



NATO PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY

SUMMARY

OF THE MEETING OF THE

POLITICAL COMMITTEE

Sunday 2 June 2019

Winter Riding Hall
Bratislava Castle
Bratislava, Slovakia

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ATTENDANCE LIST

Chairperson	Lord CAMPBELL of PITTENWEEM (United Kingdom)
General Rapporteur	Julio MIRANDA CALHA (Portugal)
Rapporteur of the Sub-Committee on Transatlantic Relations	Gerald E. CONNOLLY (United States)
Rapporteur of the Sub-Committee on NATO Partnerships	Raynell ANDREYCHUK (Canada)
President of the NATO PA	Madeleine MOON (United Kingdom)
Secretary General of the NATO PA	David HOBBS
Member delegations	
Albania	Xhemal QEFALIA
Belgium	Damien THIÉRY Georges DALLEMAGNE
Canada	Wouter DE VRIENDT Boris WRZESNEWSKYJ Pierre-Hugues BOISVENU Joseph A. DAY Brad TROST
Croatia	Miro KOVAC
Czech Republic	Jan FARSKY
France	Philippe FOLLIOU Marianne DUBOIS Gilbert ROGER
Germany	Karl A. LAMERS Alexander S. NEU Gerold OTTEN
Iceland	Njall Trausti FRIDBERTSSON
Italy	Luca FRUSONE Paolo FORMENTINI Edmondo CIRIELLI
Latvia	Ojars Eriks KALNINS Gatis EGLITIS Aldis BLUMBERGS
Lithuania	Vytautas BAKAS Rasa JUKNEVICIENE Juozas OLEKAS
Montenegro	Obrad Miso STANISIC
Netherlands	Sven KOOPMANS Janny VLIETSTRA
Norway	Harek ELVENES
Poland	Bartosz JOZWIAK
Romania	Ben-Oni ARDELEAN Vergil CHITAC
Slovakia	Martin KLUS

Slovenia	Matej TONIN Monika GREGORCIC
Spain	Begona NASARRE
Turkey	Osman Askin BAK Mevlut KARAKAYA Ilhan KESICI Ahmet YILDIZ
United Kingdom	Richard BENYON Tanmanjeet DHESI Nigel DODDS Baroness RAMSAY OF CARTVALE
United States	Brendan BOYLE Paul COOK Neal DUNN John SHIMKUS Filemon VELA

Associate delegations

Armenia	Adranik KOCHARYAN Viktor YENGIBARYAN
Austria	Michael HAMMER Harald TROCH Maximilian UNTERRAINER
Azerbaijan	Ziyafat ASGAROV Siyavush NOVRUZOV
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Nikola LOVRINOVIC
Finland	Mikko SAVOLA
North Macedonia	Ilija DIMOVSKI Katerina KUZMANOVSKA Vesel MEMEDI
Serbia	Ivan BAUER
Sweden	Karin ENSTRÖM Kenneth G. FORSLUND Roger RICHTOFF Björn SÖDER Hans WALLMARK
Switzerland	Pierre-Alain FRIDEZ
Ukraine	Oksana YURYNETS

Regional Partner and Mediterranean Associate Member Delegations

Jordan	Safa'a AL-MOMANI Issa KHASHASHNEH Majed QUISIM
Morocco	Mohammed AZRI

Parliamentary Observers

Assembly of Kosovo	Xhavit HALITI
Egypt	Tamer ABDELKADER Elsayed KOUSH
Kazakhstan	Yersultan BEKTURGANOV Nurzhan NURSIPATOV

Republic of Korea

Dong Yeol YEOM
Woon Youl CHOI

Speakers

František RUŽIČKA, State Secretary, Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs of the Slovak Republic

Tim SWEIJS, Director of Research, The Hague Center for Strategic Studies (HCSS)

Walter FEICHTINGER, Brigadier General of the Austrian Armed Forces, Director of the Institute for Peace Support and Conflict Management (IFK), National Defence Academy Austria

International Secretariat

Steffen SACHS, Director
Ginevra SPONZILLI, Coordinator
Clara DUROVRAY, Research Assistant
Angelica PUNTEL, Research Assistant

I. Opening remarks by Lord CAMPBELL OF PITTENWEEM (United Kingdom), Chairperson

1. **Lord Campbell of Pittenweem** (UK) declared the meeting of the Political Committee open. He thanked the Slovak delegation for hosting the Spring Session in Bratislava.

II. Adoption of the draft Agenda [082 PC 19 E]

2. **The draft agenda [082 PC 19 E] was adopted.**

III. Adoption of the Summary of the Meeting of the Political Committee held in Halifax, Canada, on Saturday 17 and Sunday 18 November 2018 [251 PC 18 E]

3. **The summary of the meeting held in Halifax [251 PC 18 E] was adopted.**

IV. Presentation by Ambassador František RUŽIČKA, State Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs, on *NATO's current and future role – the view from Bratislava*, followed by a discussion

4. At the outset of his presentation Ambassador **František Ružička** (SK), State Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs of the Slovak Republic stressed NATO's crucial role in making the Euro-Atlantic space a safer place for its citizens. He acknowledged the Assembly's function as an important link between citizens and NATO. The speaker then noted NATO's role as a transatlantic bond during the past seventy years. Close cooperation among Allies has prevented conflict and secured freedom and peace for almost one billion people, he highlighted. NATO is the most reliable and effective guarantor for peace, he added.

5. Slovakia's accession to the Alliance 15 years ago brought stability and paved the way for membership to the EU, he said, and emphasised that Slovakia shares the democratic values of the Alliance. Today, Slovakia also actively contributes to Alliance security. Current security risks that Slovakia faces are evolving rapidly; they include the conflict in Ukraine, terrorist attacks, climate change and the challenges from emerging technologies. Compounding this broad array of security challenges is the fact that trust is disappearing in international relations. This international security environment requires NATO to adapt; the credibility of the Alliance will depend on military capabilities and political unity, Ambassador Ružička stressed.

6. Allies have made progress with regard to providing "cash, capabilities, and contributions". By the end of 2020, European Allies and Canada will have increased their defence spending by around EUR 100 billion compared to 2016. The speaker also noted that the values of the Alliance are under threat and that Allies have begun to tackle these threats, including combatting "fake news" and protecting critical infrastructure. The rise of populism continues to pose problems for the open societies of NATO, he underlined. Building resilience and educating the public about the essential roles that NATO and the EU play in guaranteeing the values of our societies is crucially important, he said. In this context, the speaker informed the Committee that Slovakia has successfully initiated a targeted strategic communication strategy and joined the *#WeAreNATO* campaign. The parliamentarians have an important role to play in explaining NATO's contribution to peace and security to the citizens, he stressed.

7. In the ensuing Q&A with the Committee, questions and comments focused on the role of strategic communication, Ukraine, the unresolved conflict of Nagorno-Karabakh and implications of instability in Africa for Allies.

8. Ambassador Ružička stressed the important role that strategic communication, and the #WeAreNATO campaign in particular, has in raising awareness of NATO's role for Slovakia among its citizens and for generating public consensus on foreign policy issues. On the question of how to address the situation in Eastern Ukraine and how NATO could continue and increase its support for Ukraine, Ambassador Ružička suggested that the tools already in place (Minsk agreements, UN resolutions etc.) should be used. The Slovak chairmanship of the OSCE in 2019 is one communication channel to be explored. Dialogue with Ukraine and the promotion of reforms that lead to better the living conditions of the citizens is also important, he added. In response to a question on whether it is possible to advance Bosnia and Herzegovina's participation in the Membership Action Plan (MAP), the Ambassador stressed that NATO's presence in the country remains necessary and that a fragmentation of the country should be avoided at all costs. He was, however, sceptical, about Bosnia and Herzegovina joining MAP soon.

9. On the issue of how developments in Africa affect European stability and security, the Ambassador said that the situation on that continent has become increasingly relevant for Europe. He suggested that "a proxy war for resources" involving many actors from Africa and abroad is already going on with wide-ranging implications. Development assistance alone will not be sufficient to mitigate the challenges, he commented. Rather, it is necessary to help African states by assisting them in the acquisition of new technologies and make the internet more widely accessible. Special focus should be put on communication and education. In addition, African states need more and better access to world markets and more efficient control of their own resources. These measures will contribute to improved living conditions for the citizens of African nations, thereby reducing migration to Europe. Slovakia is joining efforts with Italy and Germany to address migration issues in transit countries.

10. The unresolved conflict of Nagorno-Karabakh was raised by representatives from Armenia and Azerbaijan.

**V. Consideration of the Draft Report of the Sub-Committee on Transatlantic Relations
NATO at 70: Why the Alliance Remains Indispensable [085 PCTR 19 E] by
Gerald E. CONNOLLY (United States), Rapporteur**

11. In his presentation, **Gerald E. Connolly** (US) discussed the role that the transatlantic Alliance has played in the last 70 years in securing peace, prosperity and stability in the Euro-Atlantic area and in prompting close transatlantic policy coordination. The fact that more countries want to join the Alliance is a testament to the significance of the triumph of the liberal democracy the Alliance stands for. The Rapporteur provided an overview of NATO's adaptation process and described key challenges Allies are currently facing. NATO is the best vehicle for Allies to pursue their national interests, he concluded, but cautioned that past achievements should not lead to complacency. To maintain its relevance in the future, NATO should update its Strategic Concept and establish a Democratic Resiliency Coordination Centre (DRCC) in order to rededicate the Alliance to the shared democratic values that constitute its founding principles, Mr Connolly concluded.

12. The ensuing discussion centred on the establishment of a DRCC, NATO enlargement, burden sharing, and the relevance of the Alliance.

13. With regard to the proposed DRCC and the "backsliding" of democracy in NATO member countries, different views were expressed in the exchange. One member commented that it would not be necessary to create a new institution as other forums, such as the Council of Europe and the OSCE, already deal and address democracy-related issues. Another member inquired about possible consequences if member states allow the weakening of

democratic values. Not all populist movements threaten democratic standards was suggested by another delegate who recommended to adapt the wording of the report accordingly. Mr Connolly emphasised the need to focus on shared values which underpin the Alliance. Policing each other in terms of backsliding through peer pressure and counselling would be a possible way to protect these values. However, he did not presume a regime of punitive measures. As to the use of “populist movements” in the report, the rapporteur stressed that he did not intend to single out specific countries but that the main concern is about populist movements tied to Russia. He agreed to adapt the draft for the Autumn Session accordingly.

14. The significance of the “open door” policy was stressed by several members. One delegate suggested that NATO should welcome Georgia, Ukraine, and the Republic of Moldova even if parts of their territories are occupied by Russian forces and cited the accession of Western Germany as a precedent. Mr Connolly agreed that NATO should continue the “open door” policy. However, he commented that the accession of West Germany cannot be compared with the current situation. While each case is different, it is clear that the sovereignty of Ukraine, Moldova, and Georgia has been violated. Committee members held different views on whether a parliamentary dialogue with Russia should be reinitiated or not. A member of an associate delegation encouraged his counterparts from NATO member countries to adopt the Magnitsky Act in every member state. The Ukraine delegation expressed gratitude for the support received by Allies and hope to resume the MAP.

15. One delegate commented that the Allies need to increase their cooperation on the acquisition of military equipment. One of his colleagues highlighted the importance of infrastructure investments such as roads and bridges that improve military investments for military needs and military mobility and inquired if these investments could be considered as defence expenditures. He noted that much of this investment funding is covered by the EU which will take on more responsibilities in this regard and suggested that this should be recognised. The Rapporteur acknowledged that investment that improves military mobility is part of the burden sharing debate.

16. In response to a question concerning US President Donald Trump’s public statements and the relevance of NATO, Mr Connolly reminded the Committee that the US government is made up of three branches and that US Congress has made powerful bipartisan statements in support of the Alliance and that both the US administration and Congress are following up on these with concrete measures.

17. A delegate suggested the report should also include a reference to the work of the Assembly’s “Working Group on Education and Information about NATO”.

18. Following the discussion of the report of the Sub-Committee on Transatlantic Relations **Martin Klus** (SK) commented on the 15th anniversary of Slovakia’s membership to NATO.

VI. Summary of the future activities of the Political Committee, the Sub-Committee on NATO Partnerships (PCNP), and the Sub-Committee on Transatlantic Relations (PCTR)

19. The Chair of the Sub-Committee on Transatlantic relations (PCTR), **Karl A. Lamers** (DE) informed the Committee of the activities of the Sub-Committee and of the Sub-Committee on NATO Partnerships in 2019.

VII. Presentation by Tim SWEIJS, Director of Research, The Hague Centre for Strategic Studies (HCSS), on *The changing character of contemporary conflict - Implications for the Alliance*, followed by a discussion

20. In his presentation to the Committee, **Tim Sweijs** highlighted five major trends related to security that have specific implications for the Alliance.

21. First, the duration and frequency of interstate conflicts have changed, he suggested. However, intrastate conflicts have surged during the last fifteen years. These intrastate conflicts are lasting longer. This trend started in 2004-5 and has been largely driven by the instability in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region, even though intrastate conflicts are increasingly also taking place in South America, Mexico, and South Asia. The main implication for the Alliance is an increasing demand for conflict prevention and containment, the speaker suggested. In this context, Allies will also face the need to engage in conflict stabilisation and disaster relief operations (resulting from climate change, refugee streams, and constraints in natural resources).

22. Second, there is also a “fusion” of armed conflicts. In Syria, for example, multiple conflicts are being fought simultaneously, he elaborated. This fusion tends to happen in “pivot” states where different spheres of influences overlap, like Syria, Ukraine, and Afghanistan, according to Mr Sweijs. He added that the number of conflicts in which both local and outside powers are involved has quintupled over the last twenty years. The main implication for NATO of this trend is an increasing need to invest in situational awareness and understanding the enemy. Moreover, political guidance will need to adapt more quickly and feedback loops between the operational field and the national capital will need to be shorter, he concluded.

23. Third, the risk that a local conflict, or a competition, escalates to a great power conflict is increased. These conflicts tend to last longer and have global repercussions, he explained. As a result, there is a need to improve both deterrence and crisis management capabilities. However, unlike the military which trains for contingencies, this is not the case for political decision makers. This issue needs to be addressed; the speaker suggested.

24. Fourth, the use of hybrid tools in conflict by adversaries implies that attacks against NATO Allies are increasingly likely to take place under the threshold of Article 5. The Allies would be well advised to develop a “whole-of-government” approach to deal with this challenge. The main implication of this development is the need to design a defence posture and doctrine that enables Allied governments to “compete in the grey zone” with regards to capabilities and the legal framework.

25. Fifth and finally, rapid technologic developments make it likely that conflict will “go unmanned”, i.e. conducted with autonomous or semi-autonomous arms. Advancements in deep learning and in artificial intelligence (AI) will require policymakers to address the ethical and legal aspects concerning the use of unmanned and autonomous weapons.

26. The discussion focused on the costs of preparing for future conflicts and how to end them.

27. With regard to the likely costs to prepare for future conflicts, Mr Sweijs suggested that governments should reinvent the way they operate to enable them to address new technological challenges which require different types of capabilities. However, governments also need to back up traditional capabilities as well. He added that unmanned tools will drastically reduce personnel and training costs as well as casualties and physical and “emotional” costs. The issue of the proliferation of technology that can be used in future conflicts, such as drones, and whether, respectively, non-proliferation agreements need to be adapted was also briefly raised.

28. In response to a question when a conflict can be resolved, Mr Sweijs answered that conflict will end when it is “ripe” enough, i.e., when the different parties are ready to negotiate. Unfortunately, since the end of the 1980s conflicts ended with stalemates, not with solutions.

29. The Chairperson then invited **Juraj Droba**, a former member of the Slovak delegation to the NATO PA, to briefly address the Committee.

30. Lord Campbell informed the Committee that he has appointed the Chair of the Sub-Committee on NATO Partnerships, Miro Kovac (HR), as interim Rapporteur for the *NATO-Russia Relations – a Snapshot* [084 PCNP 19 E] report as Senator Raynell Andreychuk will leave the Senate of Canada and the Assembly by mid-August. The Chair also announced that he will nominate two members to the Ukraine-NATO Interparliamentary Council as both Senator Andreychuk and Rasa Jukneviene will leave the Assembly soon.

VIII. Consideration of the Draft General Report *Security and Stability in Africa – Challenges and Opportunities for NATO* [083 PC 19 E] by Julio MIRANDA CALHA (Portugal), General Rapporteur and presented by Raynell ANDREYCHUK (Canada), Rapporteur

31. **Raynell Andreychuk** (CA) presented the draft report on *Security and Stability in Africa - Challenges and Opportunities for NATO* in lieu of the General Rapporteur Julio Miranda Calha (PT). She explained that the draft report analyses the nexus between the continuing instability of the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region and the security developments further south on the African continent. The main takeaway is that the security situation in the MENA region remains highly volatile, primarily due to economic, social, and environmental issues and poor governance. In addition, state capacities of African countries to manage these challenges are very limited and that several Allies are engaged in mitigating the risks of low security. Senator Andreychuk concluded her remarks by stressing that the draft report argues that the Alliance should take notice of the developments characterising Africa and develop further its relations with the African Union.

32. Committee members’ comments on the draft report focused on the importance of stability in Africa for European security and the need to increase situational awareness of the region.

33. The assistance to countries in the Sahel zone and Somalia was stressed by one member while another delegate noted the need for additional voluntary national contributions to the Hub for the South to increase situational awareness of the South. Dialogue with the African Union must be further developed, commentators agreed. Moreover, the contributions of France and Turkey to the stability of Africa were mentioned and one member suggested an increased operational role for NATO Allies on the continent to strengthen stability and security of the continent.

34. A delegate inquired whether the great power competition for resources in Africa is a threat for NATO while another Committee member stressed the importance to treat Africa as an equal partner and not only as a recipient of development aid. He added that the Alliance should increase cooperation in security and intelligence sharing.

35. Senator Andreychuk agreed with the comments made and emphasised that NATO should use every opportunity to develop relations with the African Union further. However, she was sceptical of an operational role for NATO as an organisation, though this would not exclude increased military and security assistance from individual member states. She also

noted the great potential of Africa and that the continent's population growth presented both a challenge and an opportunity.

IX. Consideration of the Draft Report of the Sub-Committee on NATO Partnerships (PCNP) *NATO-Russia Relations – a Snapshot* [084 PCNP 19 E] by Raynell ANDREYCHUK (Canada), Rapporteur

36. In her presentation of the draft report on *NATO-Russia Relations – a Snapshot* the Rapporteur identified key areas where Russia's actions impact the security of NATO allies. She argued that Russia is pursuing a revisionist approach that aims at establishing a new international order. Ms Andreychuk suggested that President Vladimir Putin is likely to continue with its confrontational attitude towards the Alliance. The best way to face a revisionist Russia is to remain firm and continue strengthening NATO's defence and deterrence capabilities while at the same time being mindful of not escalating the already tense relationship, she suggested. Allies should maintain their internal cohesion and muster the necessary political will to counter Russian aggression when and where necessary. The Rapporteur concluded her introduction by noting that the dialogue with Russia must be maintained at the same time.

37. The ensuing discussion with Committee members focused on the need to pursue a dual-track approach towards Russia, i.e. to strengthen defence and deterrence while maintaining dialogue. The economic costs of the sanctions regimes were also raised as well as the question of who formulates Russia's policies. Another topic mentioned by Committee members was Russia's continuing aggression against Ukraine.

38. Several delegates noted that there is also a dialogue going on between individual Allied nations and Russia. Possible areas of cooperation identified in these bilateral dialogues included the fight against terrorism, non-proliferation of arms of mass destruction, and climate change.

39. Other delegates noted the economic costs of the sanctions put in place against Russia. There was a general agreement that sanctions should be maintained as long as Russia did not comply with its international obligations.

40. On the question of whether or not it is only President Putin decides Russia's policy, the Rapporteur acknowledged that there are several layers of power that influence Russia's foreign and security policies. However, in the final analysis, President Vladimir Putin is the ultimate person in charge of the country. It is not possible to predict if Moscow's foreign policy approach will change after he will have left office.

41. With regard to Russia's continuing aggression against Ukraine, the abduction and incarceration of Ukrainian sailors breached the Geneva convention. A delegate asked how the Alliance should react to this move.

42. A Turkish delegate requested to replace the word "Islamic" when referring to terrorist and extremist groups in the draft with another expression because it could instigate islamophobia.

43. Different views on the effectiveness of continuing a dialogue with Russia were expressed. While some delegates reminded the Committee that the dialogue, including in the context of the NATO PA, had been of limited use before 2014. Others held the view that the exchange with Russia on a broad range of security issues is worthwhile. The rapporteur shared the latter view, but added that dialogue should only take place if it could be meaningful

and in NATO's interest. One delegate commented that Russia should be invited back to the NATO PA only after it has ended its aggression against Ukraine.

44. Senator Andreychuk said that she will pass on all the comments to the rapporteur ad interim. She stressed the need to maintain a cohesive approach between Allies. With respect to sanctions, she acknowledged that these generate costs for Allied nations, but that it was necessary to uphold the values of NATO.

X. Presentation by Walter FEICHTINGER, Brigadier General of the Austrian Armed Forces, Director of the Institute for Peace Support and Conflict Management (IFK), National Defence Academy Austria, on *Ukraine under pressure - implications for regional and Transatlantic Security*, followed by a discussion

45. At the outset of his presentation, the speaker reminded the Committee that Ukraine joined the NATO partnership 25 years ago; he posited that the annexation of Crimea has altered the country's outlook "from an optimistic to a pessimistic" scenario dominated by distrust.

46. From a Russian military perspective, the annexation was based on the military significance of the Crimean Peninsula, he argued. From Moscow's view, Russia acted preventively to avoid Crimea falling in the hands of the West. Moreover, Russia's support for the separatist forces in Donetsk and Luhansk provides it with leverage on Ukraine's course towards EU and NATO memberships, he said. However, he conceded that Russian efforts aimed at preventing further enlargement of the Alliance and of the EU have not been effective as the case of North Macedonia shows. Crimea and Eastern Ukraine represent two different conflicts and require two different solutions, he noted. While the situation in Crimea currently seems to "normalise", i.e. it is relatively calm, continued fighting is taking place in the East, he noted. Developments on the ground will obviously also depend on the newly elected Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky's approach to Russia.

47. A stronger UN involvement is unlikely to solve the conflict between Russia and Ukraine as both sides have different priorities, at least at the moment, the speaker said.

48. He reminded the Committee that Russia claims full rights over Crimea, including the control and exploitation of the exclusive economic zone. The economic impact on Ukraine has been enormous and hampers its development. Free access to the Sea of Azov is crucially important for Ukraine's exports and steel industry: the bridge over the Kerch Strait built and controlled by Russia prevents Ukraine from taking advantage of the area. Moreover, Russia's increased military presence on the peninsula has changed the military balance in the region. The military build-up has greatly increased Moscow's power projection capabilities into the Mediterranean and the MENA region. NATO has reacted to Russia's aggressive actions, among others by providing additional support for Ukraine and by increasing its military presence in the region. However, Turkey's evolving relationship with Russia could pose a potential problem for the Alliance, he commented.

49. Looking into the future, the speaker foresaw three different scenarios: first, a continuation of the status quo which included continued Russian support for the separatists and no bilateral relations while NATO would continue to support Ukraine's reforms. Second, appeasement: in this scenario a newly elected Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky and Russian President Vladimir Putin would come to an agreement which would see Ukraine start accession talks with NATO and Russia cease its support to the separatists. Third, confrontation: in this scenario, Ukraine would react strongly to Russia's continuing aggression and pursue a more confrontational course. In this case, Russia would likely react very strongly by closing the Strait of Kerch. The question would then be how NATO would react.

50. Comments from Committee members concentrated on prospects for a settlement in Ukraine. Brigadier General Feichtinger said finding a possible solution to end them will take a long time. However, the fact that Russia will need reconstruction partners in Syria could serve as leverage.

51. The discussion revealed agreement among Committee members that the terminology is important and that the terms used in the context of the annexation of Crimea and the Russian aggression against Ukraine must not support Moscow's narrative.

52. With regard to NATO's position in the Black Sea, the speaker said that NATO littoral countries Bulgaria, Romania, and Turkey will have an important role for regional stability. A Turkish delegate noted that Turkey will never recognise Russia's annexation of Crimea and underlined Russia's role in both the Syrian and the Ukraine conflicts. The delegate urged NATO member nations to fulfil their commitments to their Allies and partners in the region. He also commented that recognition of Israel's annexation of the Golan Heights would give Russia additional leverage in the Arab world. On the issue of the S-400 systems, Turkey expects to discuss with NATO Allies on how these systems affect the overall NATO interoperability.

XI. Any other business

53. The chairperson lauded Senator Raynell Andreychuk and Rasa Jukneviene for their longstanding membership and thanked them for their important contributions to the Committee and the Assembly.

XII. Date and place of next meeting

54. The Chairman informed participants that the next meeting of the Committee will take place at the Annual Session in London in October.

XIII. Closing remarks

55. Concluding the meeting the Chairman thanked the Slovak delegation for hosting the NATO PA Spring Session.

56. The Chairperson adjourned the meeting of the Political Committee.
