussion included the war in Afghanistan, including the

need to articulate a coherent message in relation to the ISAF mission, and the Committee's current inquiry into aspects of the Ministry of Defence's Defence Equipment program. Delegation members found it useful and interesting to have a parliamentary perspective on issues, to consider in conjunction with the views of officials and independent researchers.

Australian High Commission

2.94 The Australian High Commissioner to the United Kingdom, H.E. Mr John Dauth LVO, briefed the Delegation on a range of issues. Following the meeting, the Delegation travelled to Edinburgh. From 14-18 November the Delegation attended the NATO Parliamentary Assembly in Edinburgh – see Chapter 3.

London, 19-20 November

Ministry of Defence

- 2.95 The Delegation met Mrs Teresa Jones OBE, Head of International Policy and Planning (Civilian) in the Ministry of Defence, and other officials. International Policy and Planning is a research unit which looks ahead over a five year period, separate from specific operational planning.
- 2.96 The meeting considered a range of internal issues such as budget management and recruitment, and also wider strategic issues, including relations between the United Kingdom's armed forces and those of other countries, the situation in Fiji and the role of China in international affairs.
- 2.97 The meeting was later joined by an officer recently returned from a tour of duty in Afghanistan, who gave the Delegation a detailed briefing on a range of issues associated with the conduct of operations there.
- 2.98 The Delegation is grateful to Mrs Jones and her colleagues for extending the very valuable discussion and responding to the Delegation's many questions well beyond the scheduled time.

Dr Liam Fox MP

2.99 The Delegation met Dr Liam Fox MP, Shadow Secretary of State for Defence since 2005, and Mr Gerald Howarth MP, Shadow Minister for Defence. Discussion focussed on the war in Afghanistan, NATO, the European Union, terrorism and the Pacific. Delegation members found the meeting very useful indeed, both to acquaint themselves with the views of the Opposition on a range of issues and to engage in general discussion with Dr Fox and Mr Howarth on defence and security matters.

Imperial War Museum

2.100 The Delegation was given a tour of the Imperial War Museum by Mr Mark Whitmore, Director of Collections. Mr Whitmore was previously Assistant Director, National Collection at the Australian War Memorial in Canberra. Interesting comparisons were made between the nature of the two collections and the approach taken to research and display. There is considerable contact and exchange of ideas between the two institutions.

The NATO Parliamentary Assembly

Background

- 3.1 The NATO Parliamentary Assembly serves as the consultative inter-parliamentary organisation for the North Atlantic Alliance. It brings together legislators from NATO member countries to consider security-related issues of common interest and concern.
- 3.2 Following the creation of NATO in 1949, an annual conference of NATO parliamentarians was established in 1955. The Assembly provides an essential link between NATO and the parliaments of its member nations. The Secretary General of NATO provides a response to all Assembly recommendations and resolutions adopted in plenary sessions.
- 3.3 The Assembly provides a forum for international parliamentary dialogue on an array of security, political and economic matters. Its principal objective is to foster mutual understanding among Alliance parliamentarians of the key security challenges facing the transatlantic partnership. Further objectives are:
 - to foster dialogue among parliamentarians on major security issues;
 - to facilitate parliamentary awareness and understanding of key security issues and Alliance policies;
 - to provide NATO and its member governments with an indication of collective parliamentary opinion;
 - to provide greater transparency of NATO policies, and thereby a degree of collective accountability; and

- to strengthen the transatlantic relationship.
- 3.4 Since the end of the Cold War the Assembly has assumed a new role by integrating into its work parliamentarians from countries in Central and Eastern Europe and beyond who seek a closer association with NATO. This integration has provided both political and practical assistance and has contributed to the strengthening of parliamentary democracy in the Euro-Atlantic region, complementing and reinforcing NATO's own program of partnership and co-operation.
- 3.5 Since 1989, the following objectives have been added:
- to assist in the development of parliamentary democracy throughout the Euro-Atlantic area by integrating parliamentarians from non-member nations into the Assembly's work;
 - to assist directly those parliaments actively seeking Alliance membership;
 - to increase co-operation with countries who seek co-operation rather than membership, including those of the Caucasus and the Mediterranean regions; and
 - to assist in the development of parliamentary mechanisms, practices and 'know-how' essential for the effective democratic control of armed forces.¹
- 3.6 The Assembly consists of 257 delegates from the 28 NATO member countries. Each delegation is based on the country's size and reflects the political composition of the parliament, therefore representing a broad spectrum of political opinion. Delegates from fourteen associate countries, the European Parliament, four regional partner and Mediterranean associate member countries, as well as parliamentary observers from seven other countries – including Australia – and three inter-parliamentary assemblies, also take part in Assembly activities. A list of members is included as Appendix B to this report.
- 3.7 The Assembly's governing body is the Standing Committee, which is composed of the head of each member delegation, the President, the Vice-Presidents, the Treasurer and the Secretary General.
- 3.8 There are two plenary sessions each year, a Spring Session, usually towards the end of May, and an Annual Session in October or November. The sessions are held in member or associate member countries.

¹ NATO Parliamentary Assembly website, 29 January 2010, <http://www.nato-pa.int/>

- 3.9 The Assembly's five committees meet during plenary sessions, and occasionally at other times. They are charged with examining major contemporary issues in their fields. The committees are:
- Civil Dimension of Security;
 - Defence and Security;
 - Economics and Security;
 - Political; and
 - Science and Technology.
- 3.10 The committees and sub-committees produce reports, which are discussed in draft form at the Assembly's Spring Session. The reports are then revised and up-dated for discussion, amendment and adoption at the Assembly's Annual Session.
- 3.11 At the Annual Session, the committees produce policy recommendations which are voted on by the full Assembly and forwarded to the North Atlantic Council. As well as meetings during Sessions, the committees and sub-committees meet several times a year in member and associate nations where they receive briefings from leading government and parliamentary representatives, as well as senior academics and experts.
- 3.12 Other Assembly bodies include the Mediterranean and Middle East Special Group to enhance parliamentary dialogue and understanding with countries of the Middle East and the North African region, the Ukraine-NATO Inter-parliamentary Council, the NATO-Russia Parliamentary Committee and the NATO-Georgia Inter-Parliamentary Council.
- 3.13 The headquarters of the Assembly's International Secretariat is located in central Brussels. The International Secretariat is responsible for all administration and the bulk of research and analysis that supports the Assembly's committees, sub-committees and other groups. The Assembly is directly funded by member parliaments and governments, and is financially and administratively separate from NATO itself.

Annual Session, 14–17 November 2009, Edinburgh

- 3.14 Approximately 350 delegates from more than 50 countries attended the 2009 Annual Session in Edinburgh, from 14 to 17 November. It was the first meeting of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly to which Australia has sent a delegation since 1990. The leader of the 2009 Australian Delegation, Hon Arch Bevis MP, was a member of the 1990 Delegation.

- 3.15 In 1990 there were only sixteen member countries of the Assembly, and a key issue for consideration was the relationship with newly elected parliaments in Central and Eastern Europe, and a policy relating to the attendance of delegations from those countries. There are now 28 members of the Assembly, twelve from Central and Eastern Europe.
- 3.16 Delegation members attended meetings of the Assembly's committees, principally the Defence and Security Committee, the Committee on the Civil Dimensions of Security and the Political Committee. Members welcomed the opportunity to participate in discussions. Members also attended the plenary session and contributed to discussion in that forum.

Committee Meetings

Defence and Security Committee

- 3.17 In opening the Defence and Security Committee meeting the Chairman especially welcomed the presence of the Australian Delegation, emphasizing Australia's importance as a key NATO partner. A focus of discussions was the war in Afghanistan and related issues. Six weeks previously, five senior members of the Assembly had visited Afghanistan for meetings with senior Afghan and international officials. Members of the delegation also discussed military strategy with the ISAF Commander, General Stanley McChrystal.
- 3.18 Frank Cook MP (UK) was a member of that delegation and presented a report and policy recommendations on Afghanistan to the Committee. General Sir Peter Wall, Commander in Chief of British Land Forces, also addressed the Committee.
- 3.19 Mr Cook's detailed report to the Committee focused on a range of issues and echoed comments that the Delegation had heard in meetings in Brussels and London. In relation to Pakistan he stated: 'The security of Afghanistan is inextricably linked to that of Pakistan... It is critical to engage Pakistan if there is any hope of denying safe havens to the Afghan insurgency.' This was also a view which the Delegation had heard in a number of earlier meetings. Committee members debated possible increased troop deployments to Afghanistan, as well as the potential impact of scheduled withdrawals of some Allied contingents.
- 3.20 General Wall emphasised the importance of denying al-Qaeda a sanctuary in Afghanistan, establishing conditions where good governance can develop and providing security for civilian organisations to help develop a functioning state. He said that failure could lead to the destabilisation of the whole region. He also noted the vital role of the border region where

both Afghan and Pakistani Taliban groups are based. He repeated a view which the Delegation had heard in Brussels and London, that getting a coherent message to the public on the complex situation in Afghanistan is difficult but of vital importance in maintaining support for the mission.

- 3.21 Following discussion, in which the Australian Delegation participated, the Committee voted on a resolution to put to the Assembly's plenary session. The resolution urged governments and parliaments of the North Atlantic Alliance to reaffirm their commitment to assisting the government of Afghanistan to provide a secure and stable environment for its citizens, in order to prevent the re-emergence of threats against its own peoples and peoples elsewhere, and to further increase economic support for social and economic development. The full text of the resolution adopted by the plenary session is included at Appendix C.
- 3.22 Other topics discussed by the Defence and Security Committee included cyber-security, the changing nature of conflict and the development of a new NATO Strategic Concept.

Committee on the Civil Dimension of Security

- 3.23 The Defence and Security Committee and the Committee on the Civil Dimension of Security held a joint meeting on the subject of piracy and maritime security. The committees were briefed by Vice Admiral Hans-Jochen Witthauer, Deputy Commander of NATO's Allied Maritime Component Command, and Rear Admiral Peter Hudson, Commander United Kingdom Maritime Force and Operation Commander EU Naval Force Atalanta, on operations in the Gulf of Aden and off the coast of Somalia.
- 3.24 Rear Admiral Hudson commended current levels of co-ordination between NATO and the EU's counter-piracy operations, while noting that it was important to acknowledge that these two deployments had different strengths, tasks and mandates, and faced different force generation problems. He also welcomed the unprecedented levels of co-operation with other deployed navies, particularly those of Russia and China.
- 3.25 Following discussion the Committee on the Civil Dimensions of Security voted on a resolution to put to the Assembly's plenary session on a response to piracy off the coast of Somalia. Other topics discussed by the Committee included civilian emergency planning, the challenges facing Georgia and Moldova and the development of a new NATO Strategic Concept.

Political Committee

- 3.26 The Committee was addressed by Professor Paul Wilkinson, Emeritus Professor of International Relations and Chairman of the Advisory Board of the Centre for the Study of Terrorism and Political Violence at the University of Saint Andrews, on the challenge of international terrorism.
- 3.27 Professor Wilkinson stated that despite its setbacks in Iraq, Al Qaeda is still alive and recruiting, consolidating its position in Pakistan and reinforcing its presence in the Horn of Africa and its alliance with Al-Shabaab in Somalia. He stressed the need for a strategy that united all allied countries, particularly with regard to Afghanistan.
- 3.28 During the discussion that followed Professor Wilkinson reaffirmed that Afghanistan and Pakistan are weak points and the international community should continue its efforts in the region to prevent South East Asia from being taken over by terrorism. He said that only through a truly holistic approach combining police, judicial, intelligence, political and economic policies can terrorism be seriously challenged.
- 3.29 Delegation members noted with interest Professor Wilkinson's comment that in Indonesia evidence suggests that Jemaah Islamiyah has suffered setbacks as a result of government leadership and lack of support from the Indonesian public.
- 3.30 The Committee considered a report on relations with Pakistan, which emphasised the crucial importance of Pakistan for the stabilisation of Afghanistan and stated that Pakistan's own security, and that of the region, is inextricably linked to Afghanistan. This has led Pakistan to become an increasingly vital focal point for the Allies and for NATO.
- 3.31 The report argued that despite the recent success of the Pakistani army in the Swat valley, the security situation remains fragile and could possibly deteriorate further in the short term. The international community can aid Pakistan in various ways but a strategy must be based on Pakistan's willingness to stand up to the Taliban and support the regional approach advanced by NATO and coalition forces.
- 3.32 Following discussion the Committee voted on a resolution to put to the Assembly's plenary session on engaging Pakistan.
- 3.33 Delegation members also attended meetings of the Economics and Security Committee and the Science and Technology Committee. Discussion in those committees included the impact of the global financial crisis, food security, climate change, energy policy and weapons of mass destruction.

Meeting with the Dutch Delegation to the NATO Parliamentary Assembly

- 3.34 The Delegation met the Dutch Delegation to the Assembly, led by Mr Henk Jan Ormel. Mr Ormel, Chair of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Dutch House of Representatives, and a Vice-President of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly, led the Assembly's delegation to Afghanistan referred to above (para 3.17). The President of the Assembly, Mr John Tanner (USA), attended the opening of the meeting. He stated that the Australian contribution in Afghanistan, and the Delegation's attendance at the Assembly in Edinburgh, was greatly appreciated.
- 3.35 A very cordial and useful discussion between the Australian and Dutch delegations followed. Mr Ormel thanked Australia for the very positive cooperation between Dutch and Australian forces in Oruzgan Province in Afghanistan, and expressed his condolences for the losses Australia had suffered. He noted that there were different views in the Dutch Parliament, and within the Dutch delegation to the Assembly, regarding the Dutch commitment in Afghanistan. These views were then presented by representatives of different parties of the Dutch Parliament in the delegation.
- 3.36 The leader of the Australian Delegation, Mr Bevis, noted how closely and how well Dutch and Australian troops have worked together in Oruzgan and commented on the very high regard for Dutch forces at all levels in Australia. He expressed his condolences for the loss of 21 Dutch soldiers in Afghanistan.
- 3.37 The meeting considered the role of armed forces and civilian organisations in rebuilding Afghanistan and also considered an issue raised in the Defence and Security Committee meeting – the possibility of reconciliation with, and the reintegration into Afghan society of, elements of the Taliban.

Plenary Session

- 3.38 The Delegation attended the Plenary Session of the Assembly. The session was opened by the President of the Assembly, Mr John Tanner, who spoke on a range of issues. In relation to Afghanistan he said that NATO's commitment there was the largest mission in its history, and that it has broader implications than many of the citizens of NATO members fully appreciate. He urged delegates to discuss NATO, its operations and its purpose in as many public venues as possible, to demonstrate to the public that the Alliance is relevant to their own security.
- 3.39 The session was then addressed by the Secretary General of NATO, Mr Anders Fogh Rasmussen; the President of the Royal Institute of

International Affairs and former Secretary General of NATO, Lord Robertson; the British Foreign Secretary, the Rt Hon David Miliband; and the Supreme Allied Commander Europe, Admiral James Stavridis. Each address was followed by a question and answer period.

- 3.40 Secretary General Rasmussen stressed the importance of the ISAF mission in Afghanistan in denying al-Qaeda a sanctuary from which to launch terrorist attacks, and also the need to communicate to the public of NATO members the nature of the mission in Afghanistan and the changing security environment in general. He said that the costs of engagement are high but the costs of walking away from Afghanistan would be far higher.
- 3.41 Lord Robertson supported the Secretary General's remarks, saying that NATO members 'must explain to the people in our countries what is going on in Afghanistan and why it matters to them and why we have to prevail.' He said that this political generation would not be forgiven if it withdrew from Afghanistan prematurely.
- 3.42 The British Foreign Minister also focussed his address on the war in Afghanistan. He spoke of the importance of military strategy being aligned with a political strategy and the rebuilding of civilian institutions. He referred to the possibility of reintegrating elements of the Taliban into Afghan society and thereby weakening the insurgency. He reiterated the vital role of Pakistan in the region and of supporting Pakistan in addressing the needs of its citizens.
- 3.43 Admiral Stavridis spoke about the changing nature of NATO, noting the change from no NATO-led operations in 1990 to today's commitment of 85,000 troops on three continents and at sea. He also pointed out that the change had occurred while NATO staff had shrunk from more than 23,000 in operational headquarters to less than 8,000 and that the defence expenditures of NATO nations had shrunk from an average of 4.5 per cent of GDP in 1985 to 2.6 per cent in 2008.
- 3.44 Admiral Stavridis suggested that there are four keys to the situation in Afghanistan:
- training the Afghan security forces;
 - putting the Afghan people at the centre of gravity;
 - getting the balance right between civil and military activity; and
 - effective strategic communication, both in coalition nations and in Afghanistan itself.

- 3.45 Delegation members participated in a discussion on women in the armed forces, which began with presentations from a panel of senior female British officers.
- 3.46 Each of the Assembly's committees presented the text of resolutions for consideration by the plenary session. These were debated, amendments were considered and voted on and the final text of each resolution was agreed to. Delegation members were particularly interested in the resolutions relating to issues which they had been discussing with a range of official and independent specialists during their time in Brussels and London and with parliamentary colleagues in Edinburgh. These were the resolutions relating to Afghanistan, Pakistan and piracy off the coast of Somalia, and are reproduced in Appendix C. Other resolutions related to the global economic crisis, NATO's 'open door' policy and nuclear non-proliferation.

Conclusions

- 3.47 The Delegation found attendance at the NATO Parliamentary Assembly to be very worthwhile indeed. It was a valuable opportunity for members to inform themselves on a wide range of issues, to hear from civilian and military experts in various fields and also to exchange views with fellow parliamentarians from NATO member countries and other observer delegations.
- 3.48 While there has been increasing contact between Australia and NATO at government level in recent years in the context of the war in Afghanistan and meeting the international terrorist threat more generally, government perspectives and parliamentary perspectives are not always the same, and there is much to be gained from inter-parliamentary dialogue of the kind in which members engaged during the Assembly.
- 3.49 Given the repeated emphasis on the importance of communicating to the public the reasons for the commitment in Afghanistan, there is value in Members and Senators participating in events such as the Assembly and thereby being better equipped to communicate their understanding of relevant issues to colleagues and constituents.

Recommendation

The Delegation recommends that an Australian delegation attend the NATO Parliamentary Assembly at least once every two years.

3.50 On the subject of Afghanistan, the issues that were raised repeatedly, both in committee meetings and in the plenary session (and also in the Delegation's meetings in Brussels and London), were:

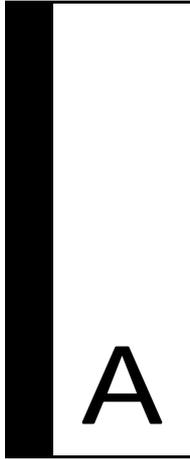
- the strategic importance of Pakistan in the region and of its continued viability as a nation state, and the need to support the Government of Pakistan in its efforts to deny safe havens to the Taliban and Al Qaeda, and against terrorism generally;
- the need to concentrate on protecting the Afghan population as well as fighting the insurgents;
- the need to communicate to the public of coalition nations the reasons for the mission in Afghanistan and the potential consequences of failure or premature withdrawal;
- the importance of assisting in the development of civil institutions and good governance in Afghanistan;
- the need to provide training for Afghan police and military forces; and
- the value of reintegrating, where possible, elements of the Taliban into mainstream Afghan society.

3.51 Other issues discussed at the Assembly which were of interest were piracy, energy, climate change, food security, nuclear proliferation, the global financial crisis, cyber-security, the changing nature of NATO's relationship with Russia and the development of a new strategic concept for NATO.

Visit to the Scottish Parliament

3.52 On Wednesday, 18 November, following the conclusion of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly, the Delegation visited the Scottish Parliament. Following a tour of the building the Delegation met the Presiding Officer of the Scottish Parliament, Alex Fergusson MSP. Mr Fergusson had led a delegation of Members of the Scottish Parliament to Australia in October.

Hon Arch Bevis MP
Delegation Leader



Appendix A – Delegation Program 9-20 November 2009

Saturday 7 November – Brussels

1105 Arrive Brussels Airport

Monday 9 November – Brussels

0900 Briefing by Ambassador HE Dr Alan Thomas and Australian Embassy staff

1030 Meeting with NATO staff

1300 Meeting with International Crisis Group

1500 Meeting with NATO Parliamentary Assembly secretariat

1600 Meeting with Andrew Duff MEP

1930 Dinner hosted by Ambassador Thomas

Tuesday 10 November – Brussels, Flanders, Ypres

0930 Tour of EUMS Operations Centre followed by meeting with General David Leakey and EUMS staff

1240 Meeting with Elmar Brok MEP

1330 Depart Brussels

1500 Tour of Flanders battlefields and war cemeteries

2000 Last Post at Menin Gate, Ypres

Wednesday 11 November – Ypres

- 0930 Remembrance Day commemorative service at St Martin’s Cathedral
- 1100 Remembrance Day ceremony at Menin Gate
- 1200 Mayor’s reception, Town Hall
- 1515 Visit to Hill 60 battlefield and memorial
- 1545 Depart for Lille
- 1735 Depart Lille Railway Station
- 1810 Arrive London, St Pancras International Railway Station

Thursday 12 November – London

- 0930 Meeting with Mr Tim Banfield, Director, Ministry of Defence Value for Money Audit – Procurement, National Audit Office,
- 1330 Meeting with Dr Jonathan Eyal, Director International Security, Royal United Services Institute and other RUSI staff
- 1500 Meeting with Mr James Arbuthnot MP, Chair of the Select Committee for Defence, and other committee members

Friday 13 November – London

- 0930 Briefing from High Commissioner HE Mr John Dauth LVO
- 1100 Depart London, Kings Cross Railway Station
- 1515 Arrive Edinburgh

Saturday 14 November – Edinburgh

NATO Parliamentary Assembly

Sunday 15 November – Edinburgh

NATO Parliamentary Assembly

Monday 16 November – Edinburgh

NATO Parliamentary Assembly

Tuesday 17 November – Edinburgh

NATO Parliamentary Assembly

Wednesday 18 November – Edinburgh

1030 Tour of the Scottish Parliament

1135 Meeting with Presiding Officer of the Scottish Parliament

1530 Depart Edinburgh Airport

1700 Arrive London, Heathrow Airport

Thursday 19 November – London

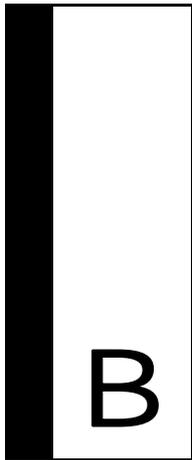
1100 Meeting with Ministry of Defence officials

1500 Meeting with Dr Liam Fox MP, Shadow Secretary of State for Defence and Mr Gerald Howarth MP, Shadow Minister for Defence

Friday 20 November – London

1200 Tour of Imperial War Museum

2200 Depart London, Heathrow Airport



Appendix B – Members of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly

UNITED STATES
FRANCE
GERMANY
ITALY
UNITED KINGDOM
CANADA
POLAND
SPAIN
TURKEY
ROMANIA
BELGIUM
CZECH REPUBLIC
GREECE
HUNGARY
NETHERLANDS
PORTUGAL
BULGARIA
DENMARK
NORWAY
SLOVAKIA
CROATIA
LITHUANIA
ALBANIA
ESTONIA
ICELAND
LATVIA
LUXEMBOURG
SLOVENIA

Associate Delegations

RUSSIAN FEDERATION

UKRAINE

AUSTRIA

AZERBAIJAN

SERBIA

SWEDEN

SWITZERLAND

FINLAND

GEORGIA

ARMENIA

BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

MOLDOVA

MONTENEGRO

THE FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA

The European Parliament**Regional Partner and Mediterranean Associate Member Delegations**

ALGERIA

MOROCCO

ISRAEL

JORDAN

Parliamentary Observers

AUSTRALIA

EGYPT

JAPAN

KAZAKHSTAN

PALESTINIAN LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

TUNISIA

SOUTH KOREA

Inter-Parliamentary Assemblies

OSCE PA

PACE

ESDA-AWEU



Appendix C – NATO Parliamentary Assembly, resolutions and addresses

RESOLUTION 375 on A COMPREHENSIVE AND CO-ORDINATED RESPONSE TO PIRACY OFF THE COAST OF SOMALIA

**Presented by the Committee on the Civil Dimension of Security and adopted by
the Plenary Assembly on Tuesday 17 November 2009, Edinburgh, UK**

The Assembly,

1. **Concerned** by the ongoing high number of pirate attacks worldwide but particularly off the coast of Somalia and in the region;
2. **Recognising** that piracy poses a serious threat to the freedom of navigation, to international shipping and other commercial activities in international waters, to highly needed deliveries of humanitarian assistance, to the security of the Alliance's citizens, and contributes to instability and insecurity in the region;
3. **Acknowledging** that the prevention and repression of piracy is primarily the responsibility of coastal states, and that the main aim of international assistance is to support them in performing these tasks;
4. **Saluting** national and international naval deployments off the coast of Somalia operating with the authorisation of the Transitional Federal Government of Somalia and under the mandate given by the United Nations Security Council;
5. **Welcoming** the high level of tactical co-ordination among deployed navies, and in particular between CTF 151, EU NAVFOR and NATO deployments;
6. **Praising** also the shipping community's efforts to enhance the self-protection of vessels against pirate attacks and promote compliance with best management practices and international regulations;

7. **Convinced** that combating piracy off the coast of Somalia requires a comprehensive approach, combining diplomacy, naval deployments, development assistance and bringing together all relevant stakeholders;
8. **Emphasising** the need to address the root causes of piracy, as well as the factors that have allowed it to prosper in Somalia;
9. **Stressing** in this regard the importance of assisting Somali institutions to consolidate the rule of law and build up functioning and accountable security institutions, as well as an effective and independent judiciary;
10. **Emphasising** also the importance of developing a genuine regional partnership against piracy, and welcoming in this regard the adoption of the Djibouti Code of Conduct;
11. **Emphasising** the importance for NATO to create a common legal framework allowing for the transfer of suspected pirates to states willing to conduct the prosecution;
12. **URGES** member governments, parliaments of the North Atlantic Alliance and, if appropriate, NATO institutions:
 - a. to support fully efforts by the Somali Transitional Federal Government and the United Nations to achieve political stability and sustainable economic development in Somalia;
 - b. to review national legislation relating to piracy with a view to the full incorporation in domestic law of the provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea and other relevant rules of international law, including those pertaining to the exercise of universal jurisdiction for the prosecution of suspected pirates;
 - c. to consider the conclusion of transfer agreements with regional states in support of NATO counter-piracy operations;
 - d. to pursue a thorough assessment of the costs and benefits of the establishment of an international tribunal to prosecute suspected pirates;
 - e. to further the establishment of judicial mechanisms to strengthen the possibilities to prosecute and try suspected pirates in the extended region;
 - f. to track better and interdict movements of funds and weapons in support of piracy;
 - g. to use all means available to become aware whether money acquired by pirates goes to finance terrorists and, if evidence shows that this is occurring, to take all steps necessary to prevent it;

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- h. to work with the shipping community to enhance compliance with best management practices and international requirements regarding the safety and security of international navigation;
- i. to sustain current levels of naval deployments in the region;
- j. to contribute additional aerial surveillance assets, and consider in particular the deployment of NATO AWACS aircraft and greater use of Unmanned Aerial Vehicles, as well as the use of material obtained by the European Space Agency and other satellite operators;
- k. to intensify public diplomacy efforts to explain the rationale for the international naval presence off the coast of Somalia;
- l. to continue efforts to achieve greater co-ordination of national and multinational naval deployments, and to seek to include all participant navies in co-ordination mechanisms such as the Shared Awareness and Deconfliction group and the co-ordination process for the Internationally Recommended Transit Corridor;
- m. to consider ways to engage NATO partner nations, as well as contact countries, in counterpiracy operations in a more systematic and structured co-operation;
- n. to avoid duplication of efforts and seek the highest possible degree of co-ordination between bilateral and multilateral initiatives to build up regional maritime law enforcement capacities;
- o. to conduct a thorough review of Allied operations off the coast of Somalia, focusing on NATO's added value and assessing achievements against stated ambitions, with a view to informing current discussions on a new maritime strategy and on the Alliance's Strategic Concept;
- p. to consider, as part of discussions on NATO's long-term role in maritime security, avenues for practical co-operation with the European Union, as well as with other multinational efforts, particularly the Combined Maritime Forces.

RESOLUTION 376 on NATO'S ENDURING COMMITMENT TO AFGHANISTAN

Presented by the Defence and Security Committee and adopted by the Plenary Assembly on Tuesday 17 November 2009, Edinburgh, UK.

1. **Reaffirming** the crucial importance of the NATO mission in Afghanistan, and noting that its success is vital to the security of our nations and the future welfare of the Afghan people;
2. **Stressing** the strategic importance of preventing Afghanistan from becoming once again a haven for international terrorism, a narco-state, or a destabilising feature in a strategically vital region;
3. **Emphasising** the Comprehensive Strategic Political Military Plan, as revised by NATO Heads of State and Government at the Strasbourg/Kehl Summit, as a clear sense of direction and a road map for success in Afghanistan;
4. **Commending** the performance of our forces in most demanding conditions and **honouring** those who have lost their lives or have been injured in this mission;
5. **Commending** further the Afghan forces that are increasingly taking the lead in security operations and withstanding high casualty rates;
6. **Welcoming** the renewal of constructive dialogue and co-operation between Afghan and Pakistani officials at all levels, including the Ankara Process;
7. **Noting** with increasing concern the deteriorating security situation in Afghanistan;
8. **Taking note of** the stark initial assessment by ISAF Commander General Stanley McChrystal, and of the fluid political process currently underway in Kabul;
9. **Wholeheartedly supporting** the successful efforts of NATO forces to reduce civilian casualties, while **regretting** the accidental deaths of Afghan civilians caused by some NATO operations;
10. **Strongly condemning** the terrorist tactics used by insurgents of deliberately targeting noncombatants and routinely using them as a shield to cover their own activity;
11. **Stressing** that NATO's role in Afghanistan is ultimately limited to providing a safe and secure environment, including by combating terrorists and drug-related illegal activities, in which efforts by other actors in the political and economic

sectors are required to achieve an acceptable, comprehensive and sustainable outcome;

12. **Recognising** that social and economic development for the Afghan people is key to obtaining a safe and stable Afghanistan;
13. **Underlining** the importance of the role that the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan must play in co-ordinating multilateral efforts;
14. **Emphasising** the need for a government accepted as legitimate, competent, efficient and effective by the Afghan people; **also emphasising** the need for the new government to enhance national unity;
15. **Encouraging** the Afghan government to enhance its efforts towards fair and free elections and furthermore to focus its efforts on good governance and fighting corruption;
16. **Recognising** the importance of capable, democratically-controlled, and well-equipped Afghan national security forces to the provision of a safe and secure environment throughout the country;
17. **Further recognising** the key nature of the role NATO must continue to play in training and equipping forces which ultimately will be responsible for ensuring Afghanistan's security for the long term;
18. **Welcoming** the recent additional military contributions of some Allied countries, but **encouraging** all Allies to share fully in the risks and costs of our collective decisions;
19. **URGES** member governments and parliaments of the North Atlantic Alliance:
 - a. to reaffirm their enduring and lasting commitment to assisting the government of Afghanistan to provide a secure and stable environment for its citizens, in order to prevent the reemergence of threats emanating from Afghan territory against its own peoples and peoples elsewhere, and to further increase economic support for social and economic development;
 - b. to endorse and resource the approach advocated by the ISAF Commander, placing the Afghan peoples at the core of our collective efforts;
 - c. to supply, as a matter of absolute priority, the personnel, equipment, and funding necessary to speed the development of the Afghan National Security forces, in order to promote a transition to Afghan leadership in all areas at the appropriate time.

RESOLUTION 378 on ENGAGING PAKISTAN

Presented by the Political Committee and adopted by the Plenary Assembly on Tuesday, 17 November 2009, Edinburgh, United Kingdom

The Assembly,

1. **Aware** that the Afghan-Pakistan border serves as the main refuge and supply-route for the Taliban insurgents and al-Qaeda across both countries;
2. **Recognising** the importance of Pakistan and its contribution to the stabilisation of Afghanistan and the surrounding region;
3. **Concerned** about the fragile security situation in Pakistan and the increasing number of Internally Displaced Persons;
4. **Noting** that Pakistan continues to suffer from high inflation, large income inequality and a chronic lack of spending for infrastructure and education, especially in the border areas;
5. **Acknowledging** that consolidating democracy while fighting an increasingly violent insurgency will be a long and painful process;
6. **Supporting** Islamabad's increasing effort to eliminate Pakistan-based extremists who have operated in neighbouring Afghanistan and India;
7. **Noting** that the Pakistani government and military have reversed their policy by militarily engaging the Pakistani Taliban;
8. **Convinced** that the development by Pakistan of a co-operative, co-ordinated working relationship, particularly with Afghanistan, India and Iran, is essential for regional and global security and stability;
9. **Endorsing** the US and the NATO Allies' comprehensive military, political and economic approach towards Afghanistan and Pakistan, which will be necessary to defeat the extremists;
10. **Recognising** the significant increase in assistance provided to Pakistan particularly by the United States;
11. **URGES** the government and parliament of Pakistan:
 - a. to reinforce the fight against local and transnational insurgents and to implement a more effective national and international approach to defeating all extremists within its borders;

b. to establish a stable and secure environment throughout Pakistan, followed by the strengthening of the rule of law and the improvement of accountability and transparency of government institutions;

12. **URGES** member governments and parliaments of the North Atlantic Alliance:

a. to enable Pakistan to combat the extremists effectively by further developing and expanding training and education courses for its officers;

b. to deliver and, if possible, to enhance the assistance promised;

c. to encourage and support Pakistan's efforts to address its long-term challenges of poverty, unemployment, and underdevelopment through continued economic assistance;

d. to reaffirm their willingness and long-term commitment to enable Pakistan to guarantee its own security;

e. to encourage India and Pakistan to open a dialogue on Kashmir, which would allow Pakistan the discretion to redeploy soldiers from its frontier regions with India to its frontier regions with Afghanistan.

Speech by the President of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly, Hon John Tanner (United States), 17 November 2009

It is a pleasure to be in Edinburgh for this Assembly meeting. For those of us from the United States and Canada, Scotland holds a special place in our national histories. Waves of Scottish immigrants became North Americans and made enormous contributions to their adopted homelands. Let me just mention two.

Alexander Graham Bell changed the world when he invented the telephone in the United States, but he was born and educated here in Edinburgh. Davy Crockett is a legendary figure in American history, but he was also the son of Scottish immigrants. I have the honour of representing the same district in the US House of Representatives that he did nearly 200 years ago. The long and deep bond between this part of the United Kingdom and North America is obvious not just in the names of our cities and towns, but in the people, the history, and the culture.

In many ways it is emblematic of what holds this Alliance together. NATO is not just a military alliance. When a new member joins us, the entire country joins, not just the military. That is because we are a community of states with common values, and a belief in government based on the principles of democracy, individual liberty, and the rule of law.

When we consider the range of issues we confront, it is useful to fall back on this basic point. If this were simply a military alliance, it would have fallen apart twenty years ago when the threat it was built to counter disappeared. This Alliance endures because it is built on something deeper. It does not stand against anyone. It stands for a community of values and a commitment to defend that community.

We should recall this sense of shared purpose as we address doubts about our common commitment to our efforts in Afghanistan.

Our national debates seem to be taking place independently of one another. I am not sure, to be honest, if many Americans realize that their men and women in uniform there are acting as part of a coalition that includes their Allies in Europe and Asia. By the same token, when I hear about how the mission in Afghanistan is being discussed in other countries, it seems as though many people in Europe are unaware that their troops are part of a NATO mission that is in turn part of a larger effort of the United Nations. Instead, it is often portrayed as an "American" mission, not the Alliance effort that it actually is.

My point in raising this issue is not to be pessimistic but to push us to be more active. Many of our citizens seem unaware or misinformed about what NATO is and what it does. I know that NATO is working to improve its public communication strategy, and I believe that the NATO Parliamentary Assembly

has an important role to play here as well. We are all here because we represent the people of our countries. We meet with them regularly in a variety of formats and discuss the issues that concern them. That is what we do as parliamentarians, but we need to be more proactive.

Our Alliance is involved in a mission that is bigger than any one of us and has broader implications than many of our citizens fully appreciate. The great Scottish-American businessman and philanthropist Andrew Carnegie once said that the key to success is understanding that “No person will make a great enterprise who wants to do it all himself or get all the credit.” It is as relevant to NATO as it was to any of Carnegie’s businesses. No one member of the Alliance can do this on his own. It is a joint effort in Afghanistan and we all must share the effort and the credit.

We need to be discussing NATO, its operations, and its purpose in as many public venues as we can. We need to demonstrate to our citizens that the Alliance is relevant to their security. We need to help them understand that the protection of what they value most depends on our ability to work together. NATO is a “great enterprise” and it requires a renewed commitment to a shared effort to ensure that it remains so.

I know that for most of us, the mission in Afghanistan is a priority. As the largest mission in NATO’s history, it deserves our focused attention and commitment. We must continue to press home the message that all the Allies agreed to this mission as a collective Alliance commitment.

But there are other important issues that we need to consider as an Alliance.

How should the Alliance adapt to meet the security challenges of the 21st century? What, if any, new missions should NATO prepare itself for? How do we build a more constructive relationship with our partners, particularly Russia?

These questions are being addressed as NATO prepares its new Strategic Concept. I know that many of you are participating in the debates we are having in this Assembly and elsewhere about this project to shape the direction of the Alliance. I am grateful for the efforts of Sven Mikser as our Special Rapporteur on the Assembly’s contribution to the Strategic Concept and I look forward to seeing his final draft. But allow me to offer a few thoughts on the Strategic Concept as I believe it is an important part of how we craft a coherent sense of purpose in the Alliance that we can communicate to our constituents.

First, if we are going to be honest with our fellow citizens, we need to have a better idea of where we are going as an Alliance. What missions do we see as part of its portfolio and how do these relate to the work of other international organizations? In tough financial times, we need to show people – taxpayers - that

NATO is a worthwhile investment. We can do that by crafting a Strategic Concept that shows how NATO fits into broader efforts to improve stability and security.

Second, we need to seriously think about how the Alliance works with its partners. There are representatives from many partner countries here today and I thank them for their participation in NATO missions. As the role of NATO in the world changes, we need to develop a coherent approach to our partners so that we can work with them to improve the security of us all. Russia is of course one of the most prominent of NATO's partners. Yet, how we deal with Russia has the potential to become a divisive issue in the Alliance. The fundamental question is how we build a cooperative, pragmatic relationship with Russia while preserving the basic principle that all states have the right to determine their foreign policy and direction in the world. NATO and Russia share many strategic interests and a partnership between them offers enormous benefits in terms of security and stability. This assembly must and will maintain an open channel of communication and opportunities for dialogue with Russian parliamentarians. However, we cannot ignore our differences. For instance, NATO also has a close partnership with both Georgia and Ukraine, and stated clearly at its Bucharest Summit that these nations will become NATO members. They have made the commitment to meet the conditions for NATO membership, and they have the sovereign right to choose their own course.

Finally, I would stress that we must carefully consider the range of risks the Alliance faces and what we want to do about them. The core of the Alliance is and always will be Article 5, and an armed attack on one member will be considered as an attack on all. That solidarity is at the heart of the transatlantic Alliance and will not change. But threats to our security can come from sources other than armed attack. How should the Alliance and its partners address the threats posed by international terrorism and the proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction? What should we do about the dangers posed by vulnerabilities in information systems? Is there a role for NATO in energy security?

It is vital that we look at the whole picture and try to make the Alliance flexible so it can adapt to changing circumstances, but not at the cost of weakening our ability to perform our core missions.

Andrew Carnegie also said, "The older I get, I pay less attention to what men say. I just watch what they do." People are watching what NATO does - but at the same time they are also paying attention to what NATO does not do. The new Strategic Concept is an opportunity to refocus our attention, reaffirm our commitments and reach out to form stronger partnerships that will enhance our security in the broadest sense.

Ladies and gentlemen, I would like to conclude by remembering the momentous events of 20 years ago, almost to the day. When the Berlin Wall fell, it set off a chain of events that were completely unimaginable then. If you said in November 1989 that in less than 20 years most of the states in Central and Eastern Europe would be independent, democratic, members of NATO and the European Union, you would have been ridiculed.

But these things happened. And they happened because this Alliance stood together in solidarity. It is an important lesson to consider as we move forward. No one can be certain what challenges we will face in the next ten or twenty years. But I am certain that we will only be able to face them if we have the same degree of solidarity as we did then.

Speech by NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen to the NATO Parliamentary Assembly, 17 November 2009

As already mentioned by the President, this is my first opportunity to address the NATO Parliamentary Assembly in my new capacity as Secretary General, and I have been looking forward to this event for quite some time. As a former parliamentarian for some 31 years, it is a bit of a home coming for me.

It is always enjoyable to be amongst colleagues and in the middle of lively political debate.

But more importantly, I have been looking forward to this occasion to seek your support. I strongly believe that now, more than ever, we need to re-build the bridges of understanding between NATO and the public of our member and partner states.

We need them to understand how our security environment is changing, how the role of military power in this environment is changing, and how NATO is changing.

You, the Parliamentarians of our Alliance and our partner nations, have a crucial role to play here in getting those messages across. And as we all know, at the moment, these messages must centre on our Number One operation priority: Afghanistan.

Let's be honest: The past months have been extremely demanding. And our forces, both Afghan and ISAF, have suffered significant numbers of casualties. So let me first recognise the tremendous hard work, and sacrifice, that the soldiers from many of your nations are making. I have witnessed at first hand their remarkable determination, professionalism, and courage.

I understand that many people have started to ask whether the price of our engagement is too high.

They are frustrated by the pace of progress. And let me tell you, I'm impatient too. They wonder whether it makes any difference at all to their security at home. And they worry about the cost – both in blood and treasure.

These questions deserve a convincing answer – from me, from governments, and from you.

Let's look at what we've achieved already. Al Qaeda no longer has any training camps in Afghanistan; they no longer have a safe haven in Afghanistan; and they haven't managed to launch a single major attack from Afghanistan since we've been there. This is a major blow to them. It's a real success for us. And it's a clear contribution to our national security at home.

To my mind, it is obvious that if we were to walk away and turn our backs on Afghanistan, Al Qaeda would be back in a flash. They would have a sanctuary from which to launch their strategy of global jihad – a strategy that is directed first and foremost against us. There is absolutely no reason to think otherwise, and anyone who does so is not living in the real world. If we were to walk away, the pressure on nuclear-armed Pakistan would be tremendous. Instability would spread throughout Central Asia.

And it would only be a matter of time until all our nations, and all our citizens, would feel the consequence.

So in answer to the question about the costs of our engagement, my answer is yes – the costs of this operation are high. But the costs of walking away would be far, far higher. And that is why we have to stay the course and build on the considerable progress we have made so far.

I know that some people are concerned not just about the costs of the operation, but also about its future direction. Again, I understand why. But people should be reassured that soon there will be new momentum. And we have many reasons to be more optimistic. We will progressively be handing over more and more lead responsibility to the Afghans themselves – this is the key element of our approach that will be clear from the decisions we will be taking in the near future.

In a few weeks, I expect we will decide, in NATO, on the approach, and troop levels needed, to take our mission forward. I'm confident it will be a counter-insurgency approach, with substantially more troops, and will place the Afghan population at the core of ISAF's collective effort – by focusing on their safety, and by supporting reconstruction and development.

And crucially, we will do more to build the capacity of the Afghan National Security Forces.

And this is the way ahead: A transition to Afghan lead responsibility.

Don't make any mistake. We will stay in Afghanistan as long as it takes to finish our job. But that is, of course, not forever. Our mission in Afghanistan ends when the Afghans are capable of securing and running their country themselves.

The way forward is to hand over lead responsibility for security to the Afghan security forces - district by district, province by province as their own capacity develops.

Therefore we must train and educate Afghan soldiers and Afghan police. We have already established a NATO training mission in Afghanistan. And I urge all Allies to contribute significantly to this training mission.

We need trainers, we need equipment and we need money. So there are many ways in which not just NATO allies and ISAF partners, but the whole international community, can invest in a transition to Afghan lead.

I am confident that we can, and should, start next year to hand over more lead responsibility for security to Afghan forces. We will do this in a coordinated way, where conditions permit, and this will allow us to progressively move into a support role.

These are very concrete steps. They are both realistic and achievable. But they cannot be done on the cheap. Indeed, if we want to do less in the future, we are going to have to do more now.

I am grateful to you, the NATO Parliamentary Assembly, for the support you have given us in meeting the Afghanistan challenge so far. But I want to use this opportunity to strongly encourage you, and your governments, to make more military resources available - extra combat forces for ISAF; extra troops for enhanced partnership and teaming with the Afghan National Security Forces; and extra troops for training, particularly through the NATO Training Mission in Afghanistan.

I firmly believe that we can continue to make progress - significant progress - if we can close the gap between the resources which the Commander of ISAF currently has available, and those he actually requires to do his job.

But extra military resources from NATO and its partners in ISAF are not a panacea.

More also needs to be done on the civilian side to boost the Afghan government's own capacity - through the United Nations Assistance Mission Afghanistan, through other International Organisations, and through bilateral and multilateral frameworks. And again, I look to you to see what more your nations can do in this respect - on the civilian side.

Finally, of course, Afghanistan itself must also do more – far more. I have urged President Karzai and his new Government to demonstrate a strong and clear commitment to reform – to redouble their efforts to fight corruption and the drug trade, to provide basic services to the people, to reform the judicial system, and to improve governance at all levels. And I hope that you will also reinforce those messages.

In the coming months, there will be an international conference, led by the United Nations. This will be the perfect opportunity to create a new compact between the Afghan Government and the international community, and to provide clear benchmarks for progress. It will also be the ideal occasion for the international community to demonstrate its long-term commitment.

And I can assure you that NATO will continue to play its full part. The Alliance has a clear strategy for the way ahead. It is a strategy that will not only help in building a secure and stable Afghanistan. It is a strategy that will help enhance security for everyone – for Afghanistan, for the wider region, and for all our nations. It is a strategy that deserves your full support.

Ladies and Gentlemen, I make no apology for speaking at length about Afghanistan. But Afghanistan is only one example of the changing security environment NATO faces. We must not ignore the many other new, complex security challenges that are becoming clearer by the day – challenges such as proliferation, cyber attacks, energy security, piracy, and the security implications of climate change.

Whenever one talks about new threats, one encounters sceptics who believe that NATO is just looking for new excuses to justify its existence. I say to those sceptics that, as a security organisation, it is our obligation to lift our eyes from the present, and to scan the horizon for what might be looming.

Ten years ago, no one would have imagined NATO in an anti-piracy role. Today, we are involved – as is the European Union and many other nations from around the world. Because times change – and the challenges change. NATO needs to continue to adapt to these challenges. And I am determined to drive that process of adaptation further forward.

I see five areas of adaptation that I consider to be most critical.

The first is military transformation. Military transformation lies at the heart of the new NATO. So we need clear thinking about the way ahead. Let me make clear: safeguarding one's territory against outside aggression is among the foremost obligations of any state – and of any alliance that takes itself seriously. This will never change.

It is equally clear, however, that most of today's challenges originate far beyond our borders. That is why our territorial defence does not begin at home, but abroad. And it is why a debate about collective defence versus expeditionary missions misses the point. We need forces that are mobile and flexible – we need forces that are deployable in any contingency. And so one of my priorities as Secretary General will be to continue to remind the Allies – and you, as parliamentarians with a key role in defence policy – to speed up the transformation of our military capabilities.

Second, I will keep on urging all Allies to devote adequate resources to defence – but also to spend their money wisely. In the current economic crisis, it is more important than ever that we get our priorities right – and that we match requirements and resources. And so we need to keep looking at the way in which we plan, man and pay for operations.

And we need to continue focusing on capabilities that we all know are relevant to the new security environment: strategic and tactical airlift, and modern command and control systems – to name but a few. And we need to promote multinational solutions through joint funding and the pooling of vital assets. And that is certainly what I will be doing.

Third, we need a more mature NATO-Russia relationship. We cannot talk seriously about an undivided Europe if we prove unable – or unwilling – to engage Russia. Among our 28 Allies, there are different views on Russia. That should not surprise anyone. History cannot be erased. But neither should we become prisoners of the past. We need a new relationship with Russia – one that allows us to pursue common interests and air our differences, such as, for example our unflinching commitment to the “open door” policy. Some consider Russia a challenge – I see it as an opportunity. And it is in this spirit that I will go to Moscow in a few weeks' time to discuss the way ahead on a deeper NATO-Russia relationship.

Fourth, we need to draw our partners closer. Our traditional partner countries have become an indispensable part of our team. And new partners from across the globe, from A like Australia to Z like New Zealand, participate in NATO-led operations. So partnership has become a true strategic asset.

We need to nourish it, and develop it further.

And finally, I also want to push forward NATO's internal reform – to improve its structures, its procedures, and its working practices. I want, in particular, to get the civilian and military side of NATO to work closer together. I want to make sure that our policy-making is supported by a strong intelligence process. And I want to continue pruning our committee structure – not in order to do away with

the consensus principle, but in order to make our decision-making faster and more effective.

All these changes, taken together, will be key elements in making NATO fit for the 21st century – which is why I am determined to pursue them. I firmly believe that we need, at the same time, to agree on a broader, long-term vision for NATO – and to set this out in our new Strategic Concept. Because this will help us to make the right political choices; to better prioritise our tasks; and to better identify the resources needed to fulfil them.

To put it simply, the new Strategic Concept will give us a vision of NATO in the changing security environment – and it will give us a firm, and agreed, foundation for all our future work.

We have deliberately made the development of a new Strategic Concept a very open and very inclusive process. I have asked a group of twelve eminent experts led by former US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright to come up with recommendations.

We are also engaging the strategic community more widely, as well as the general public, through a series of conferences and other activities. Needless to say, I expect the NATO Parliamentary Assembly to continue to play its part too, in helping to shape the future of NATO. And I am very much looking forward to receiving your inputs next spring.

Distinguished Parliamentarians, Ladies and Gentlemen, Dear Friends, Never before has our security environment been so complex. And never before has NATO's agenda been so broad. We are doing more, in more places, than ever before. That is why a new Strategic Concept is so important.

I see it as a means not only to create a new, solid consensus among Allies on our key tasks, but also to connect our populations with the new NATO. After all, people will only support what they understand and appreciate.

To me, this means that we have to invest not only in NATO's continuing political and military transformation. We also need to invest more time and effort in connecting with our publics – nearly a billion people. These people are our customers.

It is their safety – their security – that we are responsible for, and that we care for. I firmly believe that a modernised NATO, supported by a dynamic NATO Parliamentary Assembly, will bring home this fundamental truth.

Thank you.

The War In Afghanistan: How A Political Surge Can Work - Speech to the NATO Parliamentary Assembly by the Rt Hon David Miliband MP, United Kingdom Foreign Secretary, 17 November 2009

Last week in Berlin, I watched the moving commemoration of the event that defined the end of the Cold War. The fall of the Wall twenty years ago closed a dark chapter in Europe's history. It also presaged a broader role for NATO.

There are many big, long term issues for NATO to address - notably cooperation with the EU, where the passage of the Lisbon Treaty creates a major opportunity for more proactive and efficient European Defence and Foreign Policy cooperation; relations with Russia, where NATO and OSCE in their own ways need to respond in a positive and principled fashion to the idea of a debate about European security architecture; and the modernisation of NATO's internal structures, where we need to streamline decision-making, improve defence planning, slim down the headquarters structures and beef up capability development.

Today, however, I make no apology for focusing my remarks on the war in Afghanistan. In each of the countries of NATO, people are wondering whether the military commitment of combat troops will be endless. My belief is that it does not need to be - if we ally to the impending decisions for force uplift, Afghan and international, a commitment to political uplift, in the key relationships between the peoples of Afghanistan, the government and the insurgency, and Afghanistan and its neighbours. Today I want to discuss how the idea of a political surge can be turned from a cliché into a reality.

The Scale of the Sacrifice

I don't need to remind this audience that total ISAF casualties this year alone stand at 472. Many more have been injured, in many cases very seriously. Many thousands of members of the Afghan National Security Forces, the Pakistani military and civilians in Afghanistan and Pakistan have been killed. We pay tribute today to each and every sacrifice made.

For the UK, we have suffered the bloodiest year since the Falklands war. Since Armistice Day 2008 we have lost over 100 members of our armed forces. The Prime Minister spoke ten days ago, and last night, about the aims of the mission - to prevent Afghanistan being used again, by Al Qaida under the umbrella of Taliban rule, as a launching pad for international terrorism; about the strategic plan - to support the development of Afghan institutions to deliver this goal; about the priorities - for a clean and competent Cabinet and provincial appointments, for enhancements to ANSF capacity, for action against corruption that saps the loyalty of the Afghan people; and about the next steps, starting with the inauguration of President Karzai in Kabul, where I will travel later this week.

The military effort is brave and impressive. Since this is a war, and since soldiers are being killed, it is inevitable that much of the debate about strategy concerns military posture and above all troop numbers. That is important. Secretary General Rasmussen has addressed the issue this morning. In every capital, every government and every Parliament, we will have to address the issue of what burden we should bear.

President Obama is now in the final stages of his deliberations. In the UK we support the prosecution of a serious counter-insurgency effort in Afghanistan. We do not see that as an alternative to counter-terrorism but as the best means to achieve it. And we are ready in the right conditions to raise our already high contributions on the basis of an agreed strategy.

I fully endorse the arguments for burden sharing today. But I don't want to repeat them. Instead I want to return to a theme that I outlined in a speech at NATO headquarters in July, and set out what the UK government believes to be the essential counterpart of a coherent military strategy - namely a political strategy of strength because it is comprehensive and depth because it is rooted in the life and history of the Afghan people.

We all repeat that "there can be no purely military solution"; so let's take that mantra seriously; recognise that we will succeed in Afghanistan only when our military resources and development assistance are aligned behind a clear political strategy. Unless we get this right our military will be able to suppress the cancers of insurgency and instability, but not tackle their causes.

The goals of a political strategy are clear. It is to unite a critical mass of the key players behind shared goals - Al Qaida kept out, the different tribal groups kept onside, and the neighbours prepared to play a constructive role in Afghanistan's future. I stress that a political strategy is not separate from a military strategy, or vice versa. Each must be part of a single whole, working to our overriding shared objective.

To be successful the political strategy must address three audiences. This is a war in the mind as well on the ground. First, the Afghan people and their loyalty: to reassure and mobilise citizens to resist the Taliban, military effort to improve security must be allied to civilian effort to improve governance especially at the local level. Second, the insurgents and their determination to fight: military pressure to beat back the insurgency must be combined with support to flip sides rather than fight or run away. Third, Afghanistan's neighbours: a new relationship must be forged between Afghanistan and its neighbours, based on the understanding that Afghanistan's future is not as a client of any, but as a secure country in its own right.

Reassurance

Less than five percent of Afghans want the Taliban back. This is our greatest strength. But they fear that the international community will tire of the war and the Taliban will return, inflicting brutal retribution on those who “collaborated” with the government.

This is the security challenge at the heart of the McChrystal report. It requires training and mentoring of the Afghan army and police. And it requires us to support local, informal security initiatives, empowering communities that decide that they want to stop the insurgents from terrorising their villages.

But security, formal and informal, is inseparable from governance. This is the first plank of an effective political strategy.

The Taliban know this. This is why they appoint shadow governors. It is why they have systems to take up complaints against their own so called "officials". Why they install “shari'a” courts to deliver swift and enforced justice in contested and controlled areas.

The Government of Afghanistan, supported by the international community, must offer a better alternative.

Many of the candidates in the Presidential election, including President Karzai himself and Dr Abdullah, argued for a wider process than the constitutionally mandated Parliamentary and District Elections next year, to take stock of the national political structures created in the heat of events after 2001. But for most Afghans, particularly in the areas most badly infected by the insurgency, sub-national governance is the only form of governance that matters. The 34 Provincial Governors, the 364 District Governors of Afghanistan, and the *shuras* – bodies of local elders – should all represent their people’s views, and help deliver to the people the governance, the security, and the elementary justice, they crave.

There are a number of good ways sub-national governance is being supported: through the Independent Directorate of Local Governance, for example, or the Afghan Social Outreach Programme, or the 22, 000 Community Development Councils. But their coverage is patchy, the link to the reintegration of insurgents weak, and their funding far too small. In 2008, the total national budget of the Afghan Government Department responsible for local governance, the Independent Directorate of Local Governance, was \$33m. That is less than \$1m a province to run local administration.

A winning political strategy would select and train, empower and equip, mentor and monitor those responsible for governing the provinces and districts of Afghanistan. It would help those Governors and District Governors create,

through elections or other appropriate methods of consultation, truly representative local *shuras* that have the backing of the Afghan Constitution. In turn, those *shuras* can guide the distribution of development funds that create jobs and build schools and clinics. They can deliver some aspects of civil and criminal collective dispute resolution which is what Afghans mean by the rule of law. They can provide a forum for a political debate, and, under carefully controlled conditions, provide the re-entry mechanisms for insurgents seeking reintegration.

In this, there may need to be, as General McChrystal has said, a different approach to the insurgency in rural areas – where sympathy for the Taliban is much stronger, and where security and governance have never been delivered by conventional military or police forces – to that in urban areas, where resentment of the Taliban and all they represent is more acute, and where the conventional tactics of “Clear, Hold and Build”, delivered by conventional Afghan and international forces, may have a much greater chance of gaining purchase.

The offer to the Afghan people has to be, at national and subnational level, governance they can believe in. Believe in because it is there to stay. And there to stay because it goes with the grain of the ancient but continually evolving traditions on which the Afghan polity has existed as a stable but loose confederation for some two and a half centuries.

Our role should not be to prescribe exactly how those traditions evolve, or how the systems which reflect them are implemented, but to provide the resources without which none of this would be possible, and which will be far far less expensive than trying to suppress the insurgency by conventional military means.

Reintegration

This brings me to the second part of the political strategy: dividing the insurgency.

The Afghan insurgency is not a monolith. There is no single authoritative leadership. Different insurgent groups operate in different localities. Sometimes they take orders from a Taliban central command in Peshawar or Quetta. Other times cooperation is purely tactical and opportunistic.

By combining targeted military pressure with concrete political incentives we can change the calculations of these people and force them to reassess. This time last year the Taliban commander Ghulam Yahya claimed to control 600 fighters in Herat, western Afghanistan. But in October he was killed in an ISAF strike. Shortly afterwards his deputy was arrested by the ANP, and the insurgent structures underneath him quickly collapsed, with former fighters returning to their villages and accepting the authority of the government.

This is just one example. But with intelligence led, targeted operations against not just individuals but key positions within the insurgent hierarchy, we can weaken the insurgency. Because the impact is not just on the individual who is removed, but on those around him who fear for their lives.

There does, however, need to be an alternative to fighting – a route back into society, not just a tougher penalty. That is the significance of discussion of a National Reintegration Organisation, which can help former combatants to return to their homes, supporting them to start new lives and find new ways to make a living and support their families. The international community can provide support – including through an Afghan Resettlement fund – but reintegration needs to be led by the Afghans both at the central and at the district and community levels.

The thesis is simple. Some Afghan Taliban may be committed to global jihad. But the vast majority are not. Their primary commitment is to tribe and to locality. Our goal is not a fight to the death. It is to demonstrate clearly that they cannot win; and to provide a way back into their communities for those who are prepared to live peacefully.

Once reintegration gains momentum, and the insurgency is starting to fray or crumble, we will need to support President Karzai in reaching out to those high-level commanders that can be persuaded to renounce Al Qaida and pursue their goals peacefully within the constitutional framework. This will be far from straightforward. But the historical lessons are clear. Blood enemies from the Soviet period and the civil war now work together in government. Former Talibs already sit in the Parliament. It is essential that, when the time is right, members of the current insurgency are encouraged to follow suit.

Neighbours

The third element in weakening the insurgency is a new relationship with Afghanistan's neighbours. The fighters within Afghanistan draw on funding, support and shelter from beyond its borders.

Afghanistan's neighbours are motivated by a range of contradictory fears. As Hillary Clinton pointed out again on Sunday, it is not, and never has been, the coalition's intention, to establish a permanent security force in Afghanistan, or colonise the country, or to use it as a base for regional dominance. But equally having driven Al Qaida from Afghanistan we do not want to leave only for them to return.

The choice on offer for the neighbours is not between stable clienthood and unstable independence. It is between an unstable state with terrorism, crime, drugs and migration destabilising the whole neighbourhood, and an independent,

sovereign state which enjoys good relations with its neighbours, and is a responsible and respected member of the international community.

Each of the neighbours has a range of interests in Afghanistan – whether it is Iranian investments in Herat, or Pakistani interest in promoting the return of the hundreds of thousands of Afghan refugees still in Pakistan, or Russian and Central Asian concern about drug running. Above all, they have much to gain from an Afghanistan that develops as a commercial and cultural cross-roads of South West Asia. Creating this will require the kind of long-term vision and drive that brought peace to Western Europe after centuries of conflict. It must be done, using the habits of consultation and conciliation essential to convincing the parties that each has more to lose from continuing conflict than it has to gain from tolerant co-operation.

The foundation for better relations is the resolve shown by the Pakistani government, military and people in taking on domestic insurgents, most recently in South Waziristan. For years, the West has lobbied Pakistani politicians and army generals to take action against domestic militants. Yet despite billions of dollars in US military assistance, there was little shift in behaviour. The fight against terrorism was seen as Washington's war. That position has been transformed because Pakistani public opinion has shifted dramatically. Pakistani citizens have felt the devastating effects of terrorists turning on their own people.

The opportunity is to squeeze the life out of the terrorist threat from both sides of the Afghanistan-Pakistan border. That will happen only if Pakistan and the international community develop a new relationship based on a recognition of interdependence and shared interests. The successful passage of the Kerry-Lugar Bill shows that the partnership with the US is based on development as well as security, and is between civilian institutions not just military ones. The first EU-Pakistan summit earlier this year was a step towards a longer-term strategic partnership between the two, in which the world's largest single market and its biggest aid budget must help promote economic growth and development in a country beset by poverty and instability.

But the relationship must be two-way. The international community must address the needs of ordinary Pakistanis – in terms of jobs, education, trade and agriculture. Pakistan must address not just the terrorist threat to its own citizens, but Al Qaida and the Afghan Taliban who threaten our citizens. That means the current military operations need over time to address all militants who shelter Al Qaida, as well as those who threaten Pakistan itself. It also means ensuring that the areas that have already been subject to military operations – in Swat and the Malakand Division – are reconstructed effectively and internally displaced persons resettled, so that short-term military success does not give way to longer term civilian disaffection. Finally, it means giving the people of FATA a clear roadmap towards proper inclusion in the Pakistani state, with the same rights –

and responsibilities – as other citizens.

The Agenda for the next Afghan Government

This political strategy depends on an Afghan Government able to act decisively in the interests of the whole country. There can be no Afghanisation without an Afghan lead.

President Karzai intends to use his inaugural speech on Thursday to set out a positive agenda for the Afghan people. We shall be there to act as witnesses to what should be a new contract between President Karzai and people. A people whose hopes were so lifted by the achievements of the years after the fall of the Taliban; and whose fears of a return to earlier, never forgotten, miseries have been awoken by the endurance of the insurgency of a more recent past. Our role is to support their aspirations because the Afghan people are key to the future stability of the country. We need to do so in a coordinated and effective way, and that is what the Prime Minister set out yesterday.

In the eyes of the Afghan people and the wider world, this means addressing the corrosive fear of corruption. None of us is so naïve as to think that in Afghanistan, or any other country, corruption can be eliminated overnight or completely. Nor do we deny that the vast flow of foreign funds into a country whose government's self-generated income is less than \$1bn a year doesn't play a part.

Yesterday Interior Minister Atmar announced the creation of a new unit to tackle high-level corruption. This will need real powers both to investigate and to prosecute. And the Afghan people also need to see, from the appointments of Cabinet Ministers and Provincial Governors, that there is a fresh attempt to govern in their interests. By governing in their interests, the new Afghan government will be governing in ours. Because the point about counter-insurgency is that it depends on the will of the people.

I - as much as anyone else - want to bring our troops back home to safety. But we cannot leave a vacuum which the Taliban will quickly fill. Counter-terrorism deals with the symptoms. It brings short term success. But only a comprehensive strategy can deal with the causes and ensure that when we leave, we do so knowing that we will not have to return.

This is not a war without end. But success must be based on aligning our military and civilian resources behind a clear political strategy. A strategy that reassures and mobilises ordinary Afghans to resist the Taliban; that divides the insurgency by reintegrating and reconciling those in search of money, status or power; and that builds a new relationship between Afghanistan and its neighbours. That is what the British Government is determined to promote.

Speech by Admiral James Stavridis, Supreme Allied Commander Europe, to the NATO Parliamentary Assembly, 17 November 2009

President Tanner, thank you sir for your introduction and for the invitation to address this distinguished body today. Esteemed members of parliaments, ladies and gentlemen, colleagues, friends ... good afternoon It is a pleasure and honor to be here with you today.

And over the next few minutes I will offer you an overview of current NATO military operations and hopefully answer some of your questions from my perspective as the leader of NATO operations world-wide.

In the end, the strength of NATO is all of you - representing the democratic assemblies of 28 nations and our many partners and associates. I salute you and recognize how important this group is ...for 54 years now, this assembly has served as a forum for both exchanging ideas and bridging the gaps to consensus by promoting transparency, dialogue, and cooperation.

In light of the incredible complexities of the modern world, your service, your trans-Atlantic linkages, and your ability to build bridges of understanding between member nations of the Alliance as well as partner nations around the globe has never been more vital or necessary.

NATO is fundamentally a bridge:

- Geographically and geopolitically between North America and Europe;
- Temporally between the 20th and 21st century; and,
- Culturally between the immensely diverse cultures, history, and languages of our alliance and partnerships.

I believe in bridges, and thank you for your part in keeping THIS bridge strong and vital.

As Secretary General Rasmussen spoke of earlier, we live today in a very dynamic security environment -- one that demands a comprehensive security approach balancing disparate challenges and perspectives. With the fall of the Berlin Wall 20 years ago, we transitioned from a bi-polar Cold War world to a multi-polar turbulent world ... the key word becomes 'balance' ... we must find a balance between:

- Conventional threats while preparing for unforeseen or emerging ones ...
- Hard power with soft power
- Pure military power with civilian expertise and capabilities ...
- Euro-centric approach with a broader global approach
- Fixed defensive forces with what former NATO Secretary General Lord Robertson called a flexible, deployable force.

And though politically the world has changed a great deal over the last six decades, one thing has endured ... and that is NATO ... undergirded by our individual faith in freedom.

Our principles: Democracy, Individual liberty, and the rule of law served as our point of departure when, sixty years ago, the foreign ministers of the twelve original NATO members signed the North Atlantic Treaty in Washington, DC ... and they remain paramount today.

We speak about the 'comprehensive security' above all; one that combines all elements of national engagement - military, economic, political, and cultural - all undergirded by effective strategic communications.

I have been in this job now for just over four months and during that time I've heard some comments about how NATO is an old fashioned organization which has struggled to stay on course with its core mission ... or that no longer understands what that core mission is.

I disagree. The way I see it, the greatest challenge to the Alliance today is NOT lethargy, inertia, mission confusion, or the inability to adapt; but rather, it is the ever accelerating pace of change and the incredible complexities of the challenges we DO face. I firmly believe we are changing, we are adapting, and we are transforming.

I remain convinced that NATO is the greatest alliance in human history and stands ready to sail and tackle the significant challenges ahead. No nation has ever attacked a NATO member. No NATO member has ever attacked another.

But this is not cause for arrogance or surety; because the security environment - like the ocean - is ever-changing; never static - hence the need for continued effort on flexible, deployable forces.

Today, in the midst of a rapidly changing and turbulent world, our leaders in Brussels are developing a new Strategic Concept by which to chart our course. The effort is both timely and vital. An overarching strategic concept defining how we will tackle our enduring and emerging challenges is important to NATO's capacity and capabilities to respond to the *family* of 21st Century challenges.

Challenges like our missions in Afghanistan and the Balkans, piracy, terrorism, cyber security, global pandemics, climate change, energy flows ... and their implications to the security of our member states and that of our partners.

Those are not challenges of our own choosing ... nor do they represent an exhaustive list. Rather, they are indicative of the diversity of real-world threats

and challenges to our trans-Atlantic security requiring a comprehensive trans-Atlantic approach and your continued investment.

The changing world has certainly been mirrored by changes in NATO operations. NATO has grown from no real world NATO-led operations in 1990; to today's heavy load with 85,000 troops on three continents, at sea, and in the air.

Today, NATO troops can be found in operations in Afghanistan and the Balkans, engaged in counter-piracy off the Horn of Africa, countering terror in the Mediterranean, in the NATO Training Mission in Iraq, as part of the NATO Response Force, engaged in Baltic and Slovenian air policing, and other high visibility events such as G8 summits, Papal visits, heads of state visits, and even the Soccer World Cup Championship where I am working AWACS for surveillance of the ceremony.

Even so, as commitments have grown, our NATO staff has shrunk from well over 23,000 personnel in operational headquarters to less than 8800 – nearly a two thirds decline – as have the defense expenditures of all NATO nations from an average of 4.5 per cent of GDP in 1985 to about 2.6 per cent last year. We have cut our resources and staff by 65 per cent and increased operations enormously.

Famous British Admiral, innovator, and strategist Sir Jackie Fisher, when faced with declining budgets once remarked, 'now that that money's run out, we must all begin to think.'

And that's exactly what we are doing in NATO operational headquarters – *thinking* ... and taking advantage of the full range of opportunities for cooperation and the application of innovative solutions that you, as parliamentarians, will have a key role in both communicating to your citizens and garnering their support in properly resourcing.

Ladies and gentlemen, I value your role as legislators and am thankful for the forces your nations provide to face our diverse security challenges ... as well as the many sacrifices they make to assure our comprehensive security both within NATO's borders and at strategic distance across a broad geographic range.

Starting with Afghanistan let me tell you about some of those contributions and sacrifices.

Our operations in Afghanistan remain among the most challenging the Alliance has faced in its 60 year history.

During my visits to Afghanistan – the most recent including a trip to Helmand province where our coalition troops have exhibited exceptional professionalism and courage in the face of stiff resistance and unfortunate casualties – the

complexity of the mission there – the insurgency, the corruption, the scourge of narcotics, the poverty, the sheer lack of infrastructure – was perfectly clear.

Also clear was the fact that though the situation in Afghanistan is difficult, it is clear to me we can succeed. This alliance has the capacity and the capability to succeed in Afghanistan, with \$31 trillion in GDP and 3.5 million brave men and women under arms, the vast majority of them volunteers, as 23 of 28 NATO member states today have all professional militaries.

And in fact, there are good news stories coming out of Afghanistan. Since the U.S. and NATO have been in Afghanistan, nearly 5 million children – both boys *and* girls – that would have intellectually languished under Taliban rule are now in school where they are nurturing a brighter future;

Infant mortality has *decreased* by 25 per cent ... and under five mortality has been cut nearly in half.

And both men and women have gone to the polls in democratic elections over the past five years, not perfectly and not without controversy to be sure – but elected Afghan parliamentarians sit here today.

This past September, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime reported a 22 per cent reduction in opium cultivation in Afghanistan with a concomitant reduction in production

Most importantly, the Taliban do not rule and Al-Qaida is not an honored guest. Attacks against our capitals do not come from Kabul.

Those are all steps in the right direction ... signs of hope that further cements my belief that our mission in Afghanistan is important and meaningful ... that we **MUST** succeed in Afghanistan.

I believe we will succeed because we will stand shoulder-to-shoulder with the Afghan people, we will work tirelessly with the Afghan people, and we will erode the foundations of terror and tyranny in Afghanistan through the Afghan people. Never again can we permit a Taliban regime that supports Al-Qaida terrorists to hold sway in Afghanistan.

However, it is not just NATO's firepower that will deliver success in that country. As General McChrystal has said, we 'cannot kill our way to victory.' I myself have said many times that in the end security will not be delivered in Afghanistan solely from the barrel of a gun. Let me say that again – in Afghanistan, security will not be delivered from the barrel of a gun. It is far larger than that.

But please don't mistake me. Firepower is necessary, but it will not be sufficient.

But there are four keys to the situation in Afghanistan in my view:

- Putting the Afghan people at the center of gravity ... as Secretary General Rasmussen alluded to, polls indicate this is working.
- Getting the balance right between civil and military activity ... UN, Humanitarian organizations, EU, International Humanitarian organizations, Private-Public efforts
- Effective strategic communication, both in our national capitals and in Afghanistan itself - Telling the story.
- Above all else, training the Afghan security forces - all security is local and must be local.

The more than 100,000 soldiers, sailors, airmen and marines, of 43 NATO and non-NATO partner nations assigned to the International Security Assistance Force and U.S. Forces in Afghanistan are steadily enabling the Government of Afghanistan to extend its reach and expand the foundation of confidence and trust so necessary in that country.

They do so by training and educating Afghan National Security Forces and more importantly, by training Afghans to train Afghans, as we are doing with the new NATO Training Mission in Afghanistan, in an effort to deliver self-sustainability and long-lived, high-quality, home-grown expertise.

Our investment in the Afghan National Security Forces is sensible ... yielding approximately a sixty-fold return based on the comparative cost of training and deploying the average NATO troop.

Any way you look at it, that's smart-money ... and it's also smart tactically, operationally, and strategically because there is no one better suited to work with Afghans over the long-term than Afghans themselves. In the end, like politics, all security is local.

I am certain that security in Afghanistan hinges on Afghan National Security Forces ... and though the need for quality training cannot be overstated, the need to train enough of them to do the job ... and train them quickly must not be underestimated either.

Currently, the Afghan National Army is about 95,000 strong, has participated in nearly all ISAF operations, and has led more than half the deliberate operations in Afghanistan this year. That is a positive trend and we are aiming at expanding the force from present size to 134,000 by the end of October 2010.

In contrast, the Afghan National Police are composed of 93,000 personnel and there's a plan to increase to 100,000 by October 2010. Training these forces is vital and NATO's training teams are the key. We may eventually raise these targets.

But despite the high-return on investment stemming from training Afghan National Security Forces, the effort needs more help.

We need more Operational Mentor and Liaison Teams (OMLTs) and Police Operational Mentor and Liaison Teams (POMLTs) – the small training teams of 20-30 experts who work day-by-day with the Afghans, showing them the right way to do business and also learning from the Afghans about their culture. Together we can and must defeat this insurgency – this is another kind of ‘bridge’ we must build.

In Afghanistan, as in all of our operations, we must use the forces we have wisely. Caveats must be reduced.

I would say trainers and mentors and funds to support these efforts should take high priority. We must stand together with each member of the Alliance doing its fair share. More broadly, however, military forces, training, and operations are but one piece of the puzzle in Afghanistan.

The long-term security, stability, and prosperity of that country depend on so much more.

The military can help deliver the security conditions necessary for success there, but it will take a comprehensive approach and the coordinated efforts of NATO, the EU, the UN, non-NATO partners, non-governmental organizations, private and public ventures, diverse government agencies, and other countries in the region – most notably Pakistan – to help bring that security to reality and – as Secretary General Rasmussen alluded to – place the responsibility for Afghanistan’s security squarely upon the shoulders of the Afghan people.

Of course, there’s far more to NATO’s security than our good work in Afghanistan. While clearly our efforts in Afghanistan remain our top priority, we have almost 13000 troops in the Balkans – in Kosovo and Bosnia-Herzegovina – where they have stemmed the tide of violence and every day contribute to a safe and secure environment to ensure the wounds of wars past are not reopened ... nor new ones inflicted.

Based on security conditions there, the decision has been made to reduce NATO troops in Kosovo to 10,000 next year. Successful elections were just conducted there.

And though many steps remain in the path towards complete Euro-Atlantic integration, I am committed to ensuring that our mission in that region is viewed as a success ten, twenty, thirty years from now.

This past January, the Kosovo-wide recruitment campaign for the Kosovo Security Force began ... and in September this professional, all-volunteer, civilian-led force

trained according to NATO standards and key deterrent to future conflict reached its initial operational capability.

NATO troops can also be found on the ground in the Middle East ... in Iraq where the NATO Training Mission works with Iraqi security forces by providing mentoring, advice and instruction support through in- and out-of-country training and the coordination of deliveries of donated military equipment.

At sea, NATO is also actively engaged in Operation Active Endeavor – where it protects Europe from terrorist activity in the Mediterranean – and in Operation Ocean Shield – our continued contribution to international efforts to combat piracy off Africa's eastern shores.

NATO ships sailing as part of Operation Active Endeavor maintain a continuous watch of the major shipping lanes in the Mediterranean Sea while an operations center in Naples monitors and analyzes information to counter terrorism and related activities at sea.

Beyond its counter-terrorism mission, Operation Active Endeavor also serves as a vehicle of international cooperation.

Currently 42 nations share maritime data in a non-classified framework and non-NATO nations contribute to Active Endeavor operations at sea and to date, Exchanges of Letters have been signed between NATO and Albania, Georgia, Israel, Morocco, Russia and Ukraine.

Russia deployed in Support of Operation Active Endeavor in 2006 and again in 2007 ... and Ukraine has deployed several times ... the most recent just last month when the Ukrainian Frigate Ternopil joined Operation Active Endeavor to counter the common threat of terrorism at sea. This is an excellent zone of cooperation with Russia.

Off the Horn of Africa, counter-piracy is our mission du jour – another place we can work with Russia operationally. Since this past August, NATO ships are plying the waves under Operation Ocean Shield to deter piracy ... and assisting regional states – upon their request – in developing their own ability to combat piracy.

The scourge of piracy has been around a long time. The maritime environment is and always has been challenging and dangerous. From the days of sail to the advent of steam to the rise of nuclear power, the security and economic prosperity of maritime nations have depended largely upon the sea. But just as the pirates and privateers of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries raided and plundered indiscriminately along shipping lanes, so too do modern day pirates and criminals threaten the free and lawful use of the oceans today.

The past few years in particular have seen a spike in activity – most notably off the coast of Somalia. Somali pirates have grown increasingly bold and have attacked

and/or hijacked vessels ranging from the 17000 ton motor vessel ALABAMA to the 333 meter, 162,000 ton Saudi owned SIRIUS STAR, to ships laden with humanitarian assistance cargo and even private sailing ships, taking hostages.

The impact is real ... and costly. Pirates have carried out more than 100 attacks this year just in the waters of the Gulf of Aden and off the Somali coast alone. There were 8 attacks last week. As of last June, marine insurers were charging increased rates. For a vessel like the SIRIUS STAR, that can amount to approximately up to \$500,000 per trip.

In my view, piracy represents a threat to commercial trade at sea, and that, in turn, impacts our collective security, stability, and prosperity.

But like the terrorist threat in the Mediterranean, countered by Operation Active Endeavor, it also represents an opportunity for international cooperation at sea.

Currently, along with NATO's Operation Ocean Shield, Combined Task Force 151 as well as the European Union's Operation Atalanta are dedicated to counter-piracy missions off the Horn of Africa.

Besides the three multinational operations I just described and as testament to how this particular mission lends itself to international cooperation, several other navies are also present in the treacherous waters off the Horn of Africa.

Japan maintains two vessels and two maritime patrol aircraft in the region, and in July of 2009, adopted a new Anti-piracy Measures Law, allowing it to escort non-Japanese ships, as well as the possible use of force to deter acts of piracy.

Russian ships have been present in the region for over a year now and both Russia and NATO have expressed willingness to consider stepping up their co-operation in counter-piracy efforts.

Ships from China's People's Liberation Army-Navy can also be found in the area and both Malaysian and Indian ships have deployed in counter-piracy operations to the region as well.

Clearly NATO forces are well-engaged in a complex multi-polar world. Let me close with a word about our foundation - Article 5 of the Washington Treaty.

For six decades the men and women of NATO have assured the defense of the trans-Atlantic community by reassuring every member of this Alliance - as well as those who would do us harm - of the rock-solid guarantee of Article 5. An attack on one will be regarded as an attack on all.

Our NATO Alliance endures and is strong today because the men and women of NATO, representing its 28 member nations, can be found across three continents responding and adapting to a rapidly changing world ... committed to each other and stronger together.

In its sixty years, your NATO soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines have stood the watch. They have manned the lines. They have flown the long missions over arctic skies and sailed over distant seas. They have provided the essential guarantee of this alliance of free nations, of free states, of free peoples. As the Parliamentarians who support them, you should feel immensely proud of them, and they send their thanks to all of you for that support.

I would close with words from the U.S. Secretary of State Hilary Clinton, speaking at the 20th Anniversary of the fall of the wall in Berlin last week: 'We must renew the Transatlantic Alliance as a cornerstone of a global architecture of cooperation. When we come together to uphold the common good, there is no constellation of countries on earth that has greater strength. There is no wall we cannot topple. Now, as in the past, we know that the work ahead will not be quick, and it will certainly not be easy. But once again, we are called to take ownership of our future.'

That in my view is the fundamental task of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly on behalf of all our nations: to take ownership of our future. I am confident together we shall do so.

Thank you. I very much look forward to our continued work together.