



PRESIDENT'S REPORT 2008

For several years now, the ACC has been emphasizing the significance of Article 2 of the North Atlantic Treaty

The Parties will contribute toward the further development of peaceful and friendly international relations by strengthening their free institutions, by bringing about a better understanding of the principles upon which these institutions are founded, and by promoting conditions of stability and well-being. They will seek to eliminate conflict in their international economic policies and will encourage economic collaboration between any and all them.

In 2008, the ACC initiated two important projects to put this article into practice. In the first place, in February, the ACC entered into an agreement with the Canadian Turkish Business Council (CTBC) to provide secretariat services for the CTBC and help it in its mandate to develop stronger business relations between the two NATO members, Canada and Turkey. The relationship has worked out very well. The ACC contracted with **Lana Polyakov** to work half-time for the CTBC and half-time for the ACC. This has given us a permanent presence in the office, which has been very beneficial to the ACC. It has also given us stronger connections with the business world, which will benefit us in the long run.

In the Fall we also started planning for the NATO Economy Forum, which was actually held in May 2009. The President met with Ambassadors of six southeastern European countries and received their commitment to encourage senior representatives of their governments involved in trade to come to Canada to meet with Canadian business representatives and business development officials. The President also secured commitments to the project from Export Development Canada, the Department of International Trade, and NATO for the project. By the end of 2008, this project was well underway.

PEOPLE

It has been my pleasure to work productively with our Chairman, the Hon. Bill Graham. Although he is enormously busy with other activities and is a much-sought-after speaker, he has made time for regular meetings to discuss ACC business, and has attended and hosted or chaired our major events. He is truly dedicated to the Atlantic Council of Canada and its work on behalf of NATO and Canada's role in NATO. He has provided great support to the staff.

STAFFING

As in other years, there were a lot of comings and goings in 2008, which is to be expected when we work with interns.

The Toronto Community Housing Corporation internships have been very successful. Abdul Rahman Karim stayed with us until mid-March 2008 and was then replaced by Sean Billings. Then in October, Brian Dickson followed Sean. In addition to administrative work, they also worked on research and analysis, represented the ACC at several YATA events, and contributed to our Newsletters.

Luisa Sargsyan stayed with us as a Security and Defence forum intern until the end of June 2008, and stayed another three months as an intern funded by Scotiabank. She contributed greatly to the work of the ACC with her research, writing, and computer skills. She left in October for a contract position with the Government of Ontario. We also received word that we would have another SDF intern for 2008-2009, Elaine Kanasewich, who would start in January 2009.

We also had another international intern, Jerome Boutillier, from France, who had to do a work term abroad as part of his degree requirements. He was with us from April to mid-August.

In addition to these funded internships, we had the wonderful services of several volunteer interns. During the summer, Brandon Deuville, a graduate student at Carleton University, originally from Nova Scotia, was with us from the end of May until mid-August, and Hameed Hassan, a Queen's university graduate worked with us until he left for the Netherlands to start a semester of studies at the University of Groningen.

Dallas Weaver, a fourth year International Studies student at Glendon Campus, York University, came at the beginning of the university year to do a one day per week co-op internship as part of the program at Glendon. She developed the background materials for the NATO Economy Forum.

In October, Darya Klepchikova joined us. With degrees from McGill and St. Andrews UK, and fluency in English, Russian, French, Italian, and Ukrainian, Darya was a tremendous asset to the office. She took over as editor of *In Focus*, and also helped organize our Fall Conference in Ottawa.

A few weeks later, Viacheslav Kudryavtsev, known to us all as Slava, joined us. He researched Canadian Diasporas and their contribution to the peace building in their countries of origin, as well as providing cheerful assistance to everyone in the office.

ADMINISTRATION

With the help of these internships, we were able to keep the office open and well staffed to provide services to our members, answer queries from the public, and organize various events throughout the year. With the exception of the break between Christmas and New Year, the office was staffed every workday in 2008.

PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES

Conferences

Our Spring Conference entitled “**NATO's New Frontiers: Issues and Challenges for Canadians**” was held at Trinity College on April 30, 2008. Our Chairman, the Hon. Bill Graham, opening remarks set the scene for the various speakers at the conference. The first panel on Russia's resurgence, was moderated by ACC Director, Dr. Walter Perchal. Speakers were Prof. Sergey Plekhanov, York University, and Prof. Larry Black, of the Georgian College campus of Laurentian University, and Rolf Welberts, Head of the Russia/Ukraine Section at NATO Headquarters. Prof. Charles Burton, Brock University, chaired a panel on Asia, with speakers Wenzhe You, Counsellor of the Chinese Embassy in Canada, and Dr. James Boutillier, Special Advisor on Policy to Commander, Maritime Forces Pacific. The last panel focussed on Afghanistan and was moderated by ACC Vice-President, Col (Ret'd) John McKenna. Speakers were Michelle Parker, International Affairs Fellow with the Council on Foreign relations in residence at the Rand Corporation, Washington, and Prof. Gregory Chin, York University Centre for Asian Research. The Hon. John Manley gave an excellent keynote address on the experiences, findings and recommendations of the independent panel on Afghanistan which he chaired.

The Annual Fall Conference was held in Ottawa on November 4, 2008. The theme was “**Georgia: Russia's Challenge to NATO.**” In his opening remarks, Chairman, the Hon. Bill Graham, shared some personal reflections on the relations between NATO and Russia, and emphasized that the NATO-Russia Council is a very important communication tool. In his keynote address, Senator Hugh Segal also emphasized the importance of continuing communication with Russia. The first panel entitled, “Is the Bear really back?” was moderated by ACC Director, BGen (Ret'd) Dr. Bern Goetze, former Secretary of the North Atlantic Council, NATO. Speakers were Prof. Piotr Dutkiewics, Former Director of the Institute of European, Russian, and Eurasian Studies of Carleton University, and Mr. Frédéric Labarre, Head of the Department of Political and Strategic Studies, Baltic Defence College, Tartu, Estonia.

The second panel, moderated by Dr. Grant Dawson, Sessional Professor, Carleton University, concentrated on how the Georgia-Russia conflict was perceived by other countries. Ambassador Robert Hunter, President of the Atlantic Treaty Association, former U.S. Ambassador to NATO, Senior Advisor at RAND Corporation, Turkey's Ambassador to Canada, H.E. Rafet Akgünay, Mr. Giovanni di Girolamo, Head of Political and Public Affairs Section of the Delegation of the European Commission to Canada, addressed the topic from various national perspectives. The last panel, moderated by ACC President, Julie Lindhout, considered the implications of the Russian resurgence for Canada. Elizabeth Sneyd addressed the impact on Canada's Arctic, while LGen (Ret'd) Michel Maisonneuve, Academic Director of the Royal Military College Saint-Jean, discussed Canada's military capability to meet current and future challenges. Col (Ret'd) Brian MacDonald, Past President of the ACC, presented a concise and eloquent summation of the issues discussed.

Roundtables and Other Speakers

On January 23, 2008, Col. Gary Stafford, OMM, CD Deputy Commander LFCA HQ, who had recently returned from south Afghanistan where he was NATO's Regional Police Advisor, spoke about the mission of training and developing the Afghan National Police, describing successes, challenges, and lessons learned.

On February 26, 2008, Dr. Peter Singer, McLaughlin-Rotman Centre for Global Health, University of Toronto, spoke on "DNA for Peace: Balancing Biodevelopment and Biosecurity". He described both the benefits and the darker side of biotechnology and life science research.

On September 25, 2008, Prof. Robert Austin, University of Toronto's Munk Centre for International Studies at Trinity College, spoke on Kosovo's independence and what that might mean for Eurasia, NATO, and the global community as a whole.

On October 28, 2008, the ACC hosted a Roundtable with Dr. Lee Windsor, Gregg Centre for the Study of War and Society, University of New Brunswick, and author of "Canada in Kandahar", at the RCMI. The Roundtable was sponsored by Prof. Windsor's publisher, Wiley Publishing.

At the final Roundtable of the year on November 5, 2008, hosted at Torys LLP in their boardrooms, Frédéric Labarre from the Baltic Defence College, presented an analysis and reflections on the Russia/Georgia conflict. He presented both the Russian and Western points of view on a number of issues, and sparked a lively discussion.

At the Annual General Meeting on May 27, 2008, ACC Chairman, the Hon. Bill Graham, former Minister of Foreign Affairs and of National Defence, presented a remarkable first-hand account of lessons learned from Afghanistan and the need to stay the course there, the 3D "whole of government" approach", and some of the challenges faced by NATO and Canada in assisting that country to rebuild. An interesting discussion which continued during the wine-and-cheese reception followed.

Second Annual Atlantic Council of Canada Tribute Dinner

On April 9, 2008, The Atlantic Council of Canada paid tribute to the significant contribution made by its Past Chairman, Dr. Frederic L.R. Jackman to the work of the ACC, and presented then Brigadier-General David Fraser, OMM, MSM, CD, with the Atlantic Council's 2008 Award for Exceptional Contribution to International Peace and Security. Part of the Award is a financial contribution made in the name of the recipient to the Sarahim School for Exceptional Children in Kabul, Afghanistan. Lieutenant-Commander, Albert Wong, who has established a charity in Canada to support the school, accepted the cheque.

Corporate Reception

On October 9, the ACC hosted its 2008 Corporate Reception for Partners and Sponsors, to show appreciation to all those whose generous donations make it possible for us to continue to promote knowledge and understanding in Canada of NATO and Canada's role within it. Attendees enjoyed a warm and friendly atmosphere, with interesting conversation and good food and wine, in the 10th floor diningroom of E-L Financial. Certificates of Appreciation were presented to Mr. James Baillie, ACC member who has been a consistent and strong support of the ACC with yearly donations, Dr. Frederic L.R. Jackman of the Jackman Foundation, ACC Immediate Past Chairman, who has been a generous sponsor since 2003, and Grey Horse Corporation, represented by ACC Director, Mr. Paul G. Smith, EVP and CFO, whose contributions included an internship sponsorship in 2006, as well as hole sponsorships of the ACC Gold tournaments.

The 3rd Annual Atlantic Council of Canada Golf Tournament

ACC golfers spent an enjoyable day on June 10, at the Glen Eagle Golf Club. Major-General Tim Grant, OMM, CD, Deputy Commander, Canadian Expeditionary Forces Command, played golf with us and spoke at the dinner. He provided the audience with "boots-on-the-ground" perspective of what the brave men and women are really doing in Afghanistan. He was candid with the audience about the difficulties of the present operations, but was also very encouraging when he spoke of the progress that is being made. The golf tournament has become a truly fun and informative event for both golfers and non-golfers who attend the dinner.

Youth Activities

National Events

On February 28, 2008, Abdul Karim attend a "Dialogue with Young Canadians" organized by the Afghanistan Task Force of the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, at the University of Toronto. The purpose of the event was to build awareness and understanding among Canadian youth of the full scope of Canadian efforts and achievements in Afghanistan.

On March 4, 2008, Luisa Sargsyan attended a one-day briefing organized by the Department of National Defence's Security and Defence Forum's Policy Group. The event featured a number of presentations by experts from DND on current security and defence issues that are central to Canada's security and foreign policy.

YATA Seminars and Conferences

In April, Luisa Sargsyan, Alex Dobrota, McGill University, Amal Moussaoui, Benfireld Group and former ACC intern at NATO Hq, and Tamila Karpyk, Dalhousie University) represented Canada at the 2008 Young Atlanticist Summit which was held in Bucharest, Romania, in conjunction with the NATO Summit. The event was organized by the Atlantic Councils of Romania and the United States, and provided an excellent opportunity for the over 120 students and young international affairs professionals representing 37 countries to observe first-hand the important geo-political events connected with the Bucharest Summit and to be addressed by leaders such as Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer and US President George W. Bush. They also participated in a Crisis Simulation exercise involving a Romanian oil tanker hijacked by terrorists in the Mediterranean in 2012.

In July, Sean Billings and Brandon Deuille were delegated to attend the Danish Atlantic Youth Seminar, hosted by the Danish Atlantic Treaty Association (DATA) in Aalborg, Denmark. DATA has been running this highly popular seminar which brings together between forty and fifty participants from NATO Member and Partner countries and Russia for over twenty years.

In October, Jesse Chisholm-Beatson, a student at the University of Toronto, attended the Youth Atlanticist Meeting, "Partners across the globe 2008" in Budapest, Hungary, organized by the Hungarian Atlantic Council and the Atlantic Treaty Association in conjunction with NATO PDD as a side event to the Informal Meeting of the NATO Ministers of Defense.

While studying in Groningen, the Netherlands, Hassan Hameed, ACC Summer intern and Queen's University graduate, had the opportunity to represent the ACC at the Youth Energy Conference "Energy for all—a Challenge for all" organized by the Netherlands Atlantic Council in the Hague.

Student Outreach

On July 4, Andrei Sedoff, York University student, assisted by Lana Polyakov and Jerome Boutillier delivered a presentation on NATO to a class at St. Clement's School in Toronto. The presentation was originally prepared by a former ACC intern, Ian Siperco, and has been kept continually updated by Lana Polyakov with the assistance of interns. It is an effective power point presentation which is ready to be delivered to high school students by university students.

Publications

The ACC published three issues of a much-expanded **Newsletter** which was distributed electronically to all members and to many others such as NATO, DFAIT, and DND officials, ATA which excerpted large parts of the *ACC Newsletter* for its own newsletters, and past participants in ACC events.

Detailed reports on all the events summarized in this report can be read in our Newsletters which are posted on our website.

Eight issues of the news digest, **In Focus**, were produced and distributed electronically in 2008, each with a special focus on a timely topic of the day. Luisa Sargsyan was the editor until October, when Darya Klepchikova took over.

President's Travel

In 2007, in addition to representing the ACC at various ATA meetings, I also made a special effort to raise the profile of the ACC by meeting with NATO and government officials, and officials in ministers' offices personally to gain their support for the ACC and its activities.

I had numerous meetings with the Ambassadors of Albania, Bulgaria, Croatia, and Macedonia, Serbia, Ukraine, to seek their support for activities such as the NATO Economy Forum and ACC's assistance to Ukraine for its hosting of the 2009 ATA Assembly.

In February, as Vice President of the Atlantic Treaty Association, I attended the ATA Bureau meeting in Washington, DC, and meetings at several Washington "think-tanks".

In May, I travelled to Brussels to attend the ATA Bureau Meeting, and to represent the ACC at the Spring Meeting of the ATA Council. The Fall Bureau and Council meetings were held in Berlin in late October in conjunction with the ATA Assembly.

In November, immediately following the Assembly in Berlin, I travelled to Kyiv, Ukraine, where I was joined by Lana Polyakov, to assist the Atlantic Council of Ukraine with planning for the 2009 ATA Assembly. Our travel was financed by a grant from CIDA.

CONCLUSION

2008 was a very busy year for the ACC with much productive activity and positive results which have gained high national and international profile for the organization. We are continuing to build on this base in 2009 under the leadership of our Chairman, the Hon. Bill Graham, and I challenge every member of the ACC to join me in this effort. You can do your bit by recruiting new members, attending our conferences, roundtables, Golf Tournament, and other events, making donations, and contacting potential sponsors and donors. I will be pleased to follow up any contact with information material and sponsorship details. Our priorities for fundraising are staffing, youth activities, and assistance to Ukraine.