

In the preamble and in Article 1, the parties emphasize their continuing support for the United Nations and undertake (in accordance with the United Nations Charter) to settle international disputes by peaceful means and to refrain from the threat of use of force in any manner inconsistent with the purpose of the United Nations. Canada is often considered to be the originator of Article 2, which states that "the parties will contribute toward the further development of peaceful and friendly international relations by strengthening their free institutions, by bringing about a better understanding of the principles upon which these institutions are founded, and by promoting conditions of stability and well-being". Under this article, member countries also agreed to eliminate conflict in their international economic policies and to encourage economic collaboration between member countries.

As regards common defence, Article 4 provides for consultation whenever "the territorial integrity, political independence or security of any of the parties is threatened", and, under Article 5, members agree that an armed attack "against one or more of them in Europe or North America shall be considered an attack against them all". Article 6 states that the armed attack described in Article 5 will include any attack on occupation forces in Europe. Hence an attack on the tripartite occupation forces in West Berlin would be regarded by the NATO allies as an attack on themselves. Canadian involvement in the Berlin problem has been more specifically acknowledged on a number of occasions. For example, Canada subscribed to the NATO Declaration of December 16, 1958, which declared that "the member states ... could not approve the solution of the Berlin question which jeopardized the right of the three Western powers to remain in Berlin as long as their responsibilities required and did not assure freedom of communication between that city and the free world".

Article 9 of the Treaty provides for a council of representatives of member countries, responsible for consultation on matters concerning the implementation of the Treaty and able to meet promptly to carry out its responsibilities. Provision was also made for this council to be assisted by "such subsidiary bodies as may be necessary". In practice, there have generally been two meetings at ministerial level each year, one in December consisting of the ministers of foreign affairs, defence and finance from each country, and a smaller meeting (usually each spring) consisting of the ministers of foreign affairs. Between these ministerial meetings, the day-to-day work of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and its Secretariat is directed by a Council of Permanent Representatives, which is assisted by a series of committees and agencies covering a wide range of common interests.

Canadian Military Participation in NATO

Canada has had a consistently good record for fulfilling its defence commitments in NATO. Canada's contribution to the defensive strength of the Alliance includes ships and maritime patrol aircraft earmarked for the Supreme Allied Commander Atlantic, an air division and an army brigade group stationed in Europe. There are, in addition, more than 300 Canadian service personnel serving in the various command headquarters and agencies of NATO. Canadian forces and facilities make a substantial contribution to the defence of the Canada - United States region of NATO through the Joint Air Defence Command for North America, (NORAD), naval forces on both coasts and army groups in Canada.