

THE CANADA - TURKEY DEFENSE PARTNERSHIP AND THE FUTURE OF NATO

As NATO allies that are not in the European Union, Canada and Turkey share an interest in preserving the Alliance as the premier transatlantic body for defense dialogue and cooperation. On future membership, NATO as an institution must provide reasonable, pre-accession programs that strengthen security and encourage reform. Whether in the Balkans, Central Europe, Ukraine or Georgia, the Alliance should remain open to all those who share our values and are ready to contribute to Euro-Atlantic security. A number of well-established NATO nations were once themselves beneficiaries of the Open Door policy. We must remain open to membership aspirants and continue to reinforce the important role NATO has played in stabilizing relations in Europe, both during the Cold War and after, by extending the benefits of Alliance membership to others.

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Introduction: Canada-Turkey Bilateral Relations

Despite the distance between our two countries, Canada and Turkey have been drawn together by geopolitical forces, initially as belligerents during World War I and then as allies in World War II and the Cold War. Our common membership in multilateral forums such as NATO, the OSCE and the UN provided the basis for the development of bilateral relations. Today, our bilateral relationship is multi-faceted, from military cooperation to trade and investment, as well as cultural and student exchanges. Our two countries also share a commitment to similar values – such as democracy and the rule of law. Canada sees Turkey as an important friend, economic partner and military ally. Canada remembers and appreciates Turkey’s assistance in the evacuation of Canadians from Lebanon in 2006.

The premier forum for Canada-Turkey cooperation, particularly on defense and security issues, is NATO. Canada and Turkey are working alongside other NATO nations and partners as part of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) mission in Afghanistan. As NATO allies that are not in the European Union, Canada and Turkey have a common interest in maintaining NATO as the premier transatlantic body for security dialogue and defense cooperation. Key to preserving NATO’s role and effectiveness is to ensure its adaptation in accordance with evolving security realities.

NATO: An Evolving Alliance

The most striking aspect of the past decade in NATO’s history is its rapidly increasing engagement in “out-of-area” operations. In the past ten years, NATO has conducted counter-insurgency, stabilization and reconstruction in Afghanistan; training in Iraq; humanitarian relief in Pakistan and the U.S.; logistical assistance to the African Union in Darfur; and counter-terrorism and counter-piracy maritime operations in the Mediterranean and off the Horn of Africa. These operations are a testament above all to the common will and the military capabilities of NATO nations which have been drawn together through the Alliance – well trained, robust and interoperable armed forces under practiced multinational command and control. As a political as well as military alliance, NATO has developed a system of discussion and decision-making to shape, guide and direct the use of these powerful military assets.

The global scope of NATO’s engagements is also an indication of the changing nature of global security. It is increasingly difficult to draw a clear line between Euro-Atlantic security and international security. Developments “out-of-area” can have a profound effect on the security of individual allies “in-area”. In its post-9/11

operations, NATO has demonstrated a willingness to go “out-of-area” to address threats at their source. The post-9/11 world has thus given new meaning to the concept of forward defense.

The nature of security in the 21st century is driving most of the changes underway at NATO today, from the transformation of its military forces to the development of its partnerships worldwide to the reform of its internal structures and processes. While these forces are already shaping the nature of the Alliance’s day-to-day focus and activities as well as its strategic priorities, the ongoing review of NATO’s Strategic Concept document affords Turkey, Canada and our other Allies an opportunity to ensure that the changes underway are directed with a coherent, shared vision that can then be the basis to realign NATO’s capabilities, resources and structures.

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NATO’s Strategic Concept Review: Key Issues for Consideration

As we move forward with the Strategic Concept review, it is important to remember that not everything needs to change. In particular, there are longstanding core principles such as collective defense, burden sharing, indivisibility of security and the enduring transatlantic link that are still applicable to today’s challenges. While NATO’s core principles still hold true, they also have new-found meaning and application. Collective defense, for example, remains the core task but is not sufficient in an era when we face a series of threats and challenges originating far from our borders.

On the basis of these longstanding principles, the Strategic Concept review needs to address three key issues:

Lessons Learned from Operations

The first issue is to incorporate lessons learned from operations, particularly the “whole-of-government” approach. If we have come to understand anything from recent conflicts, it is that security must go hand-in-hand with development and diplomacy. Unity of effort is critical to our success at every level. Traditionally, military planning was separate from civilian planning; now it is important that our planning

be integrated from the outset to ensure military operations effectively support civilian efforts, and vice versa. This means, for example, building indigenous forces from day one. Canada itself has come a long way in instituting a whole-of-government approach in our operations in Afghanistan but there is room for further improvement. The approach clearly has applications elsewhere, as Canada has realized in our relief efforts in Haiti, where our experience in Afghanistan paid great dividends. But not every situation will be the same: there is no “one-size-fits-all” whole-of-government model suitable for every occasion. It must be adaptable to different circumstances. The nature of contemporary security issues not only compels greater coordination of effort among our respective national institutions. We must also apply these same lessons at the international level. To put it another way, NATO must be part of a “comprehensive approach” to complex international problems and challenges that combines its unique military contributions with the resources and competencies of other organizations such as the UN and EU. Accordingly, Canada played a leadership role in the adoption of a NATO Comprehensive Political-Military Plan for Afghanistan; Canada’s approach in Afghanistan has developed based on the lessons we have learned from other complex operations in the past, including the Balkans and Kosovo.

Transformation of Alliance Capabilities and Structures

The second issue is the continuing need to transform the Alliance’s capabilities and internal structures in accordance with the evolving security environment. Today’s operations require a different set of tools than those we used during the Cold War, placing greater emphasis on mobile, flexible forces capable of being transported thousands of kilometers away and supported with food, fuel and ammunition for an extended period of time. The Canadian Forces have long been an expeditionary military – Canada’s geographic size demands it and so have Canada’s international engagements. *The Canada First Defence Strategy*, which was released in June 2008, outlines an ambitious, 20-year program to rebuild the Canadian Forces in order to deliver excellence at home, be a strong and reliable partner in the defense of North America and project leadership abroad by making meaningful contributions to operations overseas. Recently, the Canadian Forces were active in providing security support for the Vancouver Winter Olympics and disaster relief in Haiti, in addition to stabilization and reconstruction in Afghanistan and conducting several other missions around the world. All of these operations drew on our expeditionary nature and experience.

NATO transformation commenced over a decade ago. Progress has been made in some areas but, in general, much more can and needs to be done to improve the overall deployability and sustainability of allied forces. Increasingly, collective defense should include taking actions to protect our security more broadly, not

just in terms of defending borders. This entails laying the conditions for wider peace and stability, whether in conflict-shattered states or pirate-infested waters. It requires adopting a proactive, rather than purely reactive, posture. Deploying abroad need not come at the expense of national security; as Canada's defense strategy recognizes, promoting stability abroad is necessary in order to prevent threats from reaching our own borders. Understandably, allies must also feel secure at home before they are willing to deploy their troops abroad. Collective defense and "out-of-area" operations are mutually reinforcing missions – we should strive for a set of capabilities that are relevant for a wide range of contingencies both at home and abroad.

There are also other new and emerging threats –energy and cyber security, for example– where NATO could add value, though we must also be cognizant of the important roles played by other international organizations and civilian partners in these areas. Energy security is an area where both Canada and Turkey have an important stake. Canada is a large producer of oil, natural gas, hydroelectricity and nuclear power, while Turkey occupies a crucial position in the geopolitics of energy. Cyber defense is yet another area where NATO has started to take on a larger role, especially with the creation of the new NATO cyber defense center of excellence in Estonia. In the face of these new security challenges, NATO must work effectively as part of a network of global actors. NATO is clearly not the only player, nor is it necessarily the best suited for dealing with many of today's complex problems. But it can be a significant partner in responding to many of them.

Continuing under the theme of transformation, there is more we can do to bring NATO's resources, headquarters and command structures into the 21st century. Resources are still being spent on Cold War era priorities while we face shortfalls for ongoing missions. The NATO command structure could also be made more deployable. With the global economic crisis placing constraints on all our governments to restrict spending, it is all the more important that the resources we provide NATO are efficiently utilized and targeted to where they have greatest impact and where we need them most. This necessitates a change of mindset and culture, not just at NATO headquarters but in allied capitals as well. Canada has taken steps in recent years to reshape its military command structure as well as its capabilities, exercises, doctrine, and training to align with current realities and we are continuing to do so. It will be necessary for NATO as a whole to do the same. Finally, NATO reform is essential to improve accountability and ensure effective decision-making.

Partnerships and Future Memberships

The third issue is to ensure that NATO's partnerships are evolving with its security requirements, and that the Alliance remains open to new members. Part of maximizing NATO's capacity and effectiveness increasingly involves working with partners from around the globe, including the EU, Russia, the Mediterranean Dialogue and Istanbul Cooperation Initiative nations, in addition to other global partners like

Australia and Japan. The development of partnerships is integral to NATO's ability to meet security challenges at a distance – Afghanistan being an important case in point.

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Through partnerships, NATO can help catalyze international collective action and work in a mutually supportive fashion with other organizations. Given their importance, NATO's partnerships with nations around the world deserve

our close attention. Their driving purpose has been evolving since the immediate post-Cold War era; while some partners continue to seek membership in NATO, most are looking to build practical cooperation with NATO. In particular, NATO must enhance opportunities for troop-contributing nations to engage in operational deliberations, with key friends and partners like Australia, New Zealand, Japan and others.

The NATO-EU relationship is of particular importance to the success of our respective missions and to the vitality of the transatlantic relationship. Maximizing the operational synergies between these organizations is absolutely essential to our collective contribution to Euro-Atlantic and international security.

The revised Strategic Concept will also need to address the Alliance's relationship with Russia, which is of strategic importance, not just for security and stability in Europe but farther afield as well. We need to continue practical cooperation and dialogue with Russia in areas of common concern and interest, such as Afghanistan, terrorism and limiting the spread of weapons of mass destruction. The NATO-Russia Council (NRC) is an important venue for political consultations and a valuable instrument in making practical progress on issues of mutual interest. But we must do this without sacrificing our key values.

On future membership, NATO as an institution must provide reasonable, pre-accession programs that strengthen security and encourage reform. Whether in the

Balkans, Central Europe, Ukraine or Georgia, the Alliance should remain open to all those who share our values and are ready to contribute to Euro-Atlantic security. A number of well-established NATO nations were once themselves beneficiaries of the Open Door policy. We must remain open to membership aspirants and continue to reinforce the important role NATO has played in stabilizing relations in Europe, both during the Cold War and after, by extending the benefits of Alliance membership to others.

Conclusion

This year will be pivotal for the Alliance, not least because of the very high stakes surrounding ongoing operations in Afghanistan. Looking ahead, there are many practical issues that must be addressed if NATO is to be successful in meeting the challenges of the 21st century. Turkey and Canada, as NATO allies, economic partners and friends, have an important role to play in helping NATO meet the challenges to international peace and stability. Allies will no doubt be engaged in lively discussion and debate on the NATO Strategic Concept in the months to come. In the end, I have no doubt that NATO will emerge the stronger for it.