



Press Release

Ukrainian Rada Joint Monitoring Group meets at NATO HQ

Brussels, 8 November 2000

The NATO PA - Ukrainian Rada Joint Monitoring Group (JMG) held its first meeting on 3 November at NATO Headquarters in Brussels.

This JMG consisting of senior members of the Assembly and the Verkhovna Rada, was created in 1998 to monitor the implementation of the NATO-Ukraine Charter and particularly the work of the NATO-Ukraine Commission and other areas of co-operation. However, it had been unable to meet earlier due to the opposition of the former Rada leadership to contacts with the NATO Parliamentary Assembly.

At the outset of the meeting, it was clear that these difficulties had now been overcome, and that all participants viewed NATO-Ukraine co-operation very positively and had a common interest in enhancing and publicizing this co-operation.

The JMG was briefed by senior NATO and Ukrainian officials on a wide range of issues including military co-operation, defence reform, civil emergency planning, and information about the Alliance. Following a final meeting with NATO's Secretary General, Lord Robertson of Port Ellen, the JMG discussed the substance of the briefings and future activities of the JMG.

Co-operation between NATO and Ukraine is proceeding vigorously: Ukraine is an active participant in PfP, and its contribution to civil emergency planning was described as "exemplary". NATO officials also stressed the importance of the Rada's ratification earlier this year of the Status of Forces Agreement, an essential prerequisite for many joint activities. A recent illustration of this was the success of Trans-Carpathia 2000, a disaster relief exercise held from 20 to 28 September involving 350 personnel from 11 countries.

The JMG also learned that the NATO Information Bureau in Kiev is now fully operational with 8 staff helping to provide information about NATO in the capital and in the provinces.

Despite the successes of NATO-Ukraine co-operation, the JMG identified several

areas of concern. Defence reform in Ukraine is severely constrained by a lack of resources. Ukrainian delegates stressed that this situation could be eased by greater armaments co-operation. The JMG also noted that NATO's public image in Ukraine had suffered as a result of action taken in 1999 against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

The JMG agreed that it would hold its next meeting in Ukraine in 2001, and that defence reform, armaments co-operation, and information should be key items for future joint work.

Mr. Stepan Havrysh, Deputy Speaker of the Rada, and Mr. Frank Cook, Vice-President of the NATO PA and a Deputy Speaker of the British House of Commons, co-chaired the meeting. In closing, Mr. Cook said that "The meeting has laid a firm foundation for the future work of the Joint Monitoring Group. We are united in our common desire to strengthen the relationship between NATO and Ukraine, and to raise awareness in our parliaments and in the public at large of the work being done to implement the NATO-Ukraine Charter."

Members of the Ukrainian Parliament

Mr. Stepan Havrysh

Deputy Speaker of the Rada, Head of Delegation

Mr. Borys Andresyuk

Chairman of the Defence Committee

Mr. Oleksiy Kostusev

Chairman of the Committee on Economic Policy

Mr. Oleh Zarubinsky

Deputy Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee, Head of the Ukrainian Delegation to NATO PA

Members of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly

United Kingdom

Mr. Frank Cook, Vice-President

Turkey

Mr. Tahir Köse, Vice-President

Germany

Mr. Markus Meckel, Head of Delegation

Netherlands

Mr. Wim van Eekelen, Head of Delegation

Poland

Mr. Czeslaw Bielecki, Head of Delegation

Background: The NATO Parliamentary Assembly, founded in 1955 with a

Brussels-based secretariat brings together 214 national parliamentarians from the 19 NATO countries. The 17 Associate delegations from Central and Eastern Europe, Ukraine, and Russia, take part in nearly all Assembly activities and meetings.

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