

the country's marginalization: "[Q]uite apart from our sense that after six decades of helping defend Europe it is a bit unfair to put us on the same footing as Russia and Ukraine ... we have yet to be reassured that if we did participate in an operation, we would have adequate input on how it was run."

On the matter of bilateral cooperation between the militaries of Canada and the Netherlands, the Ambassador noted experience had shown that they could and did work very well together (viz., the Multinational Division Southwest in Bosnia, and UNMEE). On the basis of this experience, it was only reasonable to imagine there would be further such opportunities, perhaps as part of the struggle against terrorism, for the two countries to work together militarily.

Even more "robust" had been the pattern of bilateral cooperation on political matters, with Canada considering the Netherlands very much to be one of the "like-minded" countries, and this in some measure accounted for the decision to initiate a new emphasis (nouvel élan) in the relationship, so as to provide some means of assuring continuity in bilateral ties in light of the corroding effect that time's passage inevitably had upon some of the foundational pillars of Dutch-Canadian cooperation.

Discussion:

- It is sometimes forgotten the extent to which the Netherlands, as a kingdom, is also a land of the Western hemisphere, one for whom Venezuela is a neighbour. This means that the Netherlands shares some of Canada's hemispheric political and economic concerns, and as a European country it also shares the commitment to transatlantic links.
- One possible focus of joint endeavour stems from the way in which the "new multilateralism" is putting a premium on bilateral diplomacy, and inheres in the possibility of Dutch-Canadian initiatives both on EU and on Canada-US issues.
- There are three ways of regarding ESDP: 1) as a vehicle for redressing intra-Alliance burdensharing difficulties; 2) as a counterweight to US influence (and some in the Netherlands worry that this is really what the French are promoting); and 3) as a "counterfeit, a fake, a Potemkin village"; if the latter image is the most accurate one, then there is nothing really for Canada to be involved with.
- Canada was initially more supportive of ESDI/ESDP than the US, but began to have difficulty with the concept(s) in 1999, when it looked as if the European project would necessarily exclude Canada.