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NATO's organization and functions
and Canadian interests and
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BACKGROUND

Dept. of External Affairs
Ministère des Affaires extérieures
NATO'S ORGANIZATION AND FUNCTIONS
AND
CANADIAN INTERESTS AND OBJECTIVES MAY 1987

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I. Background

The North Atlantic Treaty Organization is a defensive alliance of sixteen democratic nations in Western Europe and North America acting collectively to deter, and if necessary defend against, any aggression, particularly from the member nations of the Warsaw Pact. While its primary purpose is to defend the NATO area through effective co-ordination of the collective military capabilities of Alliance members, it also serves the equally important political role as the central Western forum for consulting on developments of common interest, particularly on means of, and where appropriate concerting member nations' efforts towards, reducing East-West tensions and maintaining international peace and stability.

Founded in 1949 by the original twelve signatories to the North Atlantic Treaty, NATO's orientation, functions, and membership have grown and evolved to the stage where the breadth of interests considered in the Alliance is extraordinarily wide-ranging, and the organizational infrastructure developed to deal with these interests is large and complex.

- Primarily a consultative organization in the beginning, headed by the North Atlantic Council (NAC) which co-ordinated the concerns of Foreign, Defence and Finance Ministers, by the early 1950's NATO had established a Defence Committee of Defence Ministers, had initiated collective defence planning on a co-ordinated basis, and had begun the development of a commonly-funded and utilized military infrastructure.
- In the mid-fifties, the adoption of the "Report of the Three Wise Men" substantially re-organized and strengthened the political/economic consultative mechanisms and procedures of the Alliance, including inter alia the establishment of the Science Committee.
- During this period, the membership was increased to fifteen with the accession of Greece and Turkey in 1952 and the Federal Republic of Germany in 1955.
- In the late sixties, the organization underwent a major evolutionary change with the withdrawal of France from the Alliance's Integrated Military Structure and its related defence planning activities, and the subsequent emergence of a re-vamped Defence Planning Committee (DPC), which became the co-ordinating and decision-making body for all questions concerning the Integrated

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Military Structure and defence planning and the Nuclear Planning Group (NPG), which provided the forum in which Defence Ministers discussed nuclear policy.

In 1967, the North Atlantic Council adopted the Harmel Report on the Future Tasks of the Alliance, which established the framework for renewed efforts to reduce East-West tensions through intensified studies in the disarmament and arms control field, and for initiatives for multilateral negotiations with the Warsaw Pact, notably the Mutual and Balance Force Reductions (MBFR) talks in Vienna.

- In 1969, the non-military concerns of NATO were further broadened with the creation of the Committee on Challenges of Modern Society (CCMS) focussing on the problems of the human environment.
- During the 1970's and 1980's a number of initiatives were taken in both political and military spheres of the Alliance to enhance further co-ordination and co-operation - e.g. the 1977 commitment of NATO Heads of Government to a target of 3% real growth in defence expenditures, and the 1984 Appraisal of East-West Relations (Harmel II).
- In 1982, Spain became the sixteenth member of NATO, although like France its forces are not part of the Integrated Military Structure.

The obligations of Alliance membership are those established by the North Atlantic Treaty; the fundamental commitment (Article 5) is that each member shall, individually or in concert with other members, take such action as it deems necessary in the event of an armed attack against one or more of them. It is on the basis of this and other articles of the Treaty [dealing with consultations (Article 2), the maintenance of individual and collective defensive capability (Article 3), and the establishment of the Council and subsidiary bodies (Article 9)] that the NATO superstructure has been constructed. NATO operates on a consensus basis and has no supra-national authority.

II. Organization of NATO

The supreme decision-making body is the North Atlantic Council, which can meet at Heads of State/Government level but normally meets twice-annually at Foreign Ministers' level. It considers all issues of general policy concern which affect the interests of all sixteen members, whereas the parallel Defence Planning Committee, composed of Defence Ministers (also meeting

twice-yearly) concentrates on defence planning issues. The third Ministerial grouping, the Nuclear Planning Group, again composed of Defence Ministers meeting bi-annually, determines policy on nuclear issues. Below the Ministerial level, the day-to-day business of these three groups is conducted by Permanent Representatives based in Brussels. Policy papers on issues of concern to Alliance members are co-ordinated and funneled to Perm Reps and Ministers by a large and complex array of subordinate Committees, Working Groups, Ad Hoc Groups etc. - some 300 at any one time. The principal committees, however, number about a score - e.g. political affairs, economics, defence review, armaments, nuclear planning, civil emergency planning, science, air defence, information, budget, infrastructure, logistics, communications, security, and so on.

This committee structure is manned largely by representatives of national delegations supplemented as necessary by representatives from capitals, and serviced by an International Secretariat headed by the Secretary-General, who also chairs meetings of Permanent Representatives and Ministers. The staff of the International Secretariat is drawn from member nations and usually hired on a contract basis. It is divided into five divisions headed by Assistant Secretaries-General - Political, Defence Planning and Policy, Defence Support, Scientific Affairs, and Infrastructure, Logistics and Council Operations. The Secretariat is essentially a co-ordinating body - it has no supra-national powers.

Paralleling this civilian structure is that of the Military Committee, which provides military advice to the civilian authorities and which conveys civilian policy guidance and instructions to the three Major NATO Commands - SACLANT, SACEUR and CINCHAN. The Military Committee is composed of the Chiefs of Defence Staff of member nations (represented on a day-to-day basis by Permanent Military Representatives), has its own network of committees composed of representatives from national military delegations, and is serviced by the International Military Staff staffed by military officers seconded from national Ministries of Defence. The Chairman of the Military Committee runs the IMS and attends meetings of the NAC, DPC, and NPG.

Although in general the bulk of military forces remain under national command in peacetime, in times of crisis or war, command authority over designated forces is progressively transferred to the Major NATO Commanders (MNC's). In peacetime the MNC's are responsible for developing defence plans for their respective areas, have their own planning staffs and structures, and are represented on the appropriate NATO civilian and military bodies noted above. It should be noted that defence planning for

the North American region is the sole responsibility of the Canada/USA Regional Planning Group.

Additionally, there are several specialized civilian and military agencies and bodies of varying composition charged with co-ordinating Alliance activities in their particular areas.

Lastly, there are a number of associations and NGO's linked to NATO, most notably the Eurogroup, an informal association of European Defence Ministers working to foster closer European co-operations within the Alliance, the North Atlantic Assembly the inter-parliamentary organization of member countries, and the Atlantic Treaty Association, composed of privately organized, national voluntary associations such as the Atlantic Council of Canada.

III. Principal Activities of NATO

A detailed review of all the activities of NATO and its subsidiary bodies is beyond the scope of this paper, but from the point of view of the concerns preoccupying the attention of the Canadian Delegation, the following general activities are probably the most important.

- Political/Economic Consultations The Council and its subsidiary political and economic bodies are mandated to consult, and where appropriate develop an Alliance consensus, on any and all developments which are of common NATO interest. Allies inform each other of their policies and the underlying considerations giving rise to such policies, and exchange views, with the objective that such information and views will be taken into account by individual member nations in the formulation of final national policies. The Council is the principal forum for such discussions and meets at least weekly (usually Wednesdays) for formal consultations. It also meets informally, either at weekly luncheons or at private meetings (convened by the Secretary-General to facilitate exchanges on difficult or particularly sensitive issues). The substantive groundwork for its discussions is carried out primarily by the Political and Economic Committees, composed of Political and Economic Counsellors of national delegations and serviced by the Political Division of the I/S, although certain important issues such as MBFR and communiqué negotiations are dealt with by the Senior Political Committee, composed of the Deputy Permanent Representatives. The Political Committee exchanges information and views on political trends and developments of interest to NATO in all areas of the world, prepares studies and reports to the

Council on political issues, such as the state of East-West relations and disarmament and arms control issues, and follows up and implements Council decisions. Its regular work is supplemented by Ad Hoc Political Working Groups and by Regional Experts Meetings. The Economic Committee carries out similar tasks: it acts as a clearinghouse for the exchange of information on economic developments (mainly those affecting East/West relations), prepared reports on East-West economic and financial relations and studies analyzing the economic situations in Eastern countries, and monitors economic co-operation within the Alliance.

- Defence Planning is a complex process but in essence involves reviewing collectively the individual defence capabilities and plans of member nations participating in the Integrated Military Structure against the background of a collective assessment of the threat facing the Alliance, establishing five-year goals for developing capabilities to defend the Alliance against the threat, and reviewing annually progress towards achieving those goals. This work is conducted on behalf of the Defence Planning Committee by the Defence Review Committee (DRC), which is staffed by Defence Counsellors from national delegations and assisted as necessary with inputs from other NATO bodies, both military and civil. Additionally, to meet longer term needs, the Alliance has adopted longer term planning procedures designed to extend progressively the coverage and time scale of NATO and national defence planning up to 15 years or more. The DRC is also responsible for the implementation of these longer-term procedures, as well as the programme of military assistance to Greece, Portugal and Turkey. A separate NATO body, the Executive Working Group, monitors progress on special programs, such as the Conventional Defence Improvement Program.
- Nuclear Planning focusses on developing Alliance policy on the strategic and tactical use of nuclear weapons and associated problems. The day-to-day work is carried out by the NPG Staff Group, staffed by Nuclear Counsellors from national delegations. Its activities are supplemented by ad hoc committees, such as the Special Consultative Group on Intermediate Nuclear Forces and the High Level Group, both composed of representatives from national capitals.
- Armaments Co-operation is concerned primarily with fostering co-operation and collaboration among Allies in their national programmes for the research,

development, and production of armaments and weapon systems. Work in this area is co-ordinated under the overall authority of the Council by a high-level body of senior representatives from national capitals, the Conference of National Armaments Directors (CNAD). The CNAD, whose routine tasks are carried out by representatives from national delegations (NADREPS), supervises the activities of a number of Groups and subordinate bodies which examine opportunities for two or more member nations to undertake co-operative projects. Work in this area is facilitated by the NATO Armaments Planning Review, a programme for identifying opportunities for co-operation by examining equipment replacement schedules against the requirements of the military authorities for standardization or interoperability, and the Periodic Armaments Planning System, a long-term planning approach which seeks to identify long-term military needs which can be met on a co-operative basis.

- Civil Emergency Planning at NATO is aimed at supplementing national civil emergency planning so as to facilitate co-operation on matters that have international implications or repercussions, to assist crisis management within the Alliance, to provide in wartime for international co-operation on the use of vital materials for essential civil and military defence purposes, and to assist the recovery and rehabilitation of national economies in the event of a general nuclear attack. The Senior Civil Emergency Planning Committee (SCEPC) acts on behalf of the Council to direct policy and generally co-ordinate NATO activities, particularly those of the planning boards and committees charged with such issues as food and agricultural planning, industrial planning, ocean shipping, civil aviation, etc. It also gives general guidance for the setting up of civil wartime agencies.

- The Infrastructure Programme is designed to provide for the construction or procurement of operational facilities required for the common defence of the NATO area e.g. military headquarters, airfields, port and missile installations, storage sites, signals and communications installations, etc. Six-year programmes called "slice groups", are submitted by the NATO military authorities, after consultations with nations, and are reviewed by the Council or the DPC, which establish financial ceilings for the "slice groups", to be paid for on the basis of an agreed cost-sharing formula. Thereafter, annual programmes or "slices" are examined by the Infrastructure Committee, which

recommends to the Council/DPC which projects can be funded. Once a "slice" has been approved, individual projects are costed and submitted to the Infrastructure Payments and Progress Committee for financial authorization. Projects are then implemented by host countries, usually on the basis of competitive bidding for contracts by firms of the participating member countries. Actual payments are made by host countries using their own funds and advance payments from other member countries.

- The Science Programme aims for the enhancement of the scientific and technical capabilities of the Alliance by fostering co-operation and information exchanges between scientists of member countries and by promoting actions to help close gaps in the scientific knowledge and research capabilities of member nations. The Science Committee fulfills this role through two types of programmes that are controlled by specially appointed panels of scientists. The first type of program is responsive and supports the general advancement of science within NATO. It includes a fellowship programme, research grants and a series of Advanced Study Institutes, which disseminate scientific knowledge and strengthen contacts between scientists through tutorial-style meetings. The second type of programme is more directive, and consists of Special Programme Panels which address multidisciplinary areas of concern. These panels have a limited duration and have in the past covered subjects such as: catalysis, robotics and geochemical cycles.

More recently, the Science Committee's "Science for Stability" programme was initiated to help promote the development of the science and technology infrastructures of Greece, Portugal and Turkey. The programme's main objective is to bring together the government, university and private sectors who work on projects of national importance.

The Committee on the Challenges of Modern Society (CCMS) was established in 1969. The mandate of the CCMS is to improve in every practical way the exchange of views and experience within the Alliance on methods of creating a better environment for Allied societies. Specifically, the CCMS is called upon to consider the problem of the human environment in its broadest terms (including socio-economic processes) with the objective of stimulating action by member governments.

As a result of the influence of the "environmental revolution" of the early 1970's, much of the work of the CCMS has remained environmental in orientation. Governments propose prior studies on specific subjects which other governments may join, or not, in accordance with their own priorities. Nearly 30 studies have been completed. Canada took a lead in two of those studies: "Inland Water Pollution" and "Nutrition and Health". Most recently Canada has been involved in studies on dioxin, aircraft noise pollution and the health and medical aspects of disaster preparedness. Other pilot studies of note have included work on forest fires and the preservation of stained glass windows from the effects of air pollution. The CCMS also administers a fellowship program linked to on-going pilot studies.

- The Information Programme assists member nations in informing their publics on NATO through the provision of publications and audio-visual material, the co-ordination of visits to NATO Headquarters (about 10 000 people a year), the joint organization of seminars, displays and lecture tours, and the NATO Research Fellowship Programme. NATO's information activities are supervised by the Information Committee.
- NATO Common Financing, other than that provided by the Infrastructure Programme, is chiefly organized under the Military and Civil Budgets. The former, controlled by the Military Budget Committee, covers some 40 budgets for military headquarters, agencies, and special undertakings. The Civil Budget, administered by the Civil Budget Committee, covers the costs of NATO Headquarters and the International Staff as well as the programmes for Science, Information and Cultural Relations, CCMS, and the costs of the NATO Industrial Advisory Group (NIAG) pre-feasibility studies. A number of special programmes, such as the NATO Airborne Early Warning and Control System (AWACS) and the NATO Central Europe Pipeline System (CEPS), are also commonly funded.
- Other less broadly focussed organs whose activities can only be noted include such bodies as: the Senior NATO Logisticians Conference, the Council Operations and Exercise Committee, the NATO Air Defence Committee, the NATO Air Defence Ground Environment, the NATO Industrial Advisory Group, the NATO Integrated Communications System (NICS), the NATO Maintenance and Supply Organization, etc.

IV. Canadian Interests and Objectives

Canada participates fully in all significant activities of the Alliance. Its most visible contribution is represented by the approximately 6 000 military personnel (land and air) stationed in Europe at CFB/Lahr and Baden-Solingen. It should be emphasized, however, that all of Canada's forces are maintained for the defence of the NATO area. While their primary responsibility is, of course, the defence of the North American region, significant forces are committed to the defence of the Atlantic Command region as well as for the reinforcement of forces stationed in Europe. Moreover, Canada contributes its proportionate share to common-funded NATO programmes, primarily the Infrastructure, Military and Civil Budgets as well as the AWACS program. Finally, Canada is a leading exponent of, and active participant in, the Alliance's non-military activities, most notably political and economic consultations.

Membership in NATO assists Canada in achieving several of its most important foreign policy objectives. It provides the essential collective security framework for enhancing the security of Canada. Through the Alliance's efforts to foster dialogue with the Warsaw Pact, most obviously via the MBFR and CSCE processes, Canada assists in advancing arms control and disarmament, reducing regional tensions, and thereby improving international peace and security. Canada's active pursuit of meaningful consultations within the Alliance, particularly on arms control and disarmament issues, serves not only the objective of enhancing national security and international peace, but also the objective of reinforcing sovereignty and Canadian identity, as such consultations give Canada an equal voice in discussions involving all but one of the major Western powers and also helps to provide balance in our bilateral relations with the United States. Participating in NATO defence planning, particularly the stationing of Canadian troops in Europe, heightens our Allies' perception of Canada and reinforces Canadian identity. Participating in the Alliance's common-funded programmes, especially the Infrastructure programme, and in the Alliance's efforts to foster armaments co-operation, improves the access of Canadian firms to Alliance defence and defence-related markets and enhances their opportunities for co-operation and contracts with other Alliance firms, particularly those involved in high technology areas.

The Canadian Delegation, assisted by the Canadian Military Representative, is the pre-eminent means whereby Canada's objectives are pursued in NATO. To fulfill its tasks, the Delegation employs nine officers from External Affairs, five from National Defence, and one from Emergency Planning Canada. While its officers represent Canada at the majority of NATO meetings, particularly those of the main committees, their

efforts are assisted by the participation annually of up to 650 officials and experts from Canada and posts abroad.

- The Delegation advances Canadian objectives and interests at NATO through:
 - a) participating on behalf of Canada in the negotiation of consensus decisions;
 - b) representing Canadian views and explaining policies;
 - c) analyzing, influencing, and reporting on views of Allies; and
 - d) participating in Canadian policy formulation.



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