



NATO PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY

SUMMARY

OF THE MEETING OF THE

DEFENCE AND SECURITY COMMITTEE (DSC)

Sunday 16 May 2021

By videoconference

096 DSC 21 E | Original: English | 16 May 2021

ATTENDANCE LIST

Committee Chairperson	Michael R. TURNER (United States)
General Rapporteur	Cédric PERRIN (France)
Rapporteur of the Sub-Committee on Transatlantic Defence and Security Cooperation	Jean-Charles LARSONNEUR (France)
Rapporteur of the Sub-Committee on Future Security and Defence Capabilities	Lara Fernandes MARTINHO (Portugal)
President of the NATO PA	Gerald E. CONNOLLY (United States)
Secretary General of the NATO PA	Ruxandra POPA
Member Delegations	
Albania	Myslim MURRIZI
Belgium	Hugues BAYET
	Karolien GROSEMANS
Bulgaria	Hristo Georgiev GADZHEV
Canada	Gwen BONIFACE
	Cheryl GALLANT
	Karen MCCRIMMON
	Vernon WHITE
Croatia	Ante BACIC
	Ante PRKACIN
Czech Republic	Miroslav BALATKA
	Josef HAJEK
Denmark	Mads FUGLEDE
Estonia	Ants LAANEOTS
France	Jean-Jacques BRIDEY
	Jean-Marc TODESCHINI
Germany	Peter BEUTH
	Michael BRAND
	Karl-Heinz BRUNNER
	Jürgen HARDT
	Wolfgang HELLMICH
	Karl A. LAMERS
	Gerold OTTEN
Greece	Konstantinos BARKAS
	Athanasios DAVAKIS
	Andreas LOVERDOS
Hungary	Attila MESTERHAZY
	Istvan SIMICSKO
	Agnes VADAI
Iceland	Thorgerdur K. GUNNARSDOTTIR
Italy	Luigi IOVINO
	Andrea Giorgio ORSINI
Latvia	Raimonds BERGMANIS
	Ojars Eriks KALNINS
Lithuania	Arvydas POCIUS
Luxembourg	Semiray AHMEDOVA
	Gilles BAUM

Montenegro	Lydia MUTSCH
Netherlands	Danilo SARANOVIC
	Alfred ARBOUW
	Ruben BREKELMANS
Norway	Jeroen VAN WIJNGAARDEN
Poland	Christian TYBRING-GJEDDE
Portugal	Rafal SLUSARZ
Romania	Rui SILVA
	Ben-Oni ARDELEAN
	Nicu FALCOI
	Pavel POPESCU
Slovakia	Juraj KRUPA
Slovenia	Branko GRIMS
Spain	Ana María BOTELLA
	Zaida CANTERA
	Fernando GUTIERREZ
	Maria Teresa RUIZ-SILLERO
Turkey	Kamil AYDIN
	Utku CAKIROZER
	Fikri ISIK
	Sirin UNAL
United Kingdom	Lord CAMPBELL OF PITTENWEEM
	Kevan JONES
	Alec SHELBROOKE
	Bob STEWART
United States	Brendan Francis BOYLE
	Neal Patrick DUNN
	Rick LARSEN
	Filemon VELA

Associate Delegations

Armenia	Andranik KOCHARYAN
	Hayk KONJORYAN
Azerbaijan	Ziyafat ASGAROV
Georgia	Irakli BERAIA
	George KHELASHVILI
Sweden	Karin ENSTRÖM
	Pal JONSON
	Laila NARAGHI
Switzerland	Josef DITTLI
	Mauro TUENA
Ukraine	Mariana BEZUHLA
	Yehor CHERNIEV

European Parliament

Mounir SATOURI

Regional Partner and Mediterranean Associate Member Delegations

Algeria	Abdelhak BENBOULAID
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Parliamentary Observers

Assembly of Kosovo	Driton HYSENI
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Speakers

Johan LAGERLÖF, Defence Policy Director,
Swedish Ministry of Defence

John MANZA, Assistant Secretary General for
Operations at NATO

International Secretariat

Ethan CORBIN

Nathan Robinson GRISON

Jailee RYCHEN

Pierre DE DREUZY

Director, Defence and Security Committee

Director, Committee on the Civil Dimension of Security

Coordinator, Defence and Security Committee

Research Assistant

I. Opening remarks by Michael R. TURNER (United States), Chairperson of the Defence and Security Committee

1. The Chairperson of the Defence and Security Committee (DSC) **Michael R. Turner** (US) welcomed DSC members to the Committee's online Spring Session meeting. The Chairperson also thanked the Committee's Swedish hosts for their important role in organising the meeting.

II. Adoption of the draft Agenda [073 DSC 21 E]

2. **The draft Agenda [073 DSC 21 E] was adopted.**

III. Adoption of the Summary of meeting of Defence and Security Committee held on 21-22 November 2020 [[185 DSC 20 E](#)]

3. **The Summary [185 DSC 20 E] was adopted.**

IV. Presentation by Johan Lagerlöf, Defence Policy Director for Sweden, on *A Swedish Perspective on Arctic Security*

4. **Pål Jonson** (SE) took the floor to introduce **Johan Lagerlöf**, Defence Policy Director at the Swedish Ministry of Defence. Mr Lagerlöf began by identifying two key factors altering the Arctic security landscape, climate change and Russia's regional military build-up. Climate change, he argued, will likely increasingly open Arctic commercial shipping lanes and facilitate regional hydrocarbon extraction in the coming years, offering Russia an economic rationale to deploy military assets to the region to protect its growing economic interests. China is also engaging in the region, he continued, although to a lesser extent than Russia. China's Arctic interests, he noted, are principally economic and scientific, he said, as China is seeking to claim a stake in the predicted future riches offered by Arctic transit and exploitation. China's current regional activity augurs a future military presence to protect growing Chinese interests. Though also currently relatively limited, Russo-Chinese cooperation in the Arctic has the potential to grow. All of this, he argued, should focus the attention of NATO Allies and their partners in the region, as they will need to be able to defend their own regional interests.

5. NATO Allies and their Nordic partners, Mr Lagerlöf argued, should focus on two principal means to defend their interests in the North Atlantic and Arctic, multilateral cooperation and a credible defence and deterrence. Mr Lagerlöf said several key mechanisms exist to facilitate mutually beneficial cooperation in the Arctic. Sweden, he noted, places a great deal of importance on the value of the Arctic Council as a means of maintaining productive multilateral cooperation among Arctic states on a broad range of issues. The Arctic Council, he said, can help NATO Allies, their Nordic partners, Sweden and Finland, as well as Russia find common ground on a multitude of issues of shared interest. Still, he continued, efforts at dialogue and cooperation in the Arctic, must also be complemented with a credible defence posture by NATO Allies and their Partners. Exercises are a key means of signalling credible defence and deterrence, he underscored. He went on to describe the long-standing cooperative defence efforts between the United States and Nordic Allies and Partners to signal shared interest in the North Atlantic and Arctic. Joint exercising, he continued, tests both national capabilities, as well as interoperability. He listed a series of air, land, and sea exercises between Allies and their Nordic Partners as examples. He praised US efforts in recent years to increase its already strong demonstration of interests in North Atlantic and Arctic security, citing the decision to reactivate the US Second Fleet as a key signal of the US strong focus on the region today and for the foreseeable future. In addition, he also highlighted steps taken by the Nordic states to reinforce and strengthen their already strong defence cooperation (NORDEFCO). Regarding Sweden's relations with NATO, he noted Stockholm's decisions post-2014 to strengthen an already strong partnership with the Alliance, noting steps taken to increase policy coordination,

joint training and exercises, and information sharing. He noted the link between Sweden and NATO is an essential part of Sweden's defence policy today and will continue to be going forward.

6. Chairperson Turner thanked Mr Lagerlöf for his presentation, opening the discussion by questioning the role of the Joint Expeditionary Force (JEF) and how the JEF might support NATO activities in the Arctic. **Lord Campbell of Pittenweem** (UK) asked whether there had been any increase in Russian territorial violations against Sweden's airspace and in home waters. **Alec Shelbrooke** (UK) also enquired about Sweden's participation in the European Union's Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO) initiative, expressing his concern that Sweden's involvement in PESCO might hamper interoperability between Sweden and non-EU NATO Allies such as the United Kingdom. **Fikri Isik** (TR) asked Mr Lagerlöf to further describe the consequences of Russo-Chinese Arctic cooperation. Finally, **Kamil Aydin** (TR) asked the presenter for more information on Sweden's view of China's activities in the Arctic.

7. Mr Lagerlöf thanked the Committee for their thoughtful questions. He first responded to Chairperson Turner, noting that the JEF prioritises rapid, coordinated, and effective military action in the Arctic, and, as such, can only complement the work of organisations like NATO. The presenter also addressed Russian violations of Sweden's airspace and coastal waters, noting that Swedish officials had indeed recorded and publicised a growing number of Russian incursions over the past seven years. Mr Lagerlöf also discussed Sweden's PESCO participation, emphasising that while the maintenance of interoperability across a wide number of partners was naturally a complex endeavour, Sweden is committed to deepening its interoperability with all partners in an open and transparent manner – regardless of their PESCO status. Mr Lagerlöf pointed out that Chinese activity in the Arctic remained limited to infrastructure building and scientific research. Moreover, he stressed, true military cooperation between Russian and Chinese forces remains low. Mr Lagerlöf noted, in fact, that Chinese military involvement in the region has been limited in large part due to Russia's unwillingness to accept a greater Chinese presence in the Arctic, a development, he argued, that would be harmful to Russian interests as well as Allied interests. He concluded by thanking the Committee for the opportunity to speak to them.

V. Presentation by John MANZA, Assistant Secretary for Operations at NATO, on *Afghanistan: Allied Withdrawal and Beyond*

8. Mr Turner introduced the next speaker, **John Manza**, Assistant Secretary for Operations at NATO. He thanked Dr Manza for taking time out of his especially busy schedule to describe the underway Allied withdrawal from Afghanistan. Dr Manza began by stating that the Allied withdrawal had to date been orderly, coordinated, and deliberate. Dr Manza stressed, however, that withdrawal did not mean the end of Allied cooperation with Afghanistan. Instead, he insisted, it would mark a new chapter of cooperation.

9. The North Atlantic Council (NAC) had approved a new concept to deliver support to Afghanistan, Dr Manza continued. The first element being the maintenance of a functioning international airport and hospital for the humanitarian staff remaining in Afghanistan. The second, he continued, is continued funding for the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) – especially the Air Force and Special Forces. The United States, he continued, would offer training and assistance to the Air Force, while the Allies would underwrite training and funding for the Afghan Special Forces. Dr Manza also assured the Committee that Allies would coordinate future activities in Afghanistan through the presence of NATO's Senior Civilian Representative to Afghanistan, Ambassador Stefano Pontecorvo. Dr Manza finally offered praise for Afghanistan's Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mohammad Hanif Atmar.

10. Mr Turner first thanked Dr Manza for his presentation, before asking him to substantiate reports that some Allies were departing from Afghanistan more haphazardly than others. Mr Turner asked Dr Manza for his opinion regarding challenges facing NATO's future counterterrorism mission in Afghanistan. Lord Campbell (UK) expressed concern over the vulnerability of the airfield and

hospital, while also asking whether the hard-won gains for women's rights in Afghanistan would be protected after NATO's withdrawal. **Neal Patrick Dunn** (US) then asked Dr Manza what NATO could do to facilitate the emigration of Afghan nationals that had worked closely with Allied forces. Finally, **Ojars Eriks Kalnins** (LV) asked Dr Manza whether there has been any outside support to the Taliban by hostile nations.

11. Dr Manza thanked the Committee for their important questions. He began by stating he believed there is no risk of a haphazard withdrawal from Afghanistan amongst Allies. A clear withdrawal plan, he continued, is guiding all Allies and partners' efforts to complete an orderly, safe, and complete withdrawal. Regarding future counterterrorism operations, Dr Manza said that, since 2015, NATO has been engaged in noncombat missions only in Afghanistan, and that kinetic counterterrorism operations were now the sole purview of individual Allies. Addressing the vulnerabilities of the airfield and hospital, Dr Manza noted that security was indeed a concern, but one mitigated by the efforts of the Afghan national forces and Turkish forces deployed to these facilities. Dr Manza welcomed news that Turkish forces were likely extending their presence in Afghanistan outside the NATO framework. The continued presence of Turkish soldiers, as well as NATO's Senior Civil Representative, would likewise be crucial to preserving hard-won gains regarding women's rights, he added. Dr Manza informed the Committee that NATO could not assist Afghan nationals and veterans regarding immigration, as this was a national rather than Allied, competency. Finally, Dr Manza regretted that he could not discuss outside support to the Taliban due to the meeting's unclassified nature.

12. Chairperson Turner thanked Dr Manza for the substantive discussion and wished him good luck with his endeavours for the Alliance.

VI. Consideration of the preliminary draft General Report on *International Arms Control: Challenges Ahead* [014 DSC 21 E] presented by Cédric PERRIN (France), Rapporteur

13. **Cédric Perrin** (FR) took the floor to present his preliminary draft Report on *International Arms Control: Challenges Ahead*. Senator Perrin began by thanking the Committee for the opportunity to discuss the issue. Mr Perrin noted the recent five-year extension of the New START treaty. He argued this five-year period presents a critical window Allies must exploit to bolster the global arms control architecture. He noted, however, that the last-minute nature of the treaty extension revealed the declining appetite for international arms control by Russia and the challenges of involving China in the future. Over the past two decades, he argued, each has developed perceptions of the international security environment that increasingly diverge from the Alliance's. The result, he said, has driven Russia's violations of a suite of arms control agreements, and China's refusal to participate in existing arms control frameworks. As such, he continued, the next five years present a closing window for Allies to bolster existing arms control frameworks undergirding Euro-Atlantic security, as well as to negotiate new ones reflecting the challenges facing international security today and over the horizon.

14. Mr Perrin identified the principal challenges he believes international arms control will face in the near term. First, he cited the vertical proliferation of Russia and China's nuclear arsenals as a primary concern, noting that this simultaneously complicates attempts to craft mutual agreements and undermines Euro-Atlantic security. Second, he continued, is the horizontal proliferation of nuclear weapons to non-nuclear states. Mr Perrin said that the more states that possess nuclear weapons, the more complex and difficult arms control negotiations will become. Finally, he stressed, emerging and disruptive technologies are sowing uncertainty in the minds of nuclear planners, undermining the mutual trust needed for durable arms control agreements.

15. Mr Perrin concluded by drawing the Committee's attention to potential positive actions available to the participants. Parliaments, he argued, have a crucial role to play in educating their national populations on the benefits of arms control, in motivating relevant parties to engage in negotiations, and in encouraging interest in arms control amongst younger generations. NATO too, he noted, can act as a consultative forum, one where consensus on arms control issues can be

forged across all 30 member states, thereby magnifying a consensus position in Allied interests. Finally, he argued, parliamentarians can and should lead multilateral processes through which norms and standards for the use of new technologies in nuclear systems might be established.

16. Chairperson Turner congratulated Mr Perrin on his report, noting that he shares the Rapporteur's belief that Russia has been a leading antagonist of arms control efforts. He suggested that Russia's historically intransigent behaviour stems from that country's relative weakness, and that this weakness has led Moscow to invest more heavily in new nuclear systems. Mr Turner concluded, then, by asking whether the Allies themselves should not invest in their own capabilities before inviting Russia for negotiations. **Mounir Satouri** (EP) thanked the Rapporteur for highlighting the importance of the five-year window but insisted that the report failed to adequately discuss some important issues, including the planned expansion of the United Kingdom's nuclear arsenal, US nuclear weapons in Europe, and the potential benefits of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW). **Mariana Bezuha** (UA) also suggested that the report remained too focused on nuclear issues and could benefit from a broader discussion of conventional arms proliferation, especially the deployment of Russian missile systems near Ukraine.

17. Mr Perrin thanked Mr Satouri for sharing his perspective but stressed that unilateral disarmament, as the TPNW calls for, would seriously undermine Allied security. Chairperson Turner concurred with Mr Perrin, adding that Russia had deployed thousands of tactical nuclear weapons against NATO Allies, and that these weapons could only be deterred through a US nuclear capability deployed in Europe within the framework of NATO's longstanding nuclear sharing agreements. Mr Shelbrooke also offered a defence of the United Kingdom's planned nuclear arsenal expansion, stating that the policy was essential for the preservation of the UK's Continuous At Sea Deterrent (CASD) capability. Finally, Mr Perrin thanked Ms Bezuha for her comments, assuring her that the final draft Report would better reflect the role of Russian weapons in Ukraine. Mr Perrin concluded by thanking the Chairperson and the Committee for a thought-provoking discussion.

VII. Consideration of the preliminary draft Report of the Sub-Committee on Transatlantic Defence and Security Cooperation *Security Challenges in the High North* [016 DSCTC 21 E] presented by Jean-Charles LARSONNEUR (France), Rapporteur

18. **Jean-Charles Larssonneur** (FR) took the floor to present his preliminary draft report, thanking his colleagues for listening to his presentation via videoconference. Mr Larssonneur opened by emphasising the intersection between climate change and the Arctic region, noting that climate change was dramatically altering the region economically, politically, and militarily. With the melting of sheet ice in the region, he noted, previously inaccessible sea lanes are being opened and well as opportunities for seabed resource extraction, attracting many countries, including Russia and China, to expand their economic investments and involvement in the region.

19. With the region's growing and potentially globally significant economic viability, Mr Larssonneur noted, both Russia and China have stepped their regional investments and activities. In parallel, to defend its growing economic interests in the region, Larssonneur continued, Russia has engaged in significant efforts to boost its military capabilities across the region. Russia's efforts extend far beyond the revamping of legacy military architecture and include a wide range of new military installations across its Arctic frontiers. Larssonneur told the Committee that China's regional efforts remained principally limited to scientific research, but that, given the size and scope of China's new and proposed investments across the region, Chinese military investment will likely soon follow to protect budding Chinese investments – indeed, he concluded, many experts believe China's regional scientific efforts have the dual intention of mapping out terrain to assist future military efforts in the region. In light of these developments, he warned, a region known in the post-Cold War as a zone of peaceful cooperation might soon be transformed by the spill over of global great power competition.

20. Mr Larssonneur then discussed key next steps necessary for Allies to defend their interests in the North Atlantic and the Arctic. To meet the challenges posed by the increased attention and investments by NATO's strategic competitors in the region, he said, Allies will have to adapt more rapidly, share more information, and coordinate more military exercises together. He highlighted the significant investments already being made by NATO's Arctic Allies and their Nordic Partners in the region, lending significant credibility to Allies' defence posture in the region. In addition, he told Committee members that non-Arctic Allies' investments in the region, including the United Kingdom, France, and others, have been far from insignificant. Still, he noted, NATO currently lacks a clear Arctic strategy, suggesting that the upcoming Strategic Concept review might be a moment to forge a consensus on the issue.

21. The Rapporteur concluded by offering three concrete recommendations for the Allies moving forward. First, he argued, the Allies must invest more heavily in Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance (ISR) capabilities in the region. Second, he continued, the Allies should invest in their military capabilities to assure adequate power projection into the region. Third, the Alliance must remain flexible and adaptable in their approach to the Arctic, highlighting that the situation in the region was altering rapidly and dynamically, he concluded. Above all, however, Mr Larssonneur noted his strong support of the Alliance's longstanding position that NATO's Arctic Allies lead when it comes to determining the nature of NATO's role in the High North.

22. After the presentation, NATO Parliamentary Assembly President **Gerald E. Connolly** (US) took the floor to congratulate both the Rapporteur and the Committee for their hard work this year, noting that the DSC's 2021 reporting focused on key issues related to the Alliance's defence and security. Commenting on the report, President Connolly insisted that NATO must assume a greater role in Arctic security in view of Allied interests in the region. NATO must, he stressed, do more to meet the challenge of Russian and Chinese growing involvement in the region, noting, his particular concern at Allies' lack of robust Arctic capabilities.

23. Chairperson Turner thanked President Connolly for his leadership of the Assembly, while also thanking Mr Larssonneur for his presentation. Mr Turner opened the discussion by asking the Rapporteur whether he was surprised by the lack of Allied ISR capabilities in the Arctic region. **Thorgerdur K. Gunnarsdottir** (IS) thanked Mr Larssonneur for his report, noting that it was a timely and relevant issue for Iceland as the island-nation was nearing the end of its chairmanship of the Arctic Council. She continued by noting that US Secretary of State Antony Blinken and Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov would soon meet in Iceland under the auspices of the Arctic Council to discuss Arctic security issues. And while the Arctic Council is an essential forum for Arctic issues, she noted, it is clear by the evolution of the security situation in the region that additional steps must be taken by NATO, as security issues follow outside the Council's mandate. Finally, Mr Perrin took the floor to congratulate Mr Larssonneur for his report as well as to ask him to expand on Russian icebreakers and the investments Moscow has made in this capability.

24. Mr Larssonneur first thanked President Connolly for his leadership and kind words regarding his report. The Rapporteur then responded to Mr Turner, informing the Chairperson that he shared his concern regarding the Allies lack of ISR capabilities, pointing out that greater ISR assets in the region will only grow in importance as Russia and China continue to expand their presence in the Arctic. The Rapporteur also thanked Ms Gunnarsdottir for raising awareness of Iceland's role in the region, reminding the Committee that they had made a very beneficial visit to Iceland in 2019. Finally, Mr Larssonneur commented on Russia's icebreaker capability, informing the Committee that while these ships are a true Russian speciality, they require large and long-term investments to maintain. The Rapporteur questioned, then, whether Russia could sustain those budgets in the future. He concluded by reemphasising the need for Allied investments in Arctic capabilities, like icebreakers and ISR, before thanking the Committee for the opportunity to present his report.

VIII. Consideration of the preliminary draft Report of the Sub-Committee on Future Security and Defence Capabilities *China's Defence Posture: Implications for NATO* [015 DSCFC 21 E] presented by Lara MARTINHO (Portugal), Rapporteur

25. Chairperson Turner opened discussion for the third and final DSC Report, *China's Defence Posture: Implications for NATO* [015 DSCFC 21 E]. DSCFC Rapporteur, **Lara Fernandes Martinho** (PT), took the floor to thank the Committee for the opportunity to present. China, she began, has pursued significant military modernisation over the past decade. Three key objectives encapsulate this modernisation drive, she continued, including *mechanisation*, *informationisation*, and *intelligentisation*. Via these guiding principles, China hopes to become a world class military by 2049, and indeed, she noted, China's financial investments, shipbuilding, and training exercises reflect this intent.

26. China's rise as a military power coincides with China's broader rise as an economic and political power on the global scale, Ms Martinho emphasised. China's military ambitions will increasingly intersect with Allied interests the most in three key domains; sea, space, and cyber — which will increasingly challenge norms for the freedom of navigation on the high seas; the ability to have secure satellite communication networks in space; and strategic competition and disruption when it comes to cyber space. Emphasising the increasingly global nature of China's military reach, she told Committee members that the Beijing has expanded its military presence in the South China Sea and Africa, struck a limited but growing partnership with Russia, and even sought partnerships in South America. The Chinese navy, she noted, is increasingly exercising in waters proximate to the Alliance, from the Mediterranean to the Baltic to the Arctic.

27. In conclusion, Ms Martinho outlined five recommendations that the Committee should consider. The Alliance must seize the opportunity presented by the NATO 2030 Reflection Process and the review of the Strategic Concept to position NATO as a strategic anchor for peace and democracy globally, she stressed. Allies, she added, must also clarify the implications of China's rise by raising awareness and cooperation amongst the Allies. NATO should also deepen its relationship not only with its Asian partners, she continued, but with China as well. Expanding contact with the latter will be especially important as China continues to expand its nuclear arsenal in ways that upset strategic stability, she added. Finally, she concluded, the Alliance must identify its own strategic vulnerabilities and shore them up against potential external leverage, reminding the Committee that the pandemic had revealed a variety of potential strategic vulnerabilities.

28. Mr Turner opened the discussion, thanking Ms Martinho for her comprehensive and timely draft Report. While the Report mentions China's technological strategy of "Military-Civil Fusion" (MCF), he noted, the Report did not fully explore the implications that MCF might have on Allied economies, especially insofar as Chinese communications technologies implemented across Europe could be exploited by the Chinese government for surveillance purposes. **Andrea Orsini** (IT) also asked the Rapporteur to offer further insights into the qualitative aspects of China's military build-up.

29. Ms Martinho thanked both the Chairperson and Mr Orsini for their questions. She stressed that she shared Mr Turner's concern regarding the deployment of Chinese communication technologies throughout Allied economies. Chinese 5G technologies are a particular concern, she admitted, but noted that this was an issue that would require greater examination in the context of an expanded section on China's MCF concept. Ms Martinho concurred with Mr Orsini that a greater understanding of the qualitative elements of China's military build-up would be crucial for Allied security, she noted she would try to ensure the report highlights this sufficiently in the updated draft.

30. Chairperson Turner thanked Ms Martinho for her presentation and invited the members to send any additional comments or questions to the Committee Director, Ethan Corbin.

IX. Future activities of the Sub-Committee on Transatlantic Defence and Security Cooperation, and the Sub-Committee on Future Security and Defence Capabilities

31. Mr Turner turned the members' attention to the Committee's planned activities for the remainder of 2021. He noted that while pandemic-related restrictions to travel persist, the Committee hopes to have future visits go ahead, informing members that the DSCTC's planned visits to Canada and Norway and the DSCFC's planned visits to South Korea and Georgia remain on the docket. He said host delegations remain enthusiastic about the Committee visits, and they would be in close contact with the NATO PA International Secretariat staff to plan according to the evolution of their national policies regarding the easing of pandemic-related restrictions.

X. Any other business

32. No other business was raised.

XI. Date and place of the Next Meeting

33. Mr Turner reminded the participants that the Committee's next meeting would take place in Lisbon, during the Parliamentary Assembly's Annual Session, from 8-11 October. He likewise expressed his confidence that pandemic-related restrictions would be lifted in time so that the meeting could be held in person.

XII. Closing remarks

34. Chairperson Turner thanked the members of the Committee for their substantive participation and debate. He also thanked the Committee Director, Ethan Corbin, and his staff for their hard work in researching the Committee reports and organising Committee business.

35. A recording of the meeting is available on the NATO PA YouTube Channel [here](#).