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Chair

Mr. Stephen Fuhr

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[Translation]

• (0845)

[English]

The Chair (Mr. Stephen Fuhr (Kelowna—Lake Country, Lib.)): Good morning.

I'd like to welcome everyone to the defence committee this morning. Gentlemen, welcome.

This morning we have Major-General Al Meinzinger, director of staff, strategic joint staff; Major-General Derek Joyce, director general, international security policy; and Major-General William Seymour, chief of staff operations, Canadian Joint Operations Command. Thank you very much for coming.

General Meinzinger, I believe you have opening remarks. I'll pass the floor to you.

Sir, you have the floor.

Major-General A. D. Meinzinger (Director of Staff, Strategic Joint Staff, Department of National Defence): Good morning, members of the Standing Committee on National Defence. It's really a delight to be back with you after your visit to NATO headquarters, to Latvia, and to the Ukraine.

Right up front, I certainly wanted to thank the committee for their interest, obviously, in the NATO mission. More importantly, we'd like to thank you for having engaged our troops abroad. I know my last opportunity to speak to the committee on this subject was in June. As I mentioned then, I was quite confident that the troops deployed would very much enjoy the engagement and enjoy having what they are doing recognized by this committee, so I thank you very much.

On behalf of the department, it is an honour for me to provide you with opening comments this morning with respect to the Canadian Armed Forces' involvement in NATO. My role is director of staff within the National Defence headquarters. My team plays an important role in the planning of operations on behalf of the chief of the defence staff. Of course we do this important work in very close collaboration with our whole-of-government partners, and internally with our team within the policy group and within the Canadian Joint Operations Command. For that reason, today, as the chair has indicated, I have my colleagues and good friends, Major-General Derek Joyce and Major-General Bill Seymour.

Today our appearance will cover Canada's support and contribution to NATO, including mention of several of our NATO military operations.

Canada is deeply engaged with NATO, which we see as the cornerstone of Euro-Atlantic security, and the importance of the alliance to Canada is reflected in *Strong, Secure, Engaged*, our new defence policy. Canada's national delegation to NATO is headed by Ambassador Buck, and Canada's military representative is Lieutenant-General Hainse, both of whom appeared before you at this committee on February 6.

In addition to Canada's national delegation to NATO headquarters, approximately 245 Canadian Armed Forces personnel are posted to NATO billets globally. This number does not include personnel deployed to NATO operations or staff working within various NATO agencies.

As the committee is aware, we are also fortunate to have Lieutenant-General Christine Whitecross serving as the commandant of the NATO Defense College in Rome. Additionally, Lieutenant-General Christian Juneau is currently serving as the deputy commander of the Joint Forces Command Naples.

[English]

Canada's priority for NATO is to ensure the alliance remains modern, flexible, agile, and able to deter the threats of today and those arising in the future. As highlighted in "Strong, Secure, Engaged", Canada will pursue leadership roles where able, and will prioritize interoperability in its planning and capability development to ensure seamless co-operation with allies and partners, particularly those within NATO.

Militarily, NATO is a key enabler for the Canadian Armed Forces' interoperability with allies, and it is apparent that for any major operation, the Canadian Armed Forces will continue to deploy as part of an alliance or coalition, often with little warning. The goal is therefore to have forces be interoperable from the moment they deploy on training or on operations. This, of course, will reduce work-up time required for forces to be truly employable, regardless of the operational environment. Interoperability, which is the ability to act together coherently, is in our parlance a force multiplier in improving the overall efficiency and effectiveness of the force.

Canada also leverages our participation in NATO to maximize our information-sharing opportunities and more generally, to strengthen our bilateral relations with our allies. There exist many collaborative programs, committees, and processes that underpin NATO's focus on interoperability as a cornerstone of the alliance. For example, there are standards and doctrine development, as well as training events such as Exercise Steadfast Cobalt, a NATO command and control interoperability exercise, just to point out one.

Additionally, the CAF participates. I look forward to discussing a number of high-level NATO joint training exercises, for example, Exercise Trident Juncture 2018, which will take place this fall. Again, this further enhances NATO interoperability and our readiness to respond to crises.

● (0850)

[Translation]

Allow me to take a few minutes to underline and update you on our ongoing operational contributions to NATO.

The Canadian Armed Forces prides itself on delivering operational success and excellence within those NATO missions assigned by government. We do so with purpose and in a manner that is reflective of Canada's solid reputation as a reliable ally.

In 2014, following the Russia-Ukraine conflict, Canada committed at the earliest stages to participate in NATO assurance measures to promote regional security and stability. At the Warsaw summit in 2016, as the NATO alliance adjusted to new security concerns in Ukraine, the Middle East, and North Africa, Canada announced that it would renew its commitment under Operation Reassurance, as part of its contribution to NATO's deterrence posture.

[English]

As a consequence of these decisions, Canada is now leading, as you know, a robust multinational battle group in Latvia as one of the four lead framework nations under NATO's enhanced forward presence in eastern Europe. The other lead nations, of course, are the United Kingdom, Germany, and the United States. They lead these battle groups in Estonia, Lithuania, and Poland, respectively.

Canada's enhanced forward presence in Latvia is the most multinational of the battle groups. Our battle group includes contributing forces, as you know, from Albania, Italy, Poland, Slovenia, and Spain, and we look forward to the Czech Republic and Slovakia joining us later in 2018. Certainly there is great interest in the work that's being done there.

Following a series of preparatory and confirmation exercises, our first battle group was declared fully operational on September 6, 2017, and we have just recently rotated out our battle group, since your visit, on January 15.

The Canadian Armed Forces is certainly proud to serve as the lead framework nation in Latvia. Not only are our personnel playing a key role within EFP, but I think they're demonstrating outstanding leadership and true commitment to the mission.

Our land force includes up to 450 Canadian Armed Forces personnel and forms Canada's largest sustained military presence in

Europe since the early 1990s. The task force includes a headquarters element, an infantry company, a combat service support element, and vehicles and equipment based at Camp Adazi, which you would have seen with your own eyes.

Our battle group is currently under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel Sean French from the 2nd Royal Canadian Regiment, and I would offer up to the committee that we were extremely proud of our first battle group commander, Lieutenant-Colonel Wade Rutland, whose leadership of the battle group and significant contributions to promoting in-country security and defence resulted in his being awarded the Order of Viesturs by the President of Latvia. I recently had the opportunity to meet the Minister of Defence from Latvia, and he spoke quite fondly and poetically with respect to what Wade had achieved during his time in the country, so we're very proud of that.

In addition to our EFP battle group, the Canadian Armed Forces is also contributing, on a rotational basis, an air task force from the RCAF, comprising up to six CF-18 fighter aircraft as well as flight crew, command staff, and key support personnel to NATO air policing duties. Our fighter force completed a very successful mission in Romania—their second, of course—which ended in January of this year. During the mission, the crews were not only there to achieve the end states for NATO, but certainly increased their interoperability with the Romanian air force and other regional partners. We've committed to continue that great work and will resume air policing duties in Romania later this calendar year.

Lastly, the Royal Canadian Navy continues to force-generate a frigate and a ship's company on a persistent rotational basis, to be employed for exercises and operational duties within NATO's maritime command area of responsibility. At this very moment Commander Gord Noseworthy, the ship's skipper, is commanding HMCS *St. John's*, which is currently on the North Sea. By the end of the current commitment, the CAF will have sustained a frigate consistently in the standing NATO maritime forces for five consecutive years, demonstrating our support to NATO's maritime posture.

● (0855)

[Translation]

Operation Kobold is Canada's contribution to the Kosovo Force, or KFOR for short. KFOR is a NATO-led peace-support operation with the objective of maintaining a safe and secure environment in Kosovo. Canada's current commitment to KFOR began in 2008.

There are currently five Canadian Armed Forces members deployed in KFOR, including the chief of the NATO Joint Logistics Operation Center. Although it is relatively modest, Canada's contribution is recognized and appreciated by our allies.

[English]

Although it's not a NATO mission, it's well known to our allies that Ukraine remains an important Canadian foreign and defence policy priority. Operation Unifier, initially announced in April 2015, has been extended to March 2019 and encompasses Canada's training and capacity-building efforts.

As you know based on your visit, we have up to 200 proud CAF personnel deployed on this key mission, and their focus is clearly on the tactical soldier training, including training in explosive ordnance disposal, military policing, medical training, logistics training, and professional development courses writ large.

By participating in this training mission, the Canadian Armed Forces is helping to develop the professionalism of the Ukrainian armed forces and to modernize and build capacity within their forces, effectively supporting Ukraine's aspirations to achieve NATO interoperability by 2020.

In conclusion, ladies and gentlemen, from our long presence in Germany and the patrols of the North Atlantic during the Cold War, to the Balkans, Afghanistan, and Libya, and now to deterrence and efforts projecting stability, the Canadian Armed Forces has consistently demonstrated our commitment to the alliance and will continue to provide those robust capabilities and deploy highly trained and competent members, obviously in line with our government's direction.

Thank you very much.

The Chair: Thank you for your opening remarks.

We had an opportunity to meet Lieutenant-Colonel Wade Rutland when we were over there. He was very impressive. I understand that the roto ones are particularly difficult because there are a lot of unknowns. It was a challenge. It's really nice to hear that he was appropriately recognized. That's good news.

Mr. Robillard, you have seven minutes for the questions and responses.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Yves Robillard (Marc-Aurèle-Fortin, Lib.): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Gentlemen, thank you for being here today.

Is Canada's role in NATO likely to evolve further as a result of the country's enhanced engagement in Europe through NATO's enhanced presence in Eastern Europe? If so, what types of contributions to NATO should Canada make in the coming years, and why?

MGen A. D. Meinzinger: Thank you for the question, sir.

Regarding our current mission, it's important to note that we now have a battle group in Latvia. We also have a ship and fighter jets contributing to NATO's air policing mission. We're definitely going to continue with that activity. We now have a few people working at the headquarters in Romania, so that gives us some influence there. We are always ready to respond to threats, activities, or other missions that NATO wants to monitor.

Mr. Yves Robillard: Have recent developments in North Korea changed NATO's threat assessment regarding the missile threat to NATO countries?

MGen A. D. Meinzinger: If I understand your question correctly, you want to know if NATO has changed its view with regard to missions in North Korea. Do I have that right?

Mr. Yves Robillard: Yes.

• (0900)

[*English*]

MGen A. D. Meinzinger: To be clear, like Canada, certainly, we watch very closely the activities of North Korea. I know that this committee has been addressed with respect to that particular issue. Like Canada, Europe in general would be concerned about the continued development of that nuclear missile program. In terms of distinct declarations of concern or warning, I'm not aware of any statements beyond the general statements that we've heard with respect to the international community writ large indicating that concern with respect to the continued non-compliance with United Nations resolutions.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Yves Robillard: Thank you.

How does hybrid warfare affect the global security environment? To what extent is NATO prepared to address the threat posed by hybrid warfare?

[*English*]

MGen A. D. Meinzinger: I'll start that one.

I think it's a great question. One of the benefits that I have while working within the strategic staff is that I have a small team run by an EX-level civil servant. His team is mandated to constantly be thinking about the future. One of the areas they've looked at is this challenge with regard to how the nature of threats has morphed. We talk often about the hybrid threat panoply of concerns. We talk about the grey zone. I think when we talk about that, we often attribute that strategy to Russia and their ability to use non-conventional means or tactics to have an effect on an adversary.

I would suggest to you that we certainly consider that daily in the work that we do. In the context of cyber and our requirements to ensure we have resilient forces when we deploy out of country, we always look at threats specific to our region. That takes into consideration the broad types of threats we would find within that hybrid envelope.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Yves Robillard: Thank you.

In your opinion, recognizing that some NATO countries include different types of expenditures when calculating their defence spending, should there be a shared NATO understanding or official guidelines regarding the expenditures that NATO countries should include when calculating and comparing their defence spending?

MGen A. D. Meinzinger: I think Ambassador Kerry Buck spoke on that topic.

[*English*]

I know that leading up to our defence policy review internal to DND working then with NATO we did a bit of stock-taking on to how we have attributed defence spending in relation to the process and, I suppose, the standards and norms that exist within NATO proper and we compared our approach to those of our allies. I think what we found in the analysis was that we were under-reporting in a few areas.

[Translation]

Costs related to information management and information technology are an example.

[English]

Some of the costs that we would have paid for had been outsourced to SSC, and we were not rolling that up in defence spending. I think NATO does have an approach as to how they calculate defence spending within the 2% regime. I would be more than willing to discuss how I believe other considerations should be brought to the table when we talk about the true contributions that we make to NATO.

The Chair: I think Major General Joyce wanted to weigh in.

We still have a minute, so if you wanted the opportunity to jump in there, I'll give you a minute.

Major-General Derek Joyce (Director General, International Security Policy, Department of National Defence): Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

Coming back to the hybrid warfare question, I want to pass on that within NATO there has very much been a focus on hybrid warfare, particularly in light of the increasing threat that we're seeing from Russia. To give you a sense, they have developed a new hybrid strategy to counter hybrid threats. This includes the establishment of a new intelligence division, which focuses on, among others, the area of hybrid threats. This includes training and exercises in the hybrid area, which had not been done before. We have an intelligence officer within that intelligence division in the hybrid area that we're committing to that headquarters. We as an alliance are working to actively counter the propaganda, which is obviously a part of the hybrid warfare area, through exercises and NATO coordination with other organizations, such as the European Union. I wanted to expand the response on that point.

• (0905)

The Chair: Mr. Yurdiga, the floor is yours.

Mr. David Yurdiga (Fort McMurray—Cold Lake, CPC): I'd like to thank our guests for coming early this morning, and thank you for your service to our great nation.

Major-General Meinzinger, you mentioned how important interoperability is and it's sort of like the core of NATO. We are aware that Turkey has purchased the S-400 missile defence system, which I think doesn't mesh very well. Now there are rumours that they will be purchasing the SU-57 fighter jet from Russia over the F-35. How is this going to work with Turkey systems not really meshing with ours? This is a new reality. How is NATO going to respond to this reality?

MGen A. D. Meinzinger: In line with my remarks, I do agree 100% that what we get from the NATO alliance is first and foremost an ability to come together when we need to come together. As an example, we on a rotational cycle participate in a very sizable joint exercise routine with NATO. In 2015, during Jointex we deployed 1,500 Canadian Armed Forces members to Spain and Italy into a high-intensity, war-fighting scenario that involved 25,000 NATO troops. We led that effort by running a computer-related exercise before our troops deployed. Benefits are accrued by training together, sharing together, whether at committees or at tables of

doctrine and the like. I think really the bedrock of the alliance is our ability to come together on a moment's notice. You point out examples. I'm not an expert in the radar system that you're referring to. I would say what matters most is our solidarity as an alliance. Individual countries have the prerogative to purchase equipment of their choice and I think we would acknowledge that. I would offer those up as some comments.

MGen Derek Joyce: If I may just add to that. Obviously Turkey is a long-standing ally and friend to Canada and we're part of the alliance and will continue to be part of the alliance. With respect to interoperability, it's more than just equipment. We have a vast array of fighter-type aircraft ships etc. and we work towards a common NATO standard with respect to areas that are of key concern for interoperability. We work through those through the exercises and operations that General Meinzinger was talking about. There's going to be a challenge there's no doubt about it, but the point is that NATO equipment is not homogeneous. There's some U.S. equipment, there's European equipment, but we make it work, and we make it work through working hard in operations and through those developmental exercises as well, so we'll be able to overcome what's expected.

Mr. David Yurdiga: I was more getting at the possibility to reduce your ability to participate in a theatre of war. Obviously, with the fighter-jet scenario we have to communicate. Accidents do happen. When you reduce the ability to communicate and share information, that creates a problem for our troops on the ground. Would this possibly say, "Okay you can't participate in this event because of these issues"? It seems to me that Turkey should be put on the back burner... only participate on certain things, but not others. Is this a correct analogy?

MGen Derek Joyce: It is possible that could be the way that any kind of operation would evolve. I would just highlight right now that we already have Russian equipment being used by NATO allies. Some of the eastern European nations actually use Russian equipment at this point and they do participate in our exercises and operations.

Mr. David Yurdiga: Regarding cyber-attacks, we talk about fake news propaganda and everything else and a recent poll suggests that two-thirds of Turks see the U.S. as their biggest threat. Pro-government media hammers home the message on a regular basis. One recent editorial screams that the U.S. is Turkey's new enemy. Do you believe this is a result of Russian fake news and media influence to destabilize NATO and its members?

• (0910)

MGen Derek Joyce: That's a great question. I'm not familiar with the example that you're using, sir. What I would comment on is the fact that we're aware that Russia is using hybrid warfare. They're using hybrid warfare, not in just certain countries, they're using hybrid warfare across the alliance and in fact, across the world where it suits their purpose. While I can't necessarily comment on that, I certainly wouldn't dispute the fact that there are certain forms of propaganda being used within the Turkish population.

Mr. David Yurdiga: I'm more concerned about what are we doing, as NATO, to combat this sort of thing. Whether it's in Turkey or wherever it may be, it doesn't make a difference. Fake news and propaganda is what it is. What are we doing, as Canadians, and as NATO members, to contradict or have a front, saying this is not true? Are we using the media to our advantage? Are we putting the message out there that this is fake news? Do we have a plan in place or are we, right now, just sitting back and monitoring the situation?

MGen A. D. Meinzinger: I can start.

Major-General William Seymour (Chief of Staff Operations, Canadian Joint Operations Command, Department of National Defence): I can supplement that, too.

MGen A. D. Meinzinger: Certainly. General Seymour will add some comments.

We went into Latvia, eyes wide open, certainly. As a lead nation, we felt it was our responsibility to understand this challenge; to make sure that we had a strong, strategic communications plan that was vetted amongst all of the capitals within our battle group, working that hand in glove with NATO to ensure that. Part of the challenge is to make sure you're getting your message out. In fact, leading up to our deployment, General Seymour and I, specifically, participated in a lead nation battle group war game, if you will, an exercise where we went through a number of examples of what may happen and how might we react to these sorts of occurrences—fake news, intrusions, disruptions from Russian hybrid tactics. I think we learned a lot from that. We came back to Canada. We ran a very similar exercise with our whole-of-government partners, the seniors from the various departments. I think the view that we took was that we need to be very connected; we need to be able to call a spade a spade when there are mistruths being made, certainly if they are directed at our Canadian Armed Forces deployed. We train them. We ensure, from a hygiene perspective, that there's a personal discipline.

General Seymour, who led the operational employment of that concept, can certainly share with the committee some additional comments if you want to grant us a bit more time.

The Chair: We will have time to circle back on this. Perhaps the witness would just glance at me once in a while; it would be helpful. I'm completely comfortable interacting with my colleagues, but I really don't like interrupting you. I appreciate your coming here and I want to make sure you're heard.

MP Garrison.

Mr. Randall Garrison (Esquimalt—Saanich—Sooke, NDP): Thanks very much, Mr. Chair, and thanks to the witnesses for being here today.

I'm going to turn my time over this morning to my colleague, Rachel Blaney, who often backs me up here in committee and also serves as the NDP representative at the international meetings of the Canadian NATO Parliamentary Association.

Ms. Rachel Blaney (North Island—Powell River, NDP): Thank you.

Thank you, all, so much for being here. I absolutely have to say that when I travel with the NATO parliamentary assembly, all of us hear, repeatedly, from so many nations about the great work that our men and women in uniform do. I think that's a huge testament to the

great work that you all do in your leadership role, so thank you so much for being here today.

I also have the proud gift of representing 19 Wing in my riding in Comox and have certainly learned a lot. I just have to say how immensely proud I was last week. We actually had the Wounded Warriors of B.C. running from Port Hardy to Victoria. In Comox, the military came out in uniform to greet them, and it was really touching to see how amazing it was in all the legions in the valley. I think there is a proud history in our community. And I want to give a special shout-out to Major-General Seymour, who I know came from Comox, and has a long history there. I'm very happy to be with you here today.

MGen William Seymour: It's my hometown.

Ms. Rachel Blaney: Exactly.

Just a few weeks ago, I met with the Campbell River Youth Action Committee that works closely with our Campbell River mayor and council. One of the things that they brought up, and I thought this was something interesting, was their very high concern about how heated tensions are across the world.

They are concerned about what's going to happen if somebody has an opportunity to push a button where nuclear arms are deployed. What they asked me a lot about is what are we doing as a country to help calm those tensions. I think, when you look at NATO's commitment to the implementation of the Treaty on Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, this is something we have to continue to work on.

We probably all read the article today with Putin making some very interesting and distressing announcements about new defence systems in his annual state address. He said that Russia is ready to use nuclear weapons, that Russia has a nuclear weapon that can reach any point in the world.

We know that this is growing. I'm just wondering if you could tell us a little bit about what Canada's role in NATO is, around having some really meaningful talks about how we stop this and how we begin that conversation.

● (0915)

MGen A. D. Meinzinger: I can kick it off and then pass it to my colleagues here.

Canada is obviously playing a leadership role in working with the international community, including through NATO, to reduce tensions. We recognize the threats posed within the international community. One of the ways that we recently addressed this is through hosting, in Vancouver. The foreign ministers of several countries to discuss diplomatic solutions to the situation in North Korea and DPRK.

Through NATO, we're working towards a deterrence style of reduction of tensions. To have a strong deterrent is very important from our perspective. We never lose sight of the fact that the primary focus needs to be a diplomatic push towards reducing tensions. One of our most tangible and most recent efforts was through that meeting in Vancouver.

MGen Derek Joyce: I would just add that in the context of the discussion this morning, a strong, cohesive, vibrant NATO is a big piece of the puzzle in terms of deterrence and assuring ourselves that as adversaries look at us and contemplate actions, they have to take notice of NATO as an extremely powerful alliance. There's nothing like it in the world. You have 29 nations that have the political will to come together and respond. I think NATO is a piece of that reassurance message.

I understand that some students out of UBC are potentially going to travel to one of our missions. I think in Latvia we're looking at supporting some of the youth getting abroad and having an opportunity to actually see NATO in action, Canadian Armed Forces within NATO providing a piece of the puzzle in that deterrence mission. Hopefully that will add a bit of understanding.

I certainly think the work with the Canadian Parliamentary Association is laudable. I certainly would commend you for that and certainly Ms. Alleslev for her leadership. It's great for us to share Canada and Canada's contributions with the broader parliamentary team.

I think if getting youth involved in that could be encouraged more broadly, that would be good for the alliance as well.

Ms. Rachel Blaney: I couldn't agree more about engaging young people. I know that having gone to a small community in this country and having heard so passionately that this is a growing concern. I understand that you are working on the front lines of this. So many people in Canada are feeling a lot of concern.

I hope Canada will continue and broaden that perspective. We want to see a long-standing dedication of Canada as peacekeepers. I know that in my riding, there are always conversations about the Canadian military really being a focus of peace and how we continually have to educate people about that role.

I'm just wondering if you could tell us a little bit about what the Canadian branch of NATO is doing to connect with young people, educate them in this way, and have more of those conversations.

MGen A. D. Meinzinger: That's a great question. I don't have any examples to draw upon in terms of NATO, but certainly we engage. I believe there's a youth champion. We have opportunities to engage with youth committees. There are various touchpoints.

Frankly, a lot of it happen at our wings and our bases. Certainly when I was a commanding officer in Gagetown, we regularly had kids come in, whether it was to see Santa flying in the back of a helicopter or open houses, air shows, where really Canada comes to our wings and bases.

We have an opportunity to showcase what we do and an opportunity to dialogue. We may have an opportunity to recruit some of them, ideally, because this is a priority for us. It's at that coal face level where we have to take those opportunities and explain what we do and why we do it.

I have young children and rarely do they ask me military questions, but certainly in the context of North Korea...which is to your point, right?

I'm sorry. I have to end.

● (0920)

The Chair: Thank you for that. We went a little bit over time.

I'm going to turn the floor over to MP Alleslev.

Ms. Leona Alleslev (Aurora—Oak Ridges—Richmond Hill, Lib.): Thank you very much.

Our role, of course, as parliamentarians is to ensure that we have the capability in our Canadian Armed Forces to meet our strategic foreign policy and alliance goals and responsibilities.

In your opening remarks, you highlighted our long presence in Germany during the Cold War, in the Balkans, Afghanistan, and Libya. Maybe not right now, but perhaps you could get this back to the committee. Could you give us a feel for what, at our peak, and you mentioned the 1990s, we had in terms of capability in Europe, how many people, what types of assets, what type of equipment, and how that compares to 455 people in Latvia and five people in Rome?

MGen A. D. Meinzinger: That might be best taken on notice, so we can come back with the exact numbers. In terms of the numbers currently under Operation Reassurance, certainly with our ship's company persistently deployed, plus our 455 people, we are, day to day, generally 700 people. When we have our ATF deployed, we're close to 1,000 people.

Certainly in terms of looking at that in the context of the previous contributions, absolutely we can provide that to the committee.

Ms. Leona Alleslev: In terms of equipment, in terms of capability, and in terms of what we brought to the table, that would be great, particularly in light of, us having a bit of a gap now of our destroyer capability, and our AORs, even though we're looking at the replacement of the joint support ships. We've been told at this committee that the Kosovo campaign and Libya campaign would be a difficult challenge to be able to mount today with the capability we have today right down to originally having 138 F-18s where we now have 60, and, of course, a decline in our subsurface surveillance capability in anti-submarine warfare, to name a few.

Could you give us an idea of how we measure our capability and how that compares again to the capability we had previously?

MGen A. D. Meinzinger: One of the points I would make first and foremost, as we look at our new defence policy, is the clarity of capability investments we have laid out in our defence policy over the next 20 years fully costed. Certainly, as we ramp up those systems, those investments, our 88 new fighter aircraft, etc., these will be capability opportunities that we will offer to the alliance as we develop them and introduce them.

Ms. Leona Alleslev: That's a very good point. I guess what I'm wanting to know is where we are today. We've outlined where we want to get to, but we haven't been given the information yet. That's what I'm asking for from you. How do we measure our capability in each one of those domains, and, therefore, what is our report card, and how are we doing today until we get to where we want to get, after that investment?

MGen A. D. Meinzinger: I would say, broadly speaking, one of my roles for the chief of the defence staff is to constantly be taking stock of what we have on the shelf. The responsibility of the chief of the defence staff, an awesome one, is to provide military advice to the Government of Canada, essentially options for putting the Canadian Armed Forces on the pointy end of the spear, in harm's way potentially. He does that, obviously, based on a look at the capabilities and the capacities that he has.

We manage that through a force posture and readiness protocol where we essentially, if you will, colour code those capabilities that we have on the shelf. We've done a little bit of work specifically given the...The element of the operational concurrency model is well outlined in our defence policy, the numbers of troops that we will need to have deployed, to a maximum, the four small missions and the three larger missions.

When we take stock of the force elements, if you will, we have many bespoke capabilities. In some cases, individuals could be seen as a Canadian Armed Forces capability based on the definition.

• (0925)

Ms. Leona Alleslev: Could you expand a bit on that? That's the next question.

What would you say are Canada's key capabilities, because we've decided that we will probably never go anywhere on our own. We're going to be part of an alliance, so therefore, a little bit like a soccer team, maybe we're the one with the left wing defenceman, not necessarily all the players on the field.

How would you highlight the key Canadian capabilities and strengths?

MGen A. D. Meinzinger: You know I love the sport analogies.

I would be a little bit cheeky, if I may. I think at the end of the day, it's not about the capital equipment. I think at the end of the day what Canada and the Canadian Armed Forces bring abroad, and I've been there, is the human capital.

I've heard General Vance say this in different forms. I think the Canadian Armed Forces members are well trained, they're disciplined, and I know a number of the committee members know that instinctively. We're brought up in a way that, I think, has us adaptable and agile. We bring a lot more to the fight, if you will, than just the equipment that we're deploying with.

Ms. Leona Alleslev: For sure, but a capability is a capability. It may only be human capital in some instances, or it may be human capital and equipment.

What would you say are the key capabilities that Canada brings to the NATO contribution?

MGen A. D. Meinzinger: I think we'd say the air force.

Voices: Oh, oh!

MGen A. D. Meinzinger: That's not for the record.

MGen William Seymour: I would say the joint force, for the record.

MGen A. D. Meinzinger: No, and that is...

Ms. Leona Alleslev: I'd have to agree. Okay.

MGen A. D. Meinzinger: I look at Afghanistan. Certainly our ability to bring joint army/navy/air force/SOF together with a command and control machine to fuse that and plug it into a coalition, we do very well.

When Canada gets the call, you can be certain that we will be able to push out the door a joint capacity, well-trained, skilled individuals with the capabilities resident within that formation. I saw it in Afghanistan, I commanded the air task force—

Ms. Leona Alleslev: If I could ask you to give us a feel for how we measure capabilities, if you can take that away and give us sort of what the key criteria are for measuring capabilities, that would be fantastic.

Thank you very much.

MGen A. D. Meinzinger: Absolutely.

The Chair: Right on time. Perfect.

We're going to go to five-minute questions now, and the first one of those is going to MP Spengemann.

Mr. Sven Spengemann (Mississauga—Lakeshore, Lib.): Gentlemen, thanks for being with us. It's nice to have you back, and thank you again for your service.

General Meinzinger, in your brief you mentioned the Warsaw summit in 2016, and I'm pulling out the phrase "new security concerns in...the Middle East".

Could you elaborate, from a NATO perspective, on what you see as those security concerns and what challenges they will bring in the short term?

MGen A. D. Meinzinger: You mean vis-à-vis the Middle East, absolutely.

I think we've seen NATO contributing to, specifically, the mission in Iraq and Syria. We've seen it in a number of different ways, the use of the NATO AWACS aircraft contributing to the command and control and ISR information requirements for the coalition.

I think as NATO continues to move forward on its project stability line of effort, which is really about capacity-building in countries like Iraq and Syria, we are supporting NATO currently in terms of counter-IED training out of Bismayah, Iraq, just southeast of Baghdad. We've got a small group of Canadian Armed Forces, largely engineers, who under the NATO project stability mission are building partner capacity with indigenous forces, things such as how to deal with an IED, how to do the drills and the tactics techniques and procedures if you encounter a minefield.

As we look to the future, we certainly see NATO building out more of that level of activity in Iraq, as an example.

• (0930)

Mr. Sven Spengemann: Okay. If we can stay with the Iraq theme for a moment, the UN just came out a couple of weeks ago with an assessment that the post-conflict, post-Daesh reconstruction agenda would run into the order of magnitude of 88 billion \$U.S.—I think that's the number they've put on it—and potentially higher than that.

I wanted to use that example to ask you the question of how much, in your mind, of a security dividend we gain from well-planned post-conflict reconstruction, especially in a theatre like Iraq.

MGen A. D. Meinzinger: I know we're here to talk about NATO, but certainly in terms of the contributions we've made I'm very proud of what the Canadian Armed Forces has done and continues to do vis-à-vis the mission in Iraq. I look at our approach and it's very much a regional approach, so doing great work in countries like Jordan and Lebanon. I think the broader coalition community is, obviously, very much contemplating phase 4, as we call it, post-conflict reconstruction and stabilization efforts in Iraq. I would offer those up as my comments.

Derek, do you want to add something?

MGen Derek Joyce: Thank you. I would just add on to General Meinzinger's response. There's no doubt, and it's recognized within NATO, that the post-conflict reconstruction is absolutely a key element of the overall re-establishment of a peaceful international community. We've seen the results when those positive reconstruction steps have not occurred. From NATO's perspective, that is why we're in Iraq in the reconstruction mode that General Meinzinger was talking about.

More specifically to Canada, it's why we're also contributing \$400,000 to the counterterrorism and Iraqi bomb disposal school. A key element of working towards a more stable and peaceful environment post-conflict is allowing people to come back home. People can't come back home if there are IEDs, unexploded ordnance, in the areas. So this is really one of the key elements that we're contributing to, to try to recreate a stable environment to get back to some level of normalcy in Iraq.

Mr. Sven Spengemann: I've got 30 seconds left, so maybe you'd give a quick yes or no. Could NATO do more, should NATO do more, in terms of the intersection with the UN apparatus on post-conflict reconstruction, the civ-mil planning component, which is very important and requires expertise both from the civilian and the military side to get on to the same page? Are there opportunities within the organization for improvement?

MGen Derek Joyce: I would say that, yes, there are opportunities for improvement. We, of course, have a common objective between the UN and NATO to work towards a peaceful international situation, but I think the UN has a specific role and NATO has taken a specific role as well. The UN works towards improvement of the peaceful situation within Iraq, and certainly NATO has taken the approach of capacity building for the Iraqi forces.

Mr. Sven Spengemann: Thank you very much.

The Chair: Ms. Gallant.

Mrs. Cheryl Gallant (Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke, CPC): Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

To General Meinzinger, are the Canadian Armed Forces experiencing any recruitment difficulties when it comes to ensuring we have cyber-defence capabilities within our military?

MGen A. D. Meinzinger: Certainly, you would have noted in our latest defence policy a commitment to introduce a new cyber-operator trade within the Canadian Armed Forces. It's very nascent, we've just started to build that pool of individuals. This is a challenge

for all organizations, the need to build capacity among those who understand how to put up defensive systems and operate in networks and the like. Banks need individuals like that, corporations need individuals like that. I think it's a great start for us to carve out a niche trade. It will allow us to train these individuals, to bring them into the Canadian Armed Forces and then leverage the skills that they have. I think it's a great start and I think it's an initiative that we've moved out very quickly on.

Mrs. Cheryl Gallant: So, yes or no? Are we having problems recruiting people for this role?

MGen A. D. Meinzinger: It's very early. I would say for that particular trade, I think there's only a handful of folks who have been brought into the trade today.

• (0935)

Mrs. Cheryl Gallant: Okay. Thank you very much.

General Joyce, do you believe the Royal Canadian Air Force is currently unable to meet its NATO commitments and given that we haven't been able to find, in the budget, any allocation for these used fighter jets, I'm wondering if you know at all when the purchase time is going to be. Apparently we have some capability gap, or do we?

MGen Derek Joyce: To be honest with you, I'm not in a position to comment on the Royal Canadian Air Force's situation right now.

Mrs. Cheryl Gallant: As it applies to NATO—it's NATO, that's where the capability gap is supposed to be—that we're not able to fulfill our obligations.

MGen Derek Joyce: All I can say is that, within our new defence policy, in SSC, we've made the commitment to work towards a fighter replacement to fill all of our security requirements. In the interim, as you're very aware, we're moving toward the purchase of some F-18s from Australia that will fill that gap.

Mrs. Cheryl Gallant: Then for our routine patrols for the countries in the Far North, the Arctic, which don't have their own air forces, for anything we need to do in NATO we're still okay: we have the number of jets and personnel to go forward and continue our obligations at this time.

MGen A. D. Meinzinger: It's important to recognize we have two requirements. We have the requirements to defend the homeland and North America in the context of NORAD. That's a requirement. Then we have a requirement to support our NATO obligations. The intended purchase of the Australian fighter jets is going to provide us the capacity over the short term to be able to meet those two obligations concurrently.

Mrs. Cheryl Gallant: Okay.

We know that, obviously, the United States is a target of this North Korean aggression. We now have partnerships in the Asian region, through NATO. Are Canadian Forces exercising with NATO's Pacific partners? Do we have anything planned specifically in that region to make sure, in that NATO capacity, that we're preparing for that particular threat?

MGen William Seymour: I wouldn't necessarily link our activities in the Pacific with NATO. We're actively involved in the Pacific. Most recently we had a couple of warships that had been operating out in the Pacific to show Canadian presence and to work with selected allies and partners out there. A number of those countries have relationships with NATO, either bilaterally or in other ways. I wouldn't necessarily link our activities there to formal activities with NATO. We're actively involved with our Asian partners, but not necessarily in a NATO role.

Mrs. Cheryl Gallant: Right, because within NATO there was this large concern over the pivot to the Pacific. Of course, our European partners were very concerned about that. Given the threat that North Korea poses, NATO is not exercising in that region whatsoever to protect one of its major allies and founding partners against that type of aggression. Do I understand that correctly? In a NATO capacity, they're not exercising.

MGen Derek Joyce: Perhaps I can respond. I'm not within the operational realm, but as General Seymour mentioned, we're not conducting NATO exercises within the Pacific region.

What I can say is that NATO, and the alliance, and individual countries have recognized the threat from DPRK. I can say that the threat is recognized as not just directed at the United States. They have the capability to hit European countries as well, and European countries are very aware of that. All of our NATO allies are in the same situation by recognizing what this DPRK threat is.

I think it's safe to say—and perhaps this answers your question best—that from a deterrence perspective NATO is always ready to protect its alliance members, so that's where we are with that.

Mrs. Cheryl Gallant: What about the interoperability—

The Chair: Your time's up, Mrs. Gallant. I'm going to have to yield the floor to Mr. Fisher.

Mr. Darren Fisher (Dartmouth—Cole Harbour, Lib.): Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

Thank you, gentlemen, for being here today. Most of my questions were asked, but I want to make a comment.

You used the terms “reliable ally” and “solid reputation”. I certainly can say that when we were walking through the camp military base with Colonel Rutland, we certainly felt that from the other members of the other countries' contingents.

I have one quick question, though, and then I'm going to pass my time off to Ms. Alleslev. We were told that our best estimation was—and this might be a little off the NATO conversation, but we did talk about Ukraine—we thought there were around 250,000 Ukrainian military members. Is that number growing, or has it levelled off, or have we even confirmed, roughly, what the numbers are that we are working to train over there? Then I'll pass the remainder of my time over to Leona.

• (0940)

MGen A. D. Meinzinger: Certainly I'm aware of the number of Ukrainian armed forces members we have trained through the Operation Unifier enterprise. I think it's just north of 5,500. We've delivered about 120 particular serials of training. Is that your question?

Mr. Darren Fisher: No, I was wondering about how many members of their military.... I think it was Lieutenant-Colonel Rutland who said it was somewhere around 250,000.

MGen A. D. Meinzinger: I don't know what their end-state armed forces are to look like in terms of numbers, but we could certainly get that to you if it's of interest.

Mr. Darren Fisher: Thank you.

Ms. Leona Alleslev: Thank you very much.

I'd like to go back to meeting our NATO obligations. Could you give us an idea of how we arrive at our NATO obligations? Is it not up to every country to say what contribution they're going to make, and therefore then follow up on making it, so we can tell them what our contribution will be?

MGen Derek Joyce: I can start off and then perhaps pass to my colleagues.

There is a specific methodology within NATO for both defence expenditures and equipment required. The allies have to report their expenditures annually through a standard process that we have. It really hasn't changed since about the 1950s.

Ms. Leona Alleslev: No, I was referring to our operational commitments. In the example of Latvia, we told them that we would lead the force. NATO didn't say, “You must and you must contribute 455 people and you must lead the battle group.” That was something that we said. Is that a true statement?

MGen Derek Joyce: Sorry. I misinterpreted your question. I thought you were talking about the equipment that we actually procure.

In this area, I would comment that it's a negotiation. When Canada volunteered to become a framework nation in Latvia, per your example, we determined—of course through our normal processes—what capabilities and numbers we were able to bring to the fight, to the operation, that would meet our budgetary restrictions and our personnel and equipment resources. As a result of that, we've gone through this negotiation process with our supporting allies that are participating in Latvia with us to bring on other capabilities that we didn't necessarily bring.

Each one of the framework nations has taken a slightly different approach, naturally, given the resources they have. I can safely say that our commitment to Latvia is probably one of the most unique, in that we have the most diverse number of supporting nations, and it truly is a strategic messaging in terms of having so many different allies all committed to that operation.

Ms. Leona Alleslev: Perfect.

If we could talk a bit about interoperability, I know that NATO has a mechanism for determining how effective we are collectively from an interoperability perspective. What kind of metrics do we in Canada use to evaluate where we are in terms of our meeting NATO interoperability requirements?

MGen William Seymour: You're going to push hard for metrics on something that requires activity on a number of levels, from procurement to procedures, tactics, and documentation. In NATO the interoperability is enhanced by a well-greased series of things that bring interoperability to bear. We're a part of all those dialogues. We participate in meetings. We participate in writings of the STANAGs. It's a fundamental level.

This is what we saw in Latvia. It comes down to people as well—people being interoperable with each other. That's something Canada does really well, with Wade Rutland again, bringing six nations together to work with each other: there are different languages to overcome, and different tactics, techniques, and procedures. Even at the parade at which they started their operation, there were different marching skills, some brought weapons, and all those things. We made it work.

It's a complex problem. In terms of metrics that make it easy to understand, it requires some time to explain in the right way, because of the complexity.

• (0945)

MGen A. D. Meinzinger: If I may, I would point—

The Chair: Actually, I'm going to have to leave it there. We're a little bit over time. My response is always that we might be able to circle back on that, and I really mean that because we do have time, but I'm going to give the floor to MP Yurdiga.

Mr. David Yurdiga: Thank you.

Canada, through NATO, contributes to ballistic missile defence of Europe, but contributes zero dollars to defence against ballistic missiles aimed at Canada. Should we do more in regard to ballistic missile defence to protect Canadian soil?

MGen A. D. Meinzinger: I think if you read our defence policy, you'll see it's quite clear that vis-à-vis ballistic missile defence it has not changed, but certainly we're committed and we recognize that our first job is to defend Canada. As our policy indicates, we're going to collaborate in a very detailed way with the U.S., to contemplate all of the threats that are presenting themselves, including some in the hybrid realm that were raised earlier.

Mr. David Yurdiga: What is the current U.S. policy? If there were a ballistic missile shot at Canada, what is the current U.S. policy regarding intercepting it?

MGen A. D. Meinzinger: I'm not an expert on U.S. policy so I wouldn't want to hazard to offer up my opinion in that regard.

Mr. David Yurdiga: Previous witnesses would not respond, so that's concerning and that's why I brought the question.

We, as Canadians, need to know. If something does happen, how are we protected?

As it sits now, if there is a ballistic missile threat inbound, how would Canada respond, as we sit now, as a nation?

MGen A. D. Meinzinger: Certainly, through NORAD, one of the missions that the binational command, Canada and the U.S., executes 24-7 is to provide strategic warning to the capitals in Washington and Ottawa. Any missile launch globally is immediately assessed, and if it is assessed to be a threat to North America, within

the treaty the obligation is that the command centre will advise both Canada and the U.S.

Of course that is a command and control process. That information would certainly be shared into the command centres in Ottawa. We would share that information with our government partners and the national command centre here in Ottawa specifically.

Mr. David Yurdiga: But we, as Canadians, do not have the ability to intercept these missiles. Am I correct?

MGen A. D. Meinzinger: If you're referring to a ballistic missile system, we do not have a system like that.

Mr. David Yurdiga: Is there an early warning sign for the general public to say that there is an inbound missile and to seek shelter or whatever? Do we have anything of that nature?

MGen William Seymour: The answer to that is really that we're a part of the information network, so when a missile launch is detected through NORAD and through the Canadian connection to NORAD, that information is passed to government. It's not the Canadian Forces' responsibility to activate those civilian measures; it's actually Public Safety Canada's, but the Canadian Forces would then activate a potential response because our responsibility is to mitigate the potential attack.

Mr. David Yurdiga: Is NATO involved at all, say, in those circumstances? How is NATO involved in that? Obviously they would come to our aid after the fact, but there is nothing in the interim, during the attack?

MGen William Seymour: I would say that NATO is involved in the warning piece, and NATO would also be notified of a potential missile launch.

In terms of the impact of a strike within North America, our ability to handle that on our own, and then in the context of article 5 and Canada and North America being attacked, the extent to which that is invoked would guide the extent to which NATO might come to our assistance.

Mr. David Yurdiga: If we had recommendations, do you think it's prudent that the current government and future governments really consider working with NORAD and actually having the comfort, knowing that the U.S. will intercept these missiles?

Everybody is concerned about what would happen, but we have nothing, giving the general public, "Well, we're okay, the Americans will intercept these missiles on our behalf because we're part of the system because we're investing in the defence system."

• (0950)

MGen A. D. Meinzinger: It's not really my position to offer up my opinion on that. As I said, the policy is pretty clear, and we respect that policy, and I think it's well articulated in "Strong, Secure, Engaged".

The Chair: You have 10 seconds for a question or a response. That's your time, and I'll leave it to you.

Mr. David Yurdiga: I'd like to thank you for participating in our study.

Do I have any more time left?

The Chair: You're out of time, but we're going to go for another round, so you're welcome to join in.

MP Gerretsen.

Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.): Thank you very much for being here. General Meinzinger, it's nice to see you again.

In response to the first question you had from Monsieur Robillard, you said that you had some other thoughts on some of the other considerations that would contribute to Canada's contribution to NATO that perhaps aren't being measured because we seem to focus on this monetary aspect of 2%. Can you provide what some of those other considerations might be.

MGen A. D. Meinzinger: Yes. I believe what matters is people stepping up. I think you heard from General Hainse, who talked about when the call is made, Canada steps up and makes a contribution. A country that had a 2% expenditure, but never offered up capability to NATO, compared to a country that, say, has 1.8%, but is always offering up capability and doing that in a professional way, I think you can see the meaningful difference between those two examples. I think it does speak to the quality, and to Ms. Alleslev's comment on capability, our ability to bring leadership to bear.

I think General Hainse was very clear from his perspective. His view is that when Canada raises its voice around the table, people stop and they listen because we're a credible partner in the alliance, so I think our contributions are very broad. I always point to Latvia because we're very proud of the work that our members have done to really bring life to that battle group, and that matters. That's not something—

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: I would agree that we were very impressed with what we saw, not just from our interaction with fellow Canadians, but with the way they were embraced by the other countries that were involved, Latvia and the other nations that were there.

Just changing gears for a second, I recently had an opportunity to speak to a few of the classes of cadets at RMC. One of the questions that seemed to be identified as a concern that they had was around Canadians' understanding of what our military does, an understanding of what NATO does, and other organizations. I think that one of the benefits of where we are positioned geographically is that we have the luxury of being able to turn off war when we want because we just stop looking at the screen that we have in front of us, whereas many other nations, some of those in the NATO group, don't have that luxury because they're worried a lot more about it.

I'm wondering if you think that there's more that Canada should be doing to educate the Canadian people in terms of what we do in NATO, why NATO is so important for Canada, as part of an educational campaign at home.

MGen Derek Joyce: Perhaps I can address that.

In fact, it very much aligns with Ms. Blaney's question about educating the youth in Canada, because we need to educate Canadians. I would start small, I guess, and then get a little larger. One of the recent examples that I've had is to participate in Carleton University's Model NATO. These are political science students in the

university who actually run a week-long session of NATO, and they go through what a North Atlantic council would look like. It's a really good educational experience. That's a small microcosm.

Something that's more aligned with your question, I think, is a very recent initiative on the part of NATO to actually educate, and it's called #WeAreNATO. In fact, Canada is one of the first of five countries, along with the United Kingdom, Poland, Slovakia, and Romania, to participate in this. It's really designed as one of the first large NATO communications campaigns designed to exactly do what you're talking about.

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: Our role here is to give recommendations to the government. Would you agree that one of those recommendations would be to better educate the Canadian population on what NATO is and what it contributes to Canada as a nation?

• (0955)

MGen Derek Joyce: I would encourage you to build a strong narrative—we as Canadians to build a strong narrative—for Canada on what NATO does, what we get from NATO, what NATO contributes, and how we contribute to NATO. The hashtag #WeAreNATO is one tool through which we can actually communicate with Canadians.

The Chair: And is really one of the reasons we're doing this study. There are many reasons, but this is exactly what we're trying to achieve here.

The last formal question goes to Mr. Garrison.

Mr. Randall Garrison: Once again, I'm going to turn my time over to Ms. Blaney because I think she had more she wanted to do and I think there was more they wanted to say.

Ms. Rachel Blaney: Thank you again.

I'm just very curious about this interaction with youth. I think you mentioned UBC and bringing young people to Latvia. I would like to learn a little bit more about that. The other thing, as a person who represents more rural and remote communities, are there ways to engage young people with some sort of activity as well in those areas?

MGen A. D. Meinzinger: I can follow up with you on the UBC piece separately. I don't have a lot of details in terms of the size of the cohort. I'm aware of the interest. I think it's a great idea. The questions are somewhat linked, Mr. Gerretsen's and yours. I think we all have a job to do to educate. I think our politicians do; we as senior leaders do. I do believe that we have a very hierarchical system in the military. I found in my career that the greatest effect, and the biggest ability to have a positive impact and make change, is at the tactical level, the unit level—the squadrons, the ships' companies, the battalions—where you really are proximate to your local community. It's not the case in Ottawa; we don't live in that kind of interface.

I think we rely on the leadership in those units to forge the bonds, create the relationships and, to some extent, educate and interact with the local populations. I think we get a lot from that. I think we need to continue to do that. It's not a top-down-driven campaign plan. I think it's kind of a grassroots, bottom-up engagement. I think we rely heavily on that to share the message.

MGen William Seymour: I can supplement that too.

Like General Joyce, I was the wing commander of 14 Wing Greenwood in Nova Scotia, which is a small area in Annapolis Valley in southwest Nova Scotia. One of my roles was to interact with the community and build relationships with the community. One of the things we did was partner with local schools so that I had folks from the base going out to schools, working with the schools, and interacting with the kids and with the youth.

I would also really like to add that every time it deploys internationally, one of the things that the Canadian Forces does very well is interact with the community. In the air task force that deployed to Romania, the lieutenant colonel who was commanding it built relationships in the local area, went out to orphanages, and did things like that. The same thing is true in Latvia. One of the key aspects of our role there is to build connections with Latvia. We're doing that across the entire country. That's a great thing about what we do when we deploy internationally.

Ms. Rachel Blaney: Thank you for that.

I think this is an important issue. I appreciate the questions about how we educate people about the usefulness and the meaningfulness of NATO. I appreciate the hashtag. It's getting people to use it that's the challenge.

This is a great tool. How are we going to use it, and how do we get everyday Canadians to use it?

The Chair: I'm going to have to hold it there just to end the formal questions. The good news is that we'll have more time.

I see about 45 minutes on the clock. We'll do five-minute rounds. I'll divide the time evenly amongst all parties.

Just before I get to that, I want to ask a quick question now that we're done the formal ones. From the lens of the value that Canada adds to NATO, I had asked a question that I kind of already knew the answer to, but I wanted to quantify it a bit more. It was about our ability to integrate with NATO with land, air, sea, special forces, and command. I think I asked one of the last two panels that question. They thought that there are only a handful of countries that can do that within NATO. The number I was told was six.

I'd like to know if you agree that that's an important and valued thing within the organization. We're not that big, but we can basically be inserted anywhere NATO wants us. Maybe I could get your comments on what kind of value that adds to the alliance.

• (1000)

MGen William Seymour: I can start off with an example yesterday.

We had a two-day joint operations symposium here in Ottawa. One of the attendees was the three-star German commander of multinational core northeast, which is the superior organization to which the Latvian brigade reports. We have a number of Canadians working for him already. He specifically asked for more Canadians because we plug in and we play and we make things happen so effectively. That's one great example.

MGen A. D. Meinzinger: I think institutionally when you compare us to other militaries, and I go back to Mr. Gerretsen's mention of RMC... We have one military academy, and it's a joint academy. We raise our members with that kind of consciousness up

front as opposed to other systems where it's kind of bespoke and it's kind of taught later in their career. I think it's part of our approach to building leadership in the Canadian Forces.

MGen Derek Joyce: If I may, I'd pile on one more. We all have these experiences we've taken part in. Much along the lines of Ms. Alleslev's question, interoperability is absolutely key. I had the opportunity to be the commander of the air task force during the Libyan war. We arrived, and our fighters arrived, and 48 hours later they were operating over Libya. That was in 2011.

Examples like that are very tangible examples of how important interoperability is within the NATO context.

The Chair: Sure. That's an excellent example. If Canada as a small country can integrate in all those areas I mentioned.... Libya is a primary example. The U.S. could have led that campaign. They didn't need Canada to do it. As we know, NATO is somewhat political, and there are political reasons why different nations can or will lead different NATO missions. The fact that they can rely on Canada to do that I think is very important, so I'm glad we recognize that.

The first five-minute question is going to Ms. Romanado. Then we will go to Ms. Gallant, and then Mr. Gerretsen.

Mrs. Sherry Romanado (Longueuil—Charles-LeMoine, Lib.): Thank you for being here today.

I want to follow up on a question my colleague, Mr. Yurdiga, was asking regarding ballistic missile defence. This committee travelled to NORAD in April 2016. I recall receiving testimony with respect to the efficacy of BMD in terms of hypersonic missiles. We heard this morning about Russia using hypersonic.

I just want to get clarity because when Mr. Graham was here earlier, our former minister of national defence, he opened up the conversation with respect to how Canada needs to have that conversation regarding BMD and joining BMD. But we also have different testimonies saying it's not effective against, for instance, Russia.

I know as part of our "Strong, Secure, Engaged" we said our position has not changed with respect to joining BMD. I just want to get clarity on that because we have conflicting testimony saying that it's not effective against Russia and Russia is a threat, but not in that capacity.

What would be the value in Canada joining BMD?

MGen A. D. Meinzinger: Again, we're here to talk NATO. I'm not an expert on the U.S. BMD system so I wouldn't be in a position to provide you any context as to the effectiveness of the system versus evolving missile.... I can't answer that question. I don't have that information.

Some of that perhaps is available in the public domain. I think you may find some of the information on the testing of the system, etc., but I don't have that information, unfortunately.

Mrs. Sherry Romanado: Switching gears, you mentioned in terms of NATO's hybrid strategy that we will have an intelligence officer in their new intelligence division at NATO headquarters.

Is that the only position we are going to be allocating towards cyber or intelligence hybrid warfare with respect to our NATO commitment, or are there other positions planned?

MGen A. D. Meinzinger: I'm not tracking the numbers of folks we have. The point I might offer up to the committee in response to your question is if you take a look at how NATO has evolved over the last 10 years, some of the structural adaptations that are under way, new subordinate commands, one of the interesting elements is the creation of what are called NATO centres of excellence. I think by my last count there were some 25 or 30 of these centres of excellence. It's very interesting. You can find this information online. It shows you particular countries, and they are not always NATO countries. They are very open to who may partner with that particular centre of excellence.

You will find these centres focus on things such as strategic communications. We talked about that today. I believe the hybrid warfare centre is an EU centre, but it is supported strongly by NATO currently located in Finland. We have a NATO strategic communications centre of excellence in Estonia. I recently had one of my team members as part of a whole-of-government visit, so we're looking at that.

What I would note for the committee is these centres cluster together academics, researchers, and military members. I think they're a great incubator for sharing ideas, discussing risks, and looking forward 20 years. I think what we will find is that work will no doubt infuse itself into the way NATO may approach certain challenges moving forward.

My response is really a suggestion that I think these are entities that ought to be supported. Where we can, and where we see the value, certainly we will intend to do that from a Canadian Armed Forces' perspective.

•(1005)

MGen Derek Joyce: If I may add to that with a couple of tangible examples, the efforts we have under way in Ukraine, a country that is experiencing hybrid warfare, is an excellent opportunity for us to learn from an actual operational situation. We're working with Ukrainians in that area.

Something even more tangible within the NATO context is the fact that Rear-Admiral Scott Bishop is going to be the 2018 chair of the NATO military intelligence committee. Canada will have a leadership role in this area over the next year.

Mrs. Sherry Romanado: We talked a little about education and training in terms of the new position of cyber-operator.

With full disclosure, I have two sons serving in the Canadian Armed Forces, one boots on the ground and one intelligence officer. In terms of recruiting and training, we know it takes time to recruit people, but also to onboard them and get them the training they need. We've said in "Strong, Secure, Engaged" that we're going to hire 3,500 additional people. Some will be allocated directly for cyber.

In terms of getting that pipeline of talent in, how soon will we be up at full capacity in terms of our needs with respect to cyber?

The Chair: I'm going to have to hold it there because that's time.

I'm going to give the floor to MP Gallant.

Mrs. Cheryl Gallant: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Through you, if I have any time, I'll be sharing with Mr. Maguire.

In our last round, you clarified that while we have NATO member countries in the Pacific who exercise together, it's not necessarily under the rubric of NATO. If there were to be a requirement that we have a fighting force of NATO countries in the Pacific, be it because North Korea or for some other reason, would NATO have the capacity to have a command structure in that region, since we haven't exercised as an entity under NATO? Would we have that ability?

MGen A. D. Meinzinger: A hypothetical question, granted, but I certainly would imagine NATO having the ability to forward project a command and control structure that would be led by a joint task force commander. That ability is very much resident in the NATO structure.

One of the benefits of NATO as an alliance is that it can pick up and move globally, and can put down a command and control joint structure and allow forces and nations to plug into that. I think one of the strengths of the NATO enterprise is the ability to fuse together an alliance internationally.

Mrs. Cheryl Gallant: Then, the part that is of concern is our non-traditional NATO members that are our partners and the question of interoperability and communication. If that's not being exercised, how do you know that will work smoothly should it become necessary to fuse them?

MGen A. D. Meinzinger: With regard to any coalition, I've heard many force commanders and commanders who have done the business say it's always sloppy. There are always challenges in integrating with teams you haven't trained with. That's why we invest so heavily in the training. We try to do the joint exercises that I described with 25,000 troops in Europe doing a scenario, working together, interacting. Sometimes it's not just the ones and zeros, having the right system to plug in, it's the getting to know one another and understanding each other. That's equally important.

It's always going to be a priority. It's not going to be easy. With pulling a coalition of the willing together that's not based on an alliance, you're going to have to work that. That's going to require discussion, rehearsals, and effort to be successful.

•(1010)

Mrs. Cheryl Gallant: Has Canada in a NATO capacity or otherwise participated in exercises in the region of the Korean peninsula?

MGen A. D. Meinzinger: An example comes to mind. We had the air force participating last year in an air mobility exercise in northern Australia. We do certainly conduct exercises of course. General Seymour would know intimately based on his service within the Pacific command. The annual RIMPAC exercise, although it's proximate to the region, is a key activity that the Canadian Armed Forces participates in each and every time. We put Canadian leadership into that exercise, which I think is important to note.

Mrs. Cheryl Gallant: Spring is around the corner. Will Canada be participating in any NATO missions, in whatever capacity, in the Mediterranean area? We know that's traditionally when we see people from North Africa trying to make their way across the water to southern Europe.

MGen A. D. Meinzinger: As I mentioned in my opening comments, our frigate is seconded to NATO, and it has been for years on end. When you look at the orbit of that particular six-month journey, that vessel will move often. As it is now in the North Sea, it will go down through into the Strait of Gibraltar into the Mediterranean. It will work as part of a standing maritime group. Absolutely, Canada regularly has at least one ship in the Mediterranean that would contribute to the mission of NATO but also do concurrent exercises afloat.

The nice thing about the navy is that it can do many things at one time. They could be delivering an operational effect, yet at the same time could be exercising with a partner navy, working on those very interoperable issues that you highlighted.

Mrs. Cheryl Gallant: Thank you.

Mr. Maguire.

Mr. Larry Maguire (Brandon—Souris, CPC): Thank you very much for your being here today and for spending the time with us.

I do a little bit of work with my colleague from the Liberal Party, Mr. Bagnell, in regard to the Arctic areas—Arctic climate change, that sort of thing. And it is changing. Our Canadian Armed Forces, through NATO, may not play the same role in the Arctic as some other regions, with the changing and potential flows of traffic in that region. Can you update us on the security levels in that area that you'd be involved in?

MGen William Seymour: A great activity is the Arctic Security Forces Roundtable, which we're hosting in Halifax, May 1-3. All the Arctic countries are coming, as well as a number of observers, and we're going to talk about Arctic security.

The Chair: I'm going to give the floor to Mr. Garrison.

Mr. Randall Garrison: Thanks very much, Mr. Chair.

I'm going to ask the witnesses to bear with me for a moment because I'm not to going to ask the question they think I might be asking.

There was news this morning of claims by President Putin about developing new missiles. This has not been independently confirmed, but if it is, they'd probably make the NATO anti-ballistic missile defences obsolete. If that technology were to proliferate, it would make all ballistic missile defences obsolete.

My concern, which I've been expressing in committee, is that there are two paths that NATO claims to follow: one is deterrence,

and the other is to make the world a place without nuclear weapons. My concern is that NATO seems to walk, these days, on one leg, when it could be walking on two.

My question to you is, how does the expertise that is gained through operations in NATO feed into the work on the reduction of tensions and the goal of disarmament? You have a lot of expertise in operations. To me, you would have a lot to say on a practical basis about how we could reduce those tensions, and how we could move forward on disarmament. Are you asked to feed into those? What is really happening?

•(1015)

MGen Derek Joyce: Sure, I can start. You've highlighted one key area, that the alliance is looking to respond to an increasingly tense situation. As of 2014, with the invasion into Ukraine-Crimea, we've seen the largest increase in forces associated with NATO since the Cold War. It's in direct response to the threats that Russia has posed to international peace and security. I'm not looking at it from the nuclear aspect, but it's all related.

Deterrence is not simply having one nuclear capability able to challenge another nuclear capability; it's a spectrum of operations that goes from conventional forces to nuclear forces. NATO, through its Reassurance efforts, is actually increasing its deterrent capability in the European theatre. That deterrent capability is directly focused on the instability in the international community caused by Russia's activities. I hope that answers your question.

MGen William Seymour: To put it into context, too, is you ask us questions about the military instrument but we talk a lot about how the military instrument fits into the broader... We talk about DIME: diplomatic, informational, military, economic. We've been successful, I think, in the west, in applying pressure on Russia in the economic sphere because of sanctions we applied and the great leadership that Canada shows in the diplomatic environment. All those tools come together to achieve outcomes that Canada wants, and we're simply one part of that. As professionals we talk about the range of those kinds of things and how they come together to support the government's objectives.

MGen A. D. Meinzinger: I'm not an expert, but I know NATO has NATO-Russia consultations, which is dialogue. You probably were briefed on that when you were over at NATO headquarters. Things such as exercises, like a large-scale Russian exercise on the edge of the Baltics, for some would be seen as very provocative. Briefing that activity out in that kind of dialogue is a way to simmer down the tensions and the provocations that some may read from it.

Mr. Randall Garrison: I guess more directly, then, I would ask, has Canada really been involved in the disarmament committee of NATO, and have you been asked to have input into activities more directly that might lead to that?

I accept that Operation Reassurance is a deterrent. In our party, we supported it on that basis, but what's happening on the other side of that? Is NATO really active, and is Canada active in trying to reduce nuclear weapons and reduce those tensions?

MGen Derek Joyce: I can say that NATO is committed to creating the conditions for a world without nuclear weapons, and that's stated.

Canada, along with co-sponsors Germany and the Netherlands—not necessarily within the NATO context—is promoting the work of the fissile material cut-off treaty, and that's really all I would have to say on that.

The Chair: Mr. Gerretsen.

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: I want to ask a couple of questions regarding the AWACS program that Canada has recently announced it will get involved with again in NATO.

I'm not sure who would like to answer this, so I'll turn it to any of you. Could you comment on what that contribution means to NATO and how important it is for Canada to play a role in AWACS?

MGen Derek Joyce: Sure, I'd be happy to.

From the NATO perspective, it's going to be Canada's contribution to the support and operations of the AWACS program to the tune of \$17 million to \$20 million, I think. We're still in the negotiations of exactly how much that will be.

It is a fair-share contribution from Canadians' perspective to a NATO program that we haven't participated in for a while. So I think —

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: I just want to interject there for a quick second.

Do you recall why we chose to get out of participating in it?

MGen Derek Joyce: Yes, certainly. It was during a time of fiscal restraint, and the Government of Canada was looking for areas to cut programs that were not viewed as being productive.

• (1020)

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: Why was it not viewed as being productive?

MGen Derek Joyce: At the time, around the 2010 period, there had been a couple of requests for the use of NATO AWACS, for example, for the 2010 Vancouver Olympics and in support of operations in Afghanistan. The NATO system was complex enough that it was not able to provide those capabilities when Canada asked, and so as a result of that, the view was that it wasn't a performing program from Canadians' perspective.

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: To help us during the Olympics?

MGen Derek Joyce: That's correct, yes, to bring the AWACS over to help control the air security situation. As a result of that, the decision was then made to cease the program, to a savings of about \$60 million.

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: Now that we're back in the program, what's the response from our allies in NATO?

MGen Derek Joyce: I think the key response is that it's great to have additional funding, but I think more importantly, it's important to have Canada as an ally in the AWACS program. The centre of

gravity of NATO is coming together as an alliance, as alliance cohesion, and this is one additional contributor to that cohesion, having all members of NATO contributing to this program.

MGen A. D. Meinzinger: I'll add that we're certainly seeing the benefit. The NATO AWACS will operate overhead our troops in Latvia by, but one example, operating, as I mentioned earlier, overhead the airspace of Iraq, so we're accruing a benefit on the ground, and I think in the policy recently released, we talk about the JISR, joint intelligence surveillance reconnaissance, the priority of that capacity in the future operating environment being kind of a premium, so we see the AWACS playing a greater role in that regard.

MGen Derek Joyce: I'd like to just add that the process for requesting AWACS support from NATO has changed, so the challenges that we had eight years ago have been mitigated.

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: So if we ask them to come, the response might be different, may have been different under this new protocol.

MGen Derek Joyce: That's correct.

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: I don't know if there's any more time, but I'm happy to share.

The Chair: You have about a minute for a question and answer.

Ms. Leona Alleslev: I have a quick question. When we were at RMC, we didn't have the opportunity to participate in a mock NATO. Would you happen to know if they can today? It's pretty cool. Do we get invited to Carleton or...?

MGen A. D. Meinzinger: When you're the commandant of an incredible institution—

Ms. Leona Alleslev: Some of us didn't play hockey. We were doing history stuff.

Voices: Oh, oh!

MGen A. D. Meinzinger: One of the benefits of being the commandant is that you get to see the wonderful work and efforts of the youth of our country.

In fact, RMC has been sending a model NATO team to a competition somewhere in New York. I apologize, but I can't remember what town. As I recall, that team won that competition five or six times consecutively. As General Joyce described, it's four days with no sleep and trying to build consensus with small teams. For some reason, our cadets—our youth, our members—have those skills. Probably because it's just the way they approach problems, they were able to win that competition.

Ms. Leona Alleslev: Do we do anything in Canada?

MGen A. D. Meinzinger: I think the example is Carleton.

Ms. Leona Alleslev: We go to Carleton? RMC goes to Carleton?

MGen A. D. Meinzinger: That I would have to confirm. I'm not aware of that particular activity.

I'm aware of the model NATO effort that occurs. We hosted one at the college while I was commandant. We ran a similar type of activity, because I think it's great in terms of the skills that it brings to bear. It certainly broadens the horizons.

The Chair: Thank you.

I'm going to give MP Maguire some time.

You can circle back on your question if you like.

Mr. Larry Maguire: Thank you.

I want to thank you, General Seymour, for your answer in regard to the conference that's going to be held in Halifax. That was pretty quick. Thank you.

Can you elaborate on that? I want to look at NATO's role in the Arctic and the future role that you see in the Arctic.

MGen William Seymour: The Arctic security forces round table, which is called the northern flanks meeting as well, is where we talk about security issues. It gets together on an annual basis. I participated in the last one in northern Sweden. We have the Arctic countries coming together with a number of observers to dialogue about their activities in the Arctic.

We talk a lot about information sharing, training and readiness, and operations in the Arctic, and what kinds of equipment you can bring to bear to operate in the Arctic. We dialogue about the threats that exist in the Arctic, the Russian threat in particular. In Europe, that's the one that's most prominent for them.

Our desire in bringing that forum to Canada is to offer them the Canadian perspective on how we see the Arctic. As you know, how you see something depends on where you stand and where you sit. What we're planning to do is offer our perspective on the Arctic and how it's changing, and how we see it as a place where nations need to co-operate actively within that environment rather than compete. That's one perspective. There's another perspective that operates and suggests that it's a place where that competition poses some kind of threat. To me, that's a very interesting piece.

We also want to highlight Canada's capability, which is growing, to operate in the Arctic. The "Strong, Secure, Engaged" policy talks about that. We chose Halifax in particular because they're building the new Arctic offshore patrol ship there. We want to show them that capability as a part of it. We designed all that because we're trying to leverage that kind of stuff that Canada is doing in the Arctic. It's a great opportunity to walk through those kinds of things.

I can certainly answer any questions you have about that.

•(1025)

Mr. Larry Maguire: Thank you.

I've had the opportunity to be in Halifax and see the ships being built.

MGen William Seymour: It's pretty impressive.

Mr. Larry Maguire: It's pretty amazing. I'm looking forward to greater use of those.

It also leads me to believe, from some of the discussions I've had with some of the Russians and from being in the room with them in some of those discussions, that they have capabilities with new icebreakers and that sort of thing. We don't even have to rely on climate change to make those passageways more open.

Can you give us a bit of an update on what you think of that militarization of the Arctic, if it's there, particularly regarding Russia, as you mentioned? Is that undermining any of the co-operation and stability in that region?

MGen William Seymour: I think it depends on who you listen to in terms of why Russia is embarking upon the program it's doing in the north. Whether or not you perceive that as threat depends on who you speak to.

Mr. Larry Maguire: Right.

MGen William Seymour: From a military perspective, our job is to consider the worst-case scenario and be prepared, but take a look at the deep roots historically in Russia that focus on the Arctic; they're very much an Arctic nation. They have a considerable portion of their population up north with cities of one million-plus in the Arctic, which pales in comparison to our 115,000-plus in the Canadian Arctic. It's a vastly different story.

The Arctic is important to their economic future. It's not surprising to me that Russia would invest in security capability in a region that is so fundamentally important to the future of their economy.

They've staked a lot on their oil capacity. There's oil in the north. They've staked a lot on having their version of the Northwest Passage as the route of choice for international operators, companies, and countries that wish to use the Arctic to reduce that transshipment time.

In order to do that, you put search and rescue assets in place; you put security measures in place; you put informational measures in place. All of those things arguably could be done to accomplish an economic objective rather than some nefarious security objective. I can't speak for the Government of Canada, but I think you need to understand both sides of that and apply that kind of thinking to how we choose to operate in Canada.

Our view is more co-operative. Through the Arctic Council and the work that we do in the Arctic Council to have a dialogue about the Arctic, we see it as a place where we need to come together and recognize that multiple nations will be up there, with the increasing openness because of global warming. It's a very interesting conversation.

Mr. Larry Maguire: There's definitely no doubt that they're going to use it for more commercialization, more delivery of goods, and park into those larger centres that they have in the Arctic that you referred to are the small populations that we have. I just wanted to relate to the security situation there and how it'll be monitored in the future and not just Canada's role but how does that fit in with the whole NATO role in the Arctic region in the near future.

MGen William Seymour: Perhaps General Joyce could refer to the NATO approach to the Arctic and the active role that it plays.

The Chair: We will have to maybe get back to that. We do have some time but to be fair I have to yield the floor to Mr. Spengemann.

Mr. Sven Spengemann: Mr. Chair, thank you very much.

Gentlemen, I want to circle back to a couple of questions that were raised earlier, the first being the cyber-operator trade.

You had a conversation with my colleague, Ms. Romanado. Could you give the committee an indication, even with approximates, of when we will reach our targets in terms of capacity within the trade? How is the recruitment process going, and when can we expect to be meeting our needs?

• (1030)

MGen A. D. Meinzinger: I recommend that we take that one. I don't have that level of detail for you at the moment.

Mr. Sven Spengemann: That's fine. If you could let the committee know, that would be great.

The second question is back to DND, not the the NORAD side but the NATO side, to pick up on the conversation with my colleague, Mr. Garrison. There's a disarmament conversation, and there's the deterrence conversation. I think this morning's article will invigorate both of those. I think they are part of a spectrum of discussion.

I wanted to see if you are willing to stipulate whether the article claims something that's factually accurate. In other words, is there a grade of weapons that has been developed or is about to be developed that is not interceptable?

Is this a conversation-changer, a game-changer in the sense that it will no longer be a tit-for-tat ratcheting up of efforts technologically to build faster weapons and intercepts? Are we reaching a threshold where interceptability is put into question permanently? How will that affect the discussion after that?

MGen Derek Joyce: That's a very interesting question. Thank you very much for that.

First of all, I will start off by saying that there's an election coming up in Russia. Let's use that as some context for what comes out of Moscow. Secondly, I would point out that ballistic missile defence is not advertised to counter the significant and long-term developed capabilities of China and Russia. It's designed for the "one of's" of the regime—

Mr. Sven Spengemann: I'm strictly focusing on the NATO side, potential bigger threats coming from China or Russia at NATO. That's my question—not within DND.

MGen Derek Joyce: Right. That you can trust.

Those are the comments that I would make at this point. None of us are munitions rocket experts or intelligence experts able to

provide you with an assessment on whether or not those claims are accurate.

Mr. Sven Spengemann: Mr. Chair, those are my questions. I'm happy to delegate the remaining time to my colleagues.

The Chair: Yes, we can do that.

There's a quick follow-up from Larry, and then I can come back to you.

Mr. Maguire.

Mr. Larry Maguire: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Before we end here, I want to add my congratulations to the Canadian Armed Forces for the work you're doing in the enhanced forward presence in Latvia and the troops on the ground. I have the proud responsibility of representing the region that Canadian Armed Forces Base Shilo is in. I really appreciate working with the lieutenant colonels who have been there so readily. It's been a great relationship. I look forward to each of the opportunities I have to meet with them, which have been many in the last four years that I've had this role.

I just want to pass that on to you and congratulate you on all of your efforts in Latvia. I know that there are troops who just came back from there in mid-January. I want you to know that we certainly support all those efforts that you're doing in those areas and have been asked to do through NATO. I look forward to continuing opportunities to work with the base at Shilo myself and doing anything else we can do. Congratulations on that.

If there's anything you can do to add to our expansion of the role you're playing there right now, I'll give you the opportunity, if you like, to add any other voice to it.

MGen A. D. Meinzinger: Thank you for your comments. I know that one of the great opportunities when troops come home to Canada is to greet them; it's the families and the chain of command, but if you ever get the chance to participate in that, I'm sure you'd be welcome to do that. I would highly recommend greeting the folks coming back to a constituency. It does have a meaningful impact on us and on those who recognize that what they did was important. Having MPs and government officials adds to that response in the reception.

Mr. Larry Maguire: The fun time is during the change of commands, but I've also had the opportunity to be there for funerals of returning members from Afghanistan situations as well.

To have the opportunity to be here today—my colleague Mr. Bezan was not able to be with us—was a pleasure for me. It was an honour to be able to sit in on this committee with my colleagues. I want to commend you for all of that work. I certainly will pass that on. I know that the base works very diligently in regard to the efforts they put forward in the training there as well.

Thank you.

• (1035)

MGen A. D. Meinzinger: I will personally pass your comments to General Winnick, the commander of the army.

The Chair: Ms. Alleslev.

Ms. Leona Alleslev: Thank you very much.

Obviously, I'd also like to reiterate that. There's no question that from corporal to officer cadet to senior officer, our Canadian Armed Forces is pretty incredible. We're recognized around the world. We have great training. We make do when we don't have a lot, and we still deliver incredible capability. You certainly are to be commended, and thank you for that.

I do want to be a little bit pointed in my remarks, because we are here to make recommendations to the government. You've done an outstanding job of telling us really how great things are, but do we as a committee then have no recommendations to give back to the government on where we should be making improvements? As this government and this Prime Minister says, better is always possible.

Please tell us what's not perfect and what recommendations, with respect to Canada's importance to NATO and NATO's importance to Canada, we should be making back to the government as a result of this study.

MGen A. D. Meinzinger: Any of you want to kick-start this?

The Chair: No pressure.

MGen A. D. Meinzinger: It's a great question.

MGen William Seymour: I'll start.

I mentioned the joint operations symposium we had in the past couple of days. Part of the dialogue there was about agility and innovation within NATO. The NATO command structure review I think is changing, and some things will result from that. That's a recognition that the Cold War ended a long time ago and there was a peace dividend capitalized from that. The threat has changed considerably over that period of time. NATO has recognized the need to respond and react to that, and some changes go with that.

Within the Canadian Forces, and I think within "Strong, Secure, Engaged", we're actually well postured to link into that, but I would suggest that we need to continue to emphasize the need for agility and innovation within NATO, to be a full part of that, and to lead that, where able, as a country to make sure that NATO moves that along. Ultimately, that has an impact on the bottom line, and our ability to do what NATO exists to do is affected by that.

I'd offer that much.

Ms. Leona Alleslev: Would you say that's equally across the board or, say, in a certain capability like command and control, where we were in the Cold War period known as being outstanding experts in that area?

MGen William Seymour: I'd say across the board, but in Canada we do leverage our strengths in certain areas. The things that we're working on, joint enablers, that "Strong, Secure, Engaged" talks about, those are the self-same areas that NATO is looking to enhance its own capacity to do, be it information operations or strategic communications, and then how that gets leveraged in the new war fight, leveraging intelligence capacity and actually sharing that capacity. We talked a lot yesterday about information networks. The speed of response in this current environment requires that we be well connected and through digital means and secure means we have that capability to plug into NATO and be effective there. The cyber

piece, which has been well brought up here today, is certainly an element of that.

MGen Derek Joyce: If I could just add on, there are areas we can improve. One of the areas is within NATO, continuing to advocate for women, peace, and security— and inclusive security. Canada has a voice, in fact, a leadership voice, as you probably heard when you were speaking with Ambassador Buck, in NATO, and it is well respected always, but specifically when we talk about advocating for the development of women, peace, and security roles and the importance of gender in military operations. This is an area we need to focus on. We're taking it very seriously, but we can improve, there's no doubt about that.

Ms. Leona Alleslev: That was certainly a challenge I faced when I was in uniform.

Alistair, do you have anything?

MGen A. D. Meinzinger: Those are great answers from my colleagues. We will need to look to invest in some of these new priorities. I think of the new structures that are establishing themselves. You may be familiar with the new logistics command entity, which I'm sure you would recognize. I think we have great capacity in that particular functional area within the Canadian Armed Forces. Making meaningful contributions into these new structures so we have a Canadian voice, a Canadian presence, I think will be important for us.

• (1040)

Ms. Leona Alleslev: Thank you very much.

The Chair: The last question, Mr. Garrison.

Mr. Randall Garrison: Thanks very much, Mr. Chair.

Of course, I want to echo the thanks that others around the table have. We were very privileged to get to visit the forward presence in Latvia and see the real contributions people are making. I've been sitting here today staring at air force uniforms, and I realize, as somebody who represents Canada's Pacific navy, there's one thing we didn't really highlight today. I just want to ask a brief question about that. Something we weren't able to see when we were in Europe was the contribution we've made by having standing naval forces contributing. The timing wasn't right and the ship wasn't in the right place, but the fact that we've had for five consecutive years a ship in place supporting NATO operations is quite significant. I don't think the public is aware of that. The contribution that's being made by the navy, even though it's not from my coast or my base, I think needs to be highlighted.

How has that contribution been made in terms of interoperability, working with others? What's our role really been there? I don't think we really highlighted that contribution.

MGen A. D. Meinzinger: Yes, it's great. When we met last, this was one of my recommendations, and maybe it's a future target, to get to a port of call and meet the ship's company and spend some time with them. You would get a great feel for what's being accomplished. I think navies in general are pretty good at coming together and operating on a command net. Just by virtue of how navies function, there's a certain predisposition for interoperability. Our vessel, as I described earlier, in a six-month period does a whole bunch of things. It's providing situational awareness; it's conducting bilateral training, in some cases with non-NATO-flagged vessels. In some cases it's doing anti-submarine warfare. It's providing critical information to the NATO command structure in the context of Russian underwater submarine activity. I think they have been making, and will continue to make, meaningful contributions to the overall NATO mission.

Mr. Randall Garrison: Great. I just didn't want to let that pass without getting the navy back in the discussion.

MGen William Seymour: For the record, both General Joyce and I flew the Aurora, so we worked considerably with the navy. We're half-navy is what I sense, for the record.

Voices: Oh, oh!

Mr. Randall Garrison: Okay. Thanks very much.

The Chair: Before we leave there are a couple of undertakings that we were asking for, just to make sure that we're all clear.

We were asking if you could get back to the committee, please, on the CAF footprint in Europe just prior to the drawdown, or our leaving formally.

We have the information on the Ukrainian forces, so I'm happy to circle back to my colleague and provide that answer because we have the answer to that, so we won't need that.

And the number of people...to know how we're making out towards our goal of populating the cyber-operator trade would be helpful.

I'm personally thrilled that we're back and involved with AWACS. I know it's a financial contribution right now, but I'm going to personally advocate to get crews on the airplane because I think that's critically important. I understand that there might be a staffing issue, but I am totally for that and I'm going to continue to advocate for that.

I want to thank you all for coming today. This adds value to our report and we very much appreciate your time. Thank you very much.

MGen A. D. Meinzinger: Thanks, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: The meeting is adjourned.

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