



## NATO Parliamentary Assembly

### **SUMMARY**

of the meeting of the Political Committee

*Plenary Hall, Chamber of Deputies,  
The Parliament (Senate and Chamber of Deputies) of Romania  
Bucharest, Romania*

Saturday 7 and Sunday 8 October 2017

**ATTENDANCE LIST**

<b>Committee Chairperson</b>	Ojars Eriks KALNINS (Latvia)
<b>General Rapporteur</b>	Rasa JUKNEVICIENE (Lithuania)
<b>Rapporteur, Sub-Committee on Transatlantic Relations</b>	Gerald E. CONNOLLY (United States)
<b>Rapporteur, Sub-Committee on NATO Partnerships</b>	Julio MIRANDA CALHA (Portugal)
<b>President of the NATO PA</b>	Paolo ALLI (Italy)
<b>Secretary General of the NATO PA</b>	David HOBBS
<b>Member delegations</b>	
Albania	Mimi KODHELI XhemaI QEFALIA Perparim SPAHIU
Belgium	Gent STRAZIMIRI Peter BUYSROGGE Karolien GROSEMANS Sébastien PIRLOT Damien THIERY Luk VAN BIESEN Karl VANLOUWE Veli YÜKSEL
Bulgaria	Plamen MANUSHEV Simeon SIMEONOV
Canada	Raynell ANDREYCHUK Joseph A. DAY Larry MILLER Marc SERRÉ Borys WRZESNEWSKYJ
Czech Republic	Milan SARAPATKA
Denmark	Peter Juel JENSEN
Estonia	Marko MIHKELSON
France	Philippe FOLLIOIOT Sonia KRIMI Gilbert ROGER
Germany	Karin EVERS-MEYER Karl A. LAMERS Anita SCHÄFER
Greece	Spyridon DANELLIS Christos KARAGIANNIDIS Meropi TZOUFI
Hungary	Mihaly BALLA Karoly TUZES
Italy	Antonino BOSCO Andrea MANCIULLI Andrea MARTELLA Roberto MORASSUT Vito VATTUONE

Latvia	Aleksandrs KIRSTEINS
Lithuania	Ausrine ARMONAITE
Luxembourg	Alexander KRIEPS
Netherlands	Herman SCHAPER
Norway	Liv Signe NAVARSETE
Poland	Waldemar ANDZEL
	Adam BIELAN
	Przemyslaw CZARNECKI
	Pawel SZRAMKA
Portugal	Carlos COSTA NEVES
Romania	Vergil CHITAC
	Pavel POPESCU
	Ben-Oni ARDELEAN
Spain	Miguel Angel GUTIERREZ
	Luis RODRIGUEZ-COMENDADOR
	Ricardo TARNO
Turkey	Metin Lutfi BAYDAR
	Ahmet Berat CONKAR
United Kingdom	Lord CAMPBELL of PITTENWEEM
	Michael GAPES
	Baroness RAMSAY of CARTVALE
	Bob STEWART
United States	Rob BISHOP
	Thomas MARINO
	Ted POE
	Linda SANCHEZ

**Associate delegations**

Armenia	Edmon MARUKYAN
	Koryun NAHAPETYAN
Austria	Hubert FUCHS
	Anton HEINZL
	Matthias KÖCHL
	Hannes WENINGER
Azerbaijan	Siyavush NOVRUZOV
Finland	Eero HEINALUOMA
	Ilkka KANERVA
	Tom PACKALEN
Republic of Moldova	Dumitru DIACOV
	Mihai GHIMPU
Montenegro	Obrad Miso STANISIC
Serbia	Dragan SORMAZ
Sweden	Göran PETTERSSON
	Björn von SYDOW
	Hans WALLMARK
Switzerland	Isidor BAUMANN
	Werner SALZMANN
	Vera TRUONG DINH
Ukraine	Yurii BEREZA
	Iryna FRIZ
	Oksana YURYNETS

**European Parliament** Anna FOTYGA

**Regional Partner and Mediterranean  
Associate Member Delegations**

Algeria  
Jordan  
Morocco

Aboufariss SERIDI  
Hussein MAJALI  
Mohammed AZRI

**Parliamentary Observers**

Australia  
  
Egypt  
Kazakhstan

Andrew LAMING  
Richard SELTH  
Eid HAIKL  
Nurzhan NURSIPATOV

**Parliamentary Guests**

Parliamentary Assembly  
of the Mediterranean

Ionas-Florin URCAN

**Speakers**

**Teodor-Viorel MELEȘCANU**, Minister of  
Foreign Affairs of Romania  
**Mark GALEOTTI**, Senior Researcher and  
Coordinator, Centre for European Security,  
Institute of International Relations Prague  
**Andreas GOLDTHAU**, professor, Department of  
Politics and International Relations, Centre of  
International Public Policy, Royal Holloway  
University of London

**Committee Secretary**

Sarah PETIT

**International Secretariat**

Steffen SACHS, Committee Director  
Karen WALKER-LOVE, Committee Coordinator  
Giulia SPINACI, Research Assistant

**Saturday 7 October 2017**

**I. Opening remarks by the Chairperson, Ojars Eriks KALNINS (Latvia)**

1. In his opening remarks, Chairperson **Ojars Eriks Kalnins** (LV) welcomed all members and associate members of the Political Committee, as well as the speakers and the observers. Mr Kalnins also thanked the Romanian delegation for hosting and organising the 2017 Annual Session.

2. The Chairperson then expressed his appreciation to the countries participating in NATO's Enhanced Forward Presence and in NATO's Baltic Air Policing Mission.

3. Following the opening remarks by the Chairperson both **the draft agenda [169 PC 17 E rev.1] and the Summary of the Meeting of the Political Committee held in Tbilisi, Georgia, on Sunday 28 May 2017 [141 PC 17 E] were adopted without changes.**

4. The Chairman explained the procedure for putting forward amendments to the draft Resolutions *Tackling Challenges from the South* [212 PC 17 E] and *Burden Sharing – Fulfilling the Promises* [223 PC 17 E].

**II. Presentation by Teodor-Viorel MELEȘCANU, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Romania, on NATO in the current international context and its role in ensuring stability and security in South-Eastern Europe**

5. **Teodor-Viorel Meleşcanu** reminded the Committee of the numerous challenges the Alliance is facing, including Russia's aggressive posture along NATO's Eastern flank, terrorism, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, hybrid threats and information warfare. To counter these threats, NATO needs to be united, he stressed. The NATO Summits in Wales in 2014 and in Warsaw in 2016 produced headway in this regard, as NATO Heads of State and Governments sent a message of unity and commitment by deciding to reinforce NATO's collective defence and deterrence, and to project stability beyond NATO's borders. In this context, the Minister underlined the importance of the Enhanced Forward Presence, which also demonstrated NATO's ability to adjust to new security conditions and challenges.

6. The speaker then emphasised the importance of partnerships, noting that the practical cooperation and political dialogue with partner countries and the Open Door policy contribute to stability in the Euro-Atlantic area and beyond. The Foreign Minister emphasised the need to remain vigilant about political developments and security in the volatile Western Balkans, warning that the incitement of ethnic tension, corruption, misinformation and Russian influence risk sowing instability. He added that the prospect of NATO or European Union membership remains a powerful driver of reform in the region and that their doors must remain open to candidates. There is still unfinished business in the Western Balkans and countries in the region are still facing multiple challenges, he said, adding that NATO and the EU should aim to boost the resilience of partners in the Western Balkans to internal and external pressures.

7. Romania is an active contributor to NATO's efforts in promoting stability and security, the Minister highlighted. Romania provides troops and equipment to the implementation of the Enhanced Forward Presence, both in Poland and in the Black Sea region. Moreover, Romania has increased its defence budget to 2% of GDP in 2017 and is cooperating with partner countries like the Republic of Moldova, Ukraine, and Georgia. Romania is also one of the main contributors of the Resolute Support Mission in Afghanistan. Thus, Romania is living up to its pledge and is fully committed to the principles of Allied solidarity and to a fair burden sharing, the speaker concluded.

8. The ensuing discussion with the Committee members focused on Russia, NATO-EU cooperation, and the Western Balkans. The Russian military build-up in the Black Sea violates the Treaty on Conventional Forces in Europe and is of serious concern to Romania. The Minister

encouraged NATO to improve cooperation with the Black Sea littoral states. On NATO's relationship with Russia, the speaker stressed the need to combine a credible deterrence with an open dialogue.

9. With regards to the perspectives of NATO-EU cooperation, the Minister stressed that the European Union could play a stronger role in the field of security and defence, provided that it does not duplicate NATO efforts. Moreover, he announced that Romania had decided to join the EU's Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO) in the upcoming weeks.

10. On the situation in Kosovo and the Western Balkans, Mr. Meleşcanu highlighted the importance of a constructive dialogue between Serbia and Kosovo which has led to positive security developments in the region. Giving the countries of the Western Balkans a clear perspective to join the European Union and NATO would help improve the security situation in the region. The Minister concluded the discussion by encouraging NATO to continue the implementation of the Open Door policy.

### III. Consideration of the draft General Report *Russia: From Partner to Competitor* [170 PC 17 E] by Rasa JUKNEVICIENE (Lithuania), General Rapporteur

11. In her presentation, **Rasa Jukneviene** (LT) highlighted that NATO-Russia relations are currently at their lowest since the end of the Cold War. Moscow's provocative approach towards NATO, its military posture in the Baltic region and the illegal annexation of Crimea undermine the security stability of the Euro-Atlantic area. President Vladimir Putin has prioritised the modernisation of Russian military forces, focusing on the Rapid Reaction Special Forces and advanced electronic warfare capabilities. In addition, Russia's strong anti-access/area denial (A2AD) significantly diminishes NATO's ability to operate and defend Allies in the East and in the Baltics. Moreover, Russia's support for the Assad regime has shifted the balance of power toward an authoritarian leader, thereby complicating the fight against Daesh<sup>1</sup> and increasing the number of refugees fleeing the country. She noted that measures agreed to at the 2016 NATO Warsaw summit are working, but more still needs to be done to adequately respond to challenges on the Eastern flank. NATO Allies need to remain committed to a strong deterrence posture and stand up to Russia's continuing provocations and aggressions against NATO partner countries, particularly Ukraine and Georgia, Ms Jukneviene said.

12. Reminding the Committee that the Kremlin has carried out activities aimed at undermining Western democracies and political processes, she stressed that it is unacceptable for a foreign power or agents of a foreign power to meddle in or seek to influence the domestic political affairs of another sovereign nation. To tackle this threat, closer NATO-EU cooperation is particularly important. She expressed concern that the Allies have only seen the beginning, and that attempts to undermine the societies of member states with fake news disseminated by Russia – as well as other actors – will continue. To avoid any miscalculation by Russian decision-makers, the General Rapporteur said that NATO Allies should strengthen their deterrence, by providing sufficient resources and implementing the Wales defence pledge. NATO should enhance its partnerships and continue implementing an Open Door policy. Ms Jukneviene noted the role of Ukraine, stressing whether Ukraine becomes a Russian vassal or not will have an important impact on European security and stability.

13. The General Rapporteur also shared her observations about the large-scale *Zapad* military exercise conducted in September 2017 by the Russian Federation and Belarus. In addition to flouting its obligation to allow international observers to monitor the exercise, as stipulated by the OSCE Vienna Document on confidence- and security-building measures, NATO received limited, partial and deliberately distorted information about this exercise. Moreover, the exercises included strategic bomber flights, the extensive use of paratroopers, and the rapid deployment of large military forces which proved the offensive nature of this exercise. Finally, the Russian military forces are still deployed in the location of the exercise, despite the active phase of *Zapad* having ended on 20 September.

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<sup>1</sup> Arabic acronym of the terrorist organisation "Islamic State in Iraq and Syria"

14. Finally, the General Rapporteur accepted all amendments to the report presented by the Georgian delegation.

15. Following the Rapporteur's presentation, the discussion focused first on Russian activities in the Baltic region. During the *Zapad* exercise, all telephone communications, including emergency lines were blocked in Latvia. The Facebook account of the Lithuanian Ministry of Defence was blocked, and Norwegian military airplanes lost GPS signal during an extensive military exercise in the Barents Sea. On the importance of maintaining a meaningful dialogue between NATO and Russia, Ms Juknevičienė stressed that it is important to build mutual confidence, but she noted that the past 25 years of NATO efforts to keep dialogue open with Russia have failed.

16. The discussion then revolved around Russian disinformation activities which require a proactive Allied counter strategy, Ms Juknevičienė suggested. Russia attempts to influence Western public opinion through disinformation campaigns, and does not shy away from using corruption and organised crime groups to undermine democratic institutions and processes in member countries. The claim, invoked by Russian officials, that it would stand up to "defend Christian values" resonates well with many right-wing political parties in Europe, further undermining Western democracies. In addition to attempting to divide NATO and the EU, Russia is also pursuing efforts to weaken partner countries, and fuelling existing conflicts, like in Nagorno-Karabakh, she suggested. Delegates also briefly touched upon the new language law that was passed by the Ukrainian parliament in September 2017.

17. Ms Juknevičienė concluded the Q&A session by stressing concerns about Russia's nuclear policy.

18. **The draft General Report [170 PC 17 E] as amended was adopted.**

**IV. Presentation by Mark GALEOTTI, Senior Researcher and Coordinator, Centre for European Security, Institute of International Relations, Prague (Czech Republic), on *Russia and Euro-Atlantic Security***

19. **Mark Galeotti** started his presentation by arguing that President Vladimir Putin's ambitions are not territorial beyond Russia's current borders, but rather political. The speaker argued that President Vladimir Putin is in many ways a "19<sup>th</sup> century geo-politician" who sees his mission as "making Russia great again". According to this notion, as a great power, Russia has a seat at the table – i.e. the power to veto – on all global issues and a sphere of influence, of privileged interest, which include Georgia, Ukraine and all other post-Soviet nations with the exception of the Baltic states. Moreover, Mr Putin wants sovereignty, but his understanding of sovereignty is different from the conception held in the West. For President Putin, a country can only claim its sovereignty if it can assert it ("might makes right"). Therefore, no one should tell Russia what to do. The speaker bemoaned that this approach is almost equivalent to a Russian effort to exclude itself from the modern world, from the interconnectivity of international treaties, norms, and understandings which are absolutely fundamental in the post-1945 world order.

20. President Putin regards the West as a threat to himself and his vision of Russia. There are two reasons for this. Firstly, it is due to a complete misunderstanding of realities by the Russian President and the Russian diplomatic and national security elite, the speaker suggested. To support this argument, Mr Galeotti noted that when the West defends anti-corruption activists, this is not a "hybrid war tool" to undermine Russia, but because we believe that corruption is a bad thing and that Russians "have the same right to not being stolen from as everyone else". However, in the perception of the Kremlin and many in the national security establishment, which comprises many intelligent and well-informed people, the West is trying to undermine Russia and marginalise it. The second reason why President Putin considers the West a threat is that he is also acutely aware of Russia's weaknesses, the speaker noted. For example, the Russian economy is smaller than that of the state of New York and cannot sustain its great power status. Despite the disproportionate amount of money invested in military build-up, military forces do not live up to the expectations of President Putin and

the strain of the ambitiously designed modernisation programme are showing. Moreover, while few countries and leaders woo Russia for political support or for Russian weapons, the country possesses strikingly little soft power. Therefore, Russia is, like any weaker power, trying to shift the focus of the conflict to areas where it considers the West to be weak. When President Putin looks to the West, he sees a constellation of democracies that do not always speak with one voice, that have internal disagreements and that have democratic processes and free media. He considers these as weaknesses, the speaker noted.

21. The Russian strategy is to employ hybrid warfare, or the “political war” as understood by Russian national security and foreign policy establishments. This strategy entails several goals: 1) to divide by exacerbating existing divisions between Western countries; 2) to distract by shifting Western attention elsewhere; 3) to dismay through exercises like *Zapad*; and 4) to deter through creating or worsening problems. Particularly with regard to the latter, Russia also applies the equivalent of geo-political extortion to the West by stoking tensions and then suggesting that the problems could “go away” if the West offers a deal.

22. The speaker concluded his presentation by arguing that although Russia can dramatically exacerbate existing problems, it does not represent an existential threat to Euro-Atlantic security. However, as long as Vladimir Putin stays in power, any substantial change beyond some minor modifications of Russia’s policies is unlikely. President Putin is aware that his values are diametrically opposed to those of the West and he has also exhausted his opportunities for reinvention. Mr Galeotti continued by arguing that the Russian President has created a situation in which he wants the West to accept a new version of Yalta, but the West is not going to do this. Therefore, the bad news is that the current situation will continue for the next years and the Alliance will have to accept the status quo, the speaker predicted. The good news is that even within the military, there is an awareness that Russia cannot maintain the high level of military spending and that they are not winning in Georgia and in Ukraine. The Russian elite fears the West’s economic strength and soft power, and suggested that despite Russian efforts to divide, distract, dismay and deter, the West has been able to maintain a strong focus on what is happening in Georgia and in Ukraine. Therefore, Russia’s efforts are failing and the West is “winning”, he concluded.

23. The debate following Mr Galeotti’s presentation centred on the future of the Russian political system; Moscow’s approaches towards the West and the East, notably China; and Russia’s relations with China. While the speaker did not foresee any major changes in the Russian political system, and noted that Russia is not going to become a Western-leaning democracy in the next five years, he saw three reasons for optimism: firstly, the younger generation, which is not necessarily eager to emulate pro-western thinking in terms of values, wants to be able to participate more in the political and economic realms and enjoy other freedoms, such as travel. Secondly, the elite, and particularly economic decision makers, realise that the Russian economy is suffering, and thirdly, the Russian elite did not sign up for some kind of grand civilizational struggle with the West, and appreciate opportunities to send their offspring to Western universities or shop in the West.

24. With regard to Russia’s relationship with the West, the speaker iterated that the notion of Russia as a great power cannot be sustained. He also noted that the West is not looking for regime change, which essentially leaves the option of a policy of containment, i.e. pursuing a policy that minimises the impact of Russian provocative actions on the West, while Russia slowly gets its act together. Although the Russian national security elite is aware of the strength of the West, there is also a degree of contempt among this elite - as many of them perceive the West as not being serious - as Western rhetoric all too often emphasises short-termism. More generally, the West has a tendency to rely more on rhetoric than action, but this should be reversed, the speaker proposed. He suggested that NATO member states be more assertive and punish Russia for breaking rules and commitments, rather than merely being vocal about it.

25. On Russia’s bilateral relationship with the United States, the speaker said that he did not think that the Kremlin had favoured Donald Trump’s election as US President. In fact, Russia’s political elite

is concerned about President Trump's unpredictable foreign policy and since the election of Donald Trump as President, Russian foreign policy has been less provocative.

26. On Russia-China relations, Mr Galeotti said that as Beijing is focusing more on long-term development, the Kremlin does not currently view China as a threat. However, there is also awareness in Moscow that Beijing is taking advantage of Russia's strained relationship with the West, among others, in their bilateral economic relationship. Referring to territorial disputes in the South and East China Seas, he said that there is also a perception that Beijing might at some point follow up on Russia's infringements on international agreements by challenging the order that was established after 1945. On Russia's role in the conflict with North Korea, the speaker commented that Moscow has thus far not played a constructive role in international efforts to make the North Korean regime heed international agreements. Mr Galeotti concluded the discussion by noting that efforts by the Kremlin to woo other countries with political, military or other incentives may often produce only positive results in the short-term but come at a heavy cost in the long term.

**V. Consideration of the draft Report of the Sub-Committee on Transatlantic Relations *NATO and Security in the Arctic* [172 PCTR 17 E] by Gerald E. CONNOLLY (United States), Rapporteur**

27. In his presentation, **Gerald E. Connolly** (US) informed the Committee members of the security situation in the High North, a region of strategic importance for NATO. The speaker assessed that the relative stability of the region might not last long. In fact, the effects of climate change have been harsher in the Arctic than in any other place in the world. This is relevant for the Alliance for three main reasons. Firstly, five of the eight Arctic littoral states are NATO members. Secondly, the High North has been a region for collaboration among Allies and adversaries alike for search and rescue initiatives, climate change mitigation, oil spill prevention, communication networks and scientific research. Thirdly, alongside the effects of increased human activity, military operations and resource exploitation, climate change has the potential to deeply affect the geopolitical situation of the High North. For all these reasons, NATO should study, understand and plan for security changes that might occur in the Arctic.

28. Russia, the biggest Arctic littoral state, sees in the High North an economic opportunity: climate change might unlock 25% of untapped oil and gas reserves and new and faster sea routes might open. The Arctic also hosts six military facilities and air defence force groupings under the Joint Strategic Command since 2014. Finally, Russian territorial ambitions must not be underestimated, especially considering repeated violations of territorial integrity of countries like Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova and Georgia. Russia has so far cooperated with other Arctic nations on a bilateral level, and at the international level it is abiding by the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). Nevertheless, NATO should improve its situational awareness of the High North, especially considering that other international actors are increasingly attracted by the region. China is the most notable example. The People's Republic of China (PRC) considers itself a near-Arctic state: accordingly, it has incorporated the Arctic into its Belt and Road Initiative and it became an observer of the Arctic Council in 2013. The Arctic's resources and the new sea routes are of course of primary relevance for the Chinese government and Russia is the partner through which the PRC's instances are being represented in the Arctic Council. As the Rapporteur noted, these developments should be closely monitored by the Alliance, because China has a rather inconsistent record in complying with the UNCLOS.

29. Mr Connolly concluded his presentation by offering an overview of the actions NATO might consider in future with regards to the High North: 1) improving information-sharing and dialogue on climate change; 2) creating an Arctic Working Group at NATO HQ to assess the challenges to Arctic security, including climate change, Allied infrastructure needs and Russia and China's shifting postures in the High North; 3) improving infrastructure in the Arctic, especially search and rescue capabilities; 4) increasing the number of NATO exercises in the High North in order to protect common security interests of the Alliance.

30. In the ensuing debate, a delegate from Norway argued that it is necessary to draw NATO's attention to the Northern border, but on the other hand, an enhanced NATO role in the region is not advisable. NATO should demonstrate commitment to defend the region, but avoid escalation. Therefore, to better reflect this view, the Norwegian delegation presented an amendment to paragraph 31 of the Report. The amendment was accepted by the Rapporteur.

31. Before the vote, the Chairman reminded Committee members that when the Political Committee delegation went to Svalbard, the Russian Foreign Minister protested, as the visit was interpreted as an attempt to militarise the region.

32. **The draft report [172 PCTR 17 E] as amended was adopted unanimously.**

**VI. Presentation by Andreas GOLDTHAU, Professor, Department of Politics and International Relations, Centre of International Public Policy, Royal Holloway, University of London, United Kingdom, on *Energy and European security – key issues for NATO***

33. **Andreas Goldthau** structured his presentation around three key points: Russian and European energy security, security in the Gulf, and the implications of social instability in key energy producing states. On Russian and European energy security, the speaker reminded the Committee that Russia provides 36% of gas and 36% of oil imports to the European Union. Contrary to widely held concerns in EU member states, Russia has not been a threat to EU energy supplies since 2009, when Russia cut gas supplies through Ukraine. This is mainly due to three reasons, he argued. Firstly, European Union infrastructure investments - namely in connectors between countries in the West, and between the East and the West, and in energy import terminals - together with EU Projects of Common Interest, have fostered diversification of EU energy supplies. Secondly, due to rapidly changing international energy markets, it is estimated that by 2020, Western access to gas will increase by 70 - 80 BCM (billion cubic meters). Thirdly, there are increasing pressure for pro-market regulation in the European Union. Elaborating on the latter point, the speaker noted that three energy packages were approved in the last couple of years, and the EU Commissioner for energy has conducted an anti-trust enquiry on Gazprom which resulted in the elimination of destination clauses, the indexation of gas prices to hub prices, and enhanced transparency on bilateral contracts.

34. On security in the Gulf, Mr Goldthau reminded participants that the shale gas revolution will make the US an international energy supplier by 2021. However, this development is unlikely to decrease the strategic significance of the Gulf region in view of the U.S., and a possible US disengagement from the region as a consequence of the shale revolution seems unlikely. To support his argument the speaker offered three reasons: firstly, from a geostrategic perspective, a US disengagement from the Gulf would allow other powers to increase their political leverage, as energy is not only a commodity but also a tool for geopolitical influence. Secondly, a global market with rising prices would harm the US economy as well, and not only importing nations. Thirdly, the US presence in the Gulf also upholds important international norms, such as the freedom of the seas and free sea trade.

35. With regard to social stability in key energy producing countries, Mr Goldthau highlighted that low energy prices have put considerable pressure on the social contract in oil exporting countries. The speaker defined the social contract as a contract between the ruling elite and the population, whereby the ruling elite would guarantee a certain level of income, services and economic development, and in return, the population would leave political decisions entirely in the hands of the ruling elite. The significant drop in revenue derived from energy exports will make it unsustainable even for rich countries in the Gulf to continue huge defence investments. The situation is far more difficult for other countries, particularly in Africa, and Mr Goldthau did not exclude the possibility of additional migration flows from Central Africa and Nigeria, where the situation is affected by global oil prices as well.

36. In the ensuing discussion with the Committee, Mr Goldthau elaborated on the profound economic transition that Gulf states have begun. In addition to the primary goal of decreasing their dependency on energy revenues, this transition is also driven by the necessity to recycle all the petrodollars that their economies cannot absorb. However, many energy exporting countries, including in the Gulf, will have difficulties to advance the necessary transformation sufficiently by around 2030, as they either run out of energy or because investing in carbohydrate-based energy exploration becomes ineffective. This will increase the pressure on the social contract in these countries significantly. On nuclear energy, the speaker explained that it is prohibitively expensive, unless costs are subsidised by the State.

37. The discussion then revolved around the construction of North Stream 2 and its political implications. While acknowledging that from a political point of view, buying Russian gas is difficult to justify to national constituencies, the speaker argued that in principle any new entry point is positive for the EU market. In analysing the consequences of North Stream 2 for Ukraine, he stressed that the focus should not be on the eventual loss of transit fees, but rather on the long-term stability and prosperity of the Ukrainian economic system. Mr Goldthau concluded his presentation by noting that Russia continues to use gas as a means of pressure against the West, primarily because the latter gives in to this blackmailing. For this reason, European countries should build resilient economies, he stressed.

### **Sunday 8 October 2017**

#### **VII. Consideration of the Draft Report of the Sub-Committee on NATO Partnerships *Tackling the Challenges from the South* [171 PCNP 17 E] by Julio MIRANDA CALHA (Portugal), Rapporteur**

38. Next, **Julio Miranda Calha** (PT), presented the report of the Sub-Committee on NATO Partnerships. He provided a general overview of the latest security developments in the MENA region, emphasising that violent conflict and instability in Syria and Iraq not only weaken the MENA region but also challenge the security of NATO from the south. An end to the conflict in Syria remains elusive as a political agreement seems far away. Iraq still faces a violent sectarian conflict and spillover effects of the Syrian war. Despite military setbacks, Daesh continues to pose a major security risk in the region and beyond. In Libya, fighting between rival militias opened a breach for the so-called caliphate and for other terrorist organisations. The violence may spread into Sub-Saharan Africa, where the absence of a strong central state, and political and economic problems have allowed jihadi groups to prosper. Migration from this region has increasingly lead to political tensions, humanitarian crises and security risks. Emphasising the importance of this region for the Alliance, the Rapporteur suggested that although NATO is not the primary actor to address the manifold problems of the region, it has the mandate and military expertise to step in and contribute to international efforts.

39. In this context, Mr Miranda Calha then highlighted the importance of NATO's partnerships like the Mediterranean Dialogue and the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative, even though they had thus far only had limited impact, while political tensions and open conflicts continue to affect the whole region. NATO's most tangible contribution to tackling the security challenges along the southern flank has been its efforts in the fight against terrorism. Since the 2016 Warsaw Summit, NATO Allies stepped up cooperation with other nations and organisations. To underpin his argument, the Rapporteur provided a number of examples, including the training programme in Iraq and NATO's contribution to the Global Coalition Against Daesh. Other areas where NATO provides assistance include the support provided to Jordan in the Defence and Related Security Capacity Building (DCB) framework and cooperation with the African Union.

40. The Alliance has expanded its footprint in the counter-terrorism field, it aims at improving cooperation with the EU and the UN, and it has pledged additional assistance to the MENA region. Nevertheless, the Rapporteur stressed that NATO could do more, by enhancing intelligence-gathering and information-sharing between the Allies and their partners and by improving situational awareness.

However, only a sustained and comprehensive approach that addresses the needs of the societies can stabilise the MENA region. Humanitarian aid, financial assistance and reconciliation processes are crucial in this respect, Mr Miranda Calha concluded.

41. At the beginning of the Q&A session, **Ionas-Florin Urcan**, Ambassador of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean (PAM) highlighted the need to harmonise national legislative frameworks to tackle the increase in terrorist attacks and to improve the effectiveness of international counter-terrorism efforts.

42. Members of the Turkish delegation expressed concern over the roles of the Kurdish Worker's Party (PKK) and the Peoples' Protection Units (YPG). They argued that both are terrorist organisations representing a threat to NATO countries and to the stability of the MENA region as a whole. One Turkish delegate also bemoaned the fact that the leadership of the Kurdish Regional Government had decided to hold a referendum on independence from Iraq. The Rapporteur agreed that these topics are very important, but that they were out of the remit of this report.

43. The Committee members also discussed the role of foreign investments in the region and the need to improve economic conditions, as well as the need to increase humanitarian aid. International cooperation, including between the UN, the EU, NATO, and the African Union, is crucial to defeat terrorist groups and to stabilise the region.

44. The importance of improving situational awareness in the region is a prerequisite for addressing the security challenges more effectively. The problems of Sub-Saharan Africa, the Horn of Africa and in the MENA region are all intertwined, one delegate noted. Abandoning the nuclear agreement with Iran could change the balance in the MENA region, the delegate added.

45. **The draft report [171 PCNP 17 E] was adopted unanimously.**

### **VIII. Consideration of the draft Special Report of the Sub-Committee on NATO Partnerships *Burden Sharing Revisited* [210 PC 17 E] by Ojars Eriks KALNINS (Latvia), Special Rapporteur**

46. **Ojars Eriks Kalnins** (LV) noted that burden sharing has been a central issue for the Alliance since its inception. However, given the current state of international security affairs and the existing political climate, it could become an even more divisive topic.

47. The mismatch between US military spending and that of the Allies has further increased since the end of the Cold War, the Special Rapporteur said. At the same time, countries like Saudi Arabia and China have increased their defence spending dramatically. Mr Kalnins then reminded delegates that at the Wales Summit, Allied Heads of State and Governments agreed to a pledge on defence investment with the "aim to move towards" spending 2% of GDP on defence "within a decade", and 20% of defence budgets on equipment modernisation. Since 2014, the declining defence spending budget trend has been reversed, and Allied commitments were confirmed during the 2017 Special Meeting in Brussels.

48. Mr Kalnins underlined that Allies must continue fulfilling the pledge. However, he also recognised that development assistance and increased spending on diplomacy and humanitarian aid undoubtedly contribute to global stability and security. Therefore, providing sufficient resources for diplomacy and humanitarian assistance is important, but it cannot replace necessary investments in military defence. Turning to existing ways to measure and compare defence investments, Mr Kalnins argued that evaluating defence spending as a percentage of GDP has limitations, as it does not necessarily give a clear picture of a NATO member's military capabilities nor to their actual contributions to NATO-led missions. The Special Rapporteur pointed out that it is crucial to look not only at the input, but first and foremost at the output, namely at capabilities that Allies generate and their contributions to NATO-led operations. NATO Allies should strengthen existing capabilities and

create new ones, providing extra funding for their development. In this context, he mentioned that the NATO Defence Planning Process is already in place and that it allows to narrow the gaps in military capabilities among Allies. The Special Rapporteur highlighted that implementing the defence pledge is an important political symbol of transatlantic unity and commitment to a resolute transatlantic defence. In his conclusions, Mr Kalnins stressed the importance of MPs supporting their governments in implementing the defence pledge, to communicate the importance of NATO's role for Euro-Atlantic defence and security to the public, and to promote greater transparency of NATO policies.

49. The discussion after the presentation focused on the definition of the 2% defence pledge and of qualitative and quantitative dimensions of the pledge. The Rapporteur iterated the importance of implementing the Wales defence pledge, but also of the capabilities and contributions to missions and operations by NATO member states. The Rapporteur also highlighted that besides confirming its commitment, NATO's focus should be on spending money more wisely.

50. **The draft report [210 PC 17 E] was adopted unanimously.**

**IX. Consideration of amendments and vote on the draft Resolutions *Tackling Challenges from the South* [212 PC 17 E] presented by Julio MIRANDA CALHA (Portugal), Rapporteur and *Burden Sharing – Fulfilling the Promises* [223 PC 17 E] presented by Ojars Eriks KALNINS (Latvia), Special Rapporteur**

51. Following introductory remarks by the Rapporteur, the Committee discussed and voted on the draft resolution *Tackling Challenges from the South* [212 PC 17 E].

52. Eight amendments were presented to the draft resolution. The following amendments were accepted: 1 (Karagiannidis), 6, 7 and 8 (Alleslev), and 3 (Conkar). One amendment was withdrawn: 4 (Conkar). Two amendments were rejected: 2 (Roger), 5 (Conkar).

53. Following introductory remarks by the General Rapporteur, the Committee discussed and voted on the draft resolution *Burden Sharing – Fulfilling the Promises* [223 PC 17 E].

54. Six amendments were presented. The following amendments were accepted: 5 as orally amended (Poe), 1 and 2 (Conkar). Two amendments were withdrawn: 3 (Lamers) and 4 (Alleslev). One amendment was rejected: 6 (Poe).

55. **The draft resolutions [212 PC 17 E] and [223 PC 17 E] as amended were adopted.**

**X. Election of Committee and Sub-Committee officers**

56. **All re-eligible Committee and Sub-Committee officers were re-elected. The following new officers were elected:**

**Political Committee**

Vice Chairperson

**Plamen MANUSHEV (Bulgaria)**

General Rapporteur

**Julio MIRANDA CALHA (Portugal)**

**Sub-Committee on NATO Partnerships**

Chairperson

**Metin Lufti BAYDAR (Turkey)**

Vice-Chairperson

**Rasa JUKNEVICIENE (Lithuania)**

Rapporteur

**Raynell ANDREYCHUK (Canada)**

**Sub-Committee on Transatlantic Relations**

Chairperson	<b>Karl A. LAMERS (Germany)</b>
Vice Chairperson	<b>Vergil CHITAC (Romania)</b>
Vice Chairperson	<b>Michael GAPES (United Kingdom)</b>

**Ukraine-NATO Interparliamentary Council**

Member	<b>Karl A. LAMERS (Germany)</b>
Alternate Member	<b>Raynell ANDREYCHUK (Canada)</b>

**XI. Future Political Committee visits and activities presented by Karl A. Lamers (Germany) Chairperson of the Sub-Committee on NATO Partnerships and Ojars Eriks KALNINS (Latvia), Chairperson of the Political Committee**

57. The Chairpersons provided an overview of the Committee and Sub-Committee activities and travels in 2017 as well as plans for 2018.

**XII. Any other business**

58. No other business was raised.

**XIII. Date and place of the next meeting**

59. Mr Kalnins announced that the Committee would next convene on 17 - 19 February in Brussels. Before that, on 8 and 9 February, the Political Committee will join the Economic and Security Committee to attend the OECD Parliamentary Days in Paris. Finally, the Chairperson announced that the Spring Session would take place in Warsaw (Poland) from 25 - 28 May 2018.

**XIV. Final remarks**

60. Mr Kalnins concluded the meeting by thanking Committee members for their participation and constructive comments and the Romanian delegation to the NATO PA and the Romanian Parliament for hosting the Session. The meeting was adjourned.

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