



An Address by

Jaap de Hoop Scheffer

Secretary-General of NATO

At

The Canadian War Museum

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Thank you for the opportunity to speak to you this afternoon. Let me start by saying that it is a pleasure for me, to be here in Canada. This splendid war memorial not only records the consistent contribution that Canada has made to efforts worldwide to defend our values, including on many operations in the UN context, but it also pays a wonderful tribute to the many Canadians who have laid down their lives for the benefit of others.

Just a couple of weeks ago, I opened a new war memorial in the Netherlands, called 'Liberty Park', a museum recalling the sacrifices made by many, including Canadians, to liberate the Netherlands. Its motto is that war belongs in a museum. And who could disagree? But the truth is that, whether we like it or not, sacrifices still need to be made in pursuit of peace.

And I should like to take this opportunity to extend my condolences to all the families and friends of Canadian personnel who have been killed and injured on NATO operations.

I know how painful and tragic these losses are. Here in Canada, 17 have made the ultimate sacrifice, including Captain Goddard and Glyn

Berry. But I also know they were fighting for the right cause: to preserve our security and defend our core values.

Today, our common values are under threat from terrorism, from the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and from failing states.

And to defend our values against these new threats, we require new and robust responses - we need to project stability, beyond the traditional NATO area.

This new approach is reflected in the range - both the geographic range, and the functional range - of NATO's current operational commitments. And it is most clearly seen in our operation in Afghanistan.

L'Afghanistan est notre priorité numéro un, et nous ne pouvons pas nous permettre d'échouer. Il est absolument capital que l'Afghanistan ne redevienne pas un "exportateur" de terrorisme. C'est pourquoi l'OTAN doit maintenir son engagement dans ce pays.

Là-bas, nous ne travaillons pas seuls. Trente-six pays de l'OTAN et pays partenaires participent à la force dirigée par l'OTAN qui opère dans le pays sous mandat des Nations Unies.

Et la communauté internationale est consciente qu'il est important d'apporter la démocratie et la stabilité en Afghanistan ;

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Elle sait bien qu'elle doit rester pleinement engagée afin d'épauler l'OTAN dans la reconstruction des institutions du pays, de son économie, et pour la promotion de l'État de droit et de la démocratie. Pour obtenir les meilleurs résultats possibles, les Nations Unies, l'OTAN, l'Union européenne et les principaux acteurs de la scène internationale doivent être totalement complémentaires et coordonner leur action.

La mission menée sous la direction de l'OTAN est claire. Nous apportons une aide au Gouvernement afghan en assurant la sécurité indispensable à la reconstruction et au développement du pays. Mais il ne faut pas se faire d'illusion : notre engagement sera long. Car la situation est très difficile : les ennemis de la démocratie nous mettent déjà à l'épreuve. Et nous serons très certainement à nouveau mis à l'épreuve à mesure que la FIAS élargira progressivement sa mission dans le reste du pays.

Il nous faut donc continuer à réagir en toute équité, tout en faisant preuve de détermination et de fermeté. Et il est important que tous les Alliés continuent de manifester un soutien politique et militaire sans faille.

Le Canada a déjà apporté une contribution majeure, sous le commandement du général Hillier, à la mission de la FIAS dirigée par l'OTAN, et ce fut un grand succès.

Voilà pourquoi j'apprécie tout particulièrement votre récente décision d'apporter une nouvelle contribution significative à cette opération, au moins jusqu'en février 2009. Une telle décision témoigne de cet engagement à long terme qui est si indispensable dans le cadre de cette mission.

But Afghanistan is not our only operation.

As I speak, North American and European Allies are actively engaged alongside each other in Kosovo, where our troops continue to keep the peace and ensure a safe and stable environment in which the UN-sponsored talks on the future status of that province can take place. In Iraq, NATO is training Iraqi security forces to allow them to take on more responsibility for their own security.

In Africa, African Union peacekeeping troops are being airlifted into the Darfur region of Sudan by NATO aircraft, and we are also providing other assistance to that force.

And we delivered humanitarian relief to the victims of last year's Hurricane Katrina in the United States, as well as to victims of last October's earthquake in Pakistan.

These commitments clearly show just how much NATO has changed, and how much it is in demand. And I am convinced that these demands will grow further.

So to ensure that we remain up to the task, NATO Heads of State and Government will hold the next NATO Summit, in Riga, in November, to direct the continuing transformation of the Alliance.

The Riga agenda will cover three 'baskets' of work. The first of these covers our current operations. This then links to the second, which covers our military capabilities. And the third covers the major political issues. Let me say a few words about some of the principal topics in each of these baskets.

And I shall start with our operations. I have already spoken about the importance to Allies of Afghanistan.



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By the time of Riga, the United Nations sponsored talks on Kosovo's future status could be in a decisive stage and we shall need to decide how our military and political engagement can continue to contribute effectively to the future development of Kosovo.

I also anticipate that we shall need to consider possible decisions relating to the crisis in Darfur.

I discuss the situation regularly with the United Nations' Secretary General, and we could be asked to do more in support of the African Union and the United Nations.

This leads me to the second 'basket' of work at Riga. In light of the demanding operations and missions NATO is currently undertaking, it is absolutely vital that we have the right capabilities to maximise our chances of success.

This requires us to have available forces that can project stability -forces that can react quickly; that can be deployed over strategic distance, and then sustained over a long period of time.

We have already made good progress in developing such capabilities. The NATO Response Force, which should be fully operational by the time of the Riga Summit, will enable us to react to new challenges even more quickly. Next week, the NRF will hold a major exercise in Cape Verde, with over 7000 personnel involved, to test its effectiveness.

At Riga, we shall also consider a NATO special operations forces initiative. This might include a NATO framework for training and employing Special Forces, and arrangements for sharing information and tactics.

We will also look to give a further

impetus to our current plans to acquire greater access to strategic airlift. I know Canada is moving to acquire this capability. Let me say that this is the right thing to do. It meets real-world, urgent requirements.

Military transformation -- acquiring modern capabilities -- does not come for free. It has to be funded. And that is why I welcome Canada's recent decision to increase significantly defence spending and investment in the Canadian armed forces. Canada's efforts are an example to the Alliance. They will also help make NATO stronger.

Enfin, à Riga, les travaux concernent aussi la « corbeille » politique. La politique d'élargissement de l'OTAN a été une vraie réussite et a grandement contribué à étendre la stabilité et la sécurité, surtout en Europe centrale et orientale. Lorsque le Canada a aidé à fonder l'Alliance en 1949, celle-ci comptait douze membres. Nous sommes maintenant 26. À Riga, nous souhaiterons souligner que nous restons attachés à la politique de la porte ouverte et à la poursuite de l'élargissement de l'Alliance.

Mais il ne faut pas s'attendre à de nouvelles invitations à adhérer à l'Alliance. Il est probable que les Alliés souhaiteront plutôt encourager nos trois pays actuellement candidats à l'adhésion, l'Albanie, la Croatie et l'ex-République yougoslave de Macédoine[1],, à poursuivre les efforts qu'ils déploient pour remplir les conditions voulues. Nous avons engagé un dialogue intensifié avec l'Ukraine, et à Riga, les Alliés annonceront probablement la suite qu'ils comptent donner au souhait manifesté par ce pays, ainsi que par la Géorgie, d'adhérer à l'Alliance.

L'OTAN a toujours eu un caractère



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transatlantique, avec l'article 5 a sa base. Cela ne va pas changer. Mais nous devons aussi chercher à renforcer la coopération avec nos partenaires actuels. Et nous devons également chercher à renforcer nos relations avec des pays comme l'Australie, la Nouvelle-Zélande, le Japon et la Corée du Sud.

Ces pays souhaitent nouer des relations de travail plus étroites avec nous. Ainsi que le ministre japonais des Affaires étrangères l'a déclaré le mois dernier lorsqu'il s'est adressé au Conseil de l'Atlantique Nord, ces pays partagent nos valeurs, tout comme ils partagent nos préoccupations en matière de sécurité.

And as we continue to look to enhance our outreach to the broader Middle East region, the idea of a NATO training initiative has received widespread support.

The initial focus of such an initiative would be the countries from that region, but I hope that other regions could be involved at some stage as well.

I have highlighted some of the key decisions that we will be taking at Riga at the end of the year, but the overall NATO agenda is much broader. We continue to work closely with Russia and look to deepen our relationship even further.

And we continue to work towards establishing closer ties with other institutions, notably the EU and the UN. NATO and the United Nations cooperate increasingly at staff level, as well as in the field on operations. But we should develop a more structured framework for our cooperation, and we are pursuing efforts that will hopefully conclude with a joint UN-NATO declaration. And last, but certainly not

least, we continue to strengthen the role of NATO as a forum for political dialogue.

In an age where security challenges emerge with little warning, it is absolutely essential that we do not shy away from debating the key issues, so that we can identify the new common challenges as early as possible.

This country has a long tradition of multilateralism. It has a long history of defending values, including, when necessary, through the use of the armed forces. Canada also has a firm record as a country that pulls its weight when it comes to security.

As a Dutchman, I can tell you my country remembers, and honours, those Canadians who fell defending values far away from home, many years ago. We can see today, in Afghanistan, that that Canadian tradition is still alive today. I can see, in the investments being made today in defence, that your country will continue to contribute in future as well. Let me conclude simply by saying thank you; well done; and keep up the good work.

Thank you.

[1] La Turquie reconnaît la République de Macédoine sous son nom constitutionnel.

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