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Mr. Stephen Fuhr

Standing Committee on National Defence

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• (1530)

[English]

The Chair (Mr. Stephen Fuhr (Kelowna—Lake Country, Lib.)): I call the meeting to order. We have a quorum.

I'd like to welcome everybody to the defence committee, and especially welcome Dr. Walter Dorn from the Royal Military College in Kingston.

Thank you for coming. I realize you have an engagement with Minister Freeland at the bottom of the next hour and you need to be there on time. I'm going to get right to it and let you have your opening remarks. Then we'll get right into questions so that you can meet with the minister on time.

Sir, the floor is yours.

Prof. Walter Dorn (Professor, Royal Military College of Canada, Department of Defence Studies, As an Individual): Thank you, sir, for your consideration, and thank you for the honour of testifying before this important committee.

My past testimony before parliamentary committees has been on arms control, Afghanistan operations, peacekeeping, and the United Nations. Those subjects are in my comfort zone. I have to say that NATO isn't in my area of expertise, but NATO is an organization that has premier status in the institutions in which I teach military officers, namely the Royal Military College and the Canadian Forces College.

I'd like to use my presentation to compare Canada's role in NATO with its role in the United Nations. The last time I testified to the Senate, the question was, which would you give emphasis to, NATO or the UN? I realize that some people may view them as dichotomous; in my case, I view them as complementary institutions. Both are vital to Canadian and global security, and Canada can do more for both.

As you know, Canada, and particularly the diplomat and politician Lester B. Pearson, played an important role in the creation of both organizations. In 1945 the Canadian delegation in San Francisco negotiated hard for an economic dimension in the UN Charter. Similarly, in the North Atlantic Treaty, NATO's charter, Canada pushed for article 2, sometimes known as the Canadian article, to include political and economic co-operation along with military co-operation in this new treaty. There will be more about the current implementation later.

The UN was created as an organization for collective security to deal with threats globally, including threats created by its own members. In contrast, NATO was created as an organization for collective defence to deal with external threats, namely the menacing rise of the Soviet bloc. It also had other functions: as Lord Ismay, the first NATO Secretary General informally put it, "to keep the Russians out, the Americans in, and the Germans down".

Over time, the organization realized that there was no reason to fear that Germany would rise again as a menacing military power, but the Russian threat has recently risen again, and there's a need to keep Russia out of the affairs of many states—not only its neighbours, such as Ukraine, but also, in our cyber age, the democracies of Europe and North America.

Both organizations run military operations. It might surprise people to know that the UN has more military personnel on operations than NATO has. Currently, the UN Secretary-General has 84,000 military personnel under his operational control in 16 peacekeeping operations, while those under NATO number some 20,000: 13,000 in Afghanistan, 4,500 in Kosovo, 4,500 in the Baltics, and smaller numbers in naval operations.

It should be noted that NATO had at its peak 130,000 troops under NATO operational control in Afghanistan, with Canada contributing 3,300, mostly in Kandahar. Currently the Canadian Armed Forces has deployed 450 members, plus 250 temporary members, in Latvia, and our navy contributes to NATO exercises. The air force is now contributing to NATO air policing in Romania. Until 2014 the air force also provided personnel for NATO's airborne early warning and control force. Maybe Canada should reconsider joining that program again.

Canadian generals have played major leadership roles in both organizations. In the UN, General Tommy Burns was the first commander of the UN's first peacekeeping force, created at Pearson's urging to end the Suez Crisis of 1956. In the 1990s, Canada provided the military adviser to the Secretary General, General Maurice Baril, and seven military commanders of seven UN missions, though none so far in this century.

In recent NATO history Canada provided the chair of the military committee, General Ray Henault, from 2004 to 2008, and the commander of its mission in Libya, General Charles Bouchard.

I hasten to add that the NATO mission in Libya was under Security Council mandate and was very well executed, in my opinion. The problem in Libya was that afterwards, both NATO and the UN shied away from any post-conflict peace force, thinking erroneously that the job was done, leaving Libya a deeply fractured country to this day.

In the past, NATO has not only done defence and enforcement but also peacekeeping, and done it well. After the UN protection force was unable to end the conflict or the ethnic cleansing in Bosnia, NATO provided a very capable force, composed of many nations that had contributed to the UN force, but now with much better equipment and organization and, I add, at much greater financial cost.

• (1535)

Here I come to a major difference. In NATO, the player pays—that is, each contributing country covers its own costs—while in the UN, there is a reimbursement scheme that allows for a significant portion, if not all, of the nation's costs to be recovered with UN funding.

Like the UN, NATO operations are a combination of national contributions, but NATO features advanced western countries providing cutting-edge equipment—again, at their own expense—to the NATO operations. Plus, NATO has spent almost 70 years developing a high level of interoperability among its members, even while growing from 12 to 29 countries, while the interoperability among the UN's current 125 or so peacekeeping contributors is much poorer. The range of equipment quality among the developed and developing countries is much wider; however, the re-engagement of European countries in UN peacekeeping is raising the technological standards of UN missions.

Canada can do much more to contribute to UN missions across the range of functions from personnel to training, from aircraft to reconnaissance vehicles, from night vision to long-range surveillance, including by using Canadian experience in NATO.

There is much that the UN can learn from NATO on military operations: intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance, otherwise known as ISR; command and control; logistics; standardization agreements; industrial coordination; and particularly exercises and simulations, among many things.

Like the UN, but on a much smaller scale, NATO also has co-operation programs outside of the military domain. In a handout, Dr. Danielle Stodilka, a senior fellow at the Canadian International Council, and I summarized three important NATO programs: the science for peace and security program, the Euro-Atlantic Disaster Response Coordination Centre, and the NATO centres of excellence, or COEs.

We found that Canada was under-represented in all these activities, and we make some concrete recommendations, so here I go.

In the next year, Canada should host a NATO science for peace and security information day, led by a high-level delegation from NATO's emerging security challenges division, to explore possible partnerships with Ukraine and other countries. It should also increase

support for programs of the NATO Euro-Atlantic Disaster Response Coordination Centre.

In other conclusions, showing my nuanced approach to NATO, one, there is a danger that the world will march into a new cold war. The UN experience shows that it is important to keep talking even while exposing Russian wrongdoings. Deterrence will have its value, but both sides have to ensure that extremist arguments and extremist weapons do not win the day. While there is clear aggression on the Russian side, the conflicts are not entirely black and white. There are shades of grey, with measures needed to protect Russian-speaking minorities in the “near abroad”, as Russia calls it. Some sensitivity to Russian arguments should be shown, even as military, political, economic, and legal measures are all taken against misbehaviour.

Two, the UN has made major advances to rid the world of weapons of mass destruction. Through treaties, tens of thousands of tonnes of chemical weapons have been disarmed and biological weapons have been banned. Also, much progress has been made in nuclear weapons disarmament, the latest advance being the nuclear prohibition treaty negotiated at the UN and opened for signature in September.

Nuclear weapons belong in the dustbin of history, along with other weapons of mass destruction, such as chemical and biological weapons. No one could or should seriously consider incinerating cities and killing millions of people. The only sane approach to end the mutual assured destruction, or MAD, strategy of nuclear deterrence is nuclear abolition, so NATO should drop its faith in nuclear weapons as the “supreme guarantee” of peace. It should move the world along the path of mutual balanced reductions in nuclear forces so that one day there will be no nuclear weapons that can fall into terrorists' hands, be used during escalation of tensions, or be fired by accident. We should be careful not to succumb to the strong-arm tactics of the nuclear nations.

Three, NATO can be an important instrument for the United Nations. This was seen in Kosovo with the UN-mandated and NATO-led Kosovo Force, KFOR, working with the UN mission in Kosovo. It was also seen in Libya in the execution of Security Council resolution 1973 to protect civilians, though the follow-up peacekeeping force should have been implemented and should still be implemented by the UN.

• (1540)

Overall, UN-NATO co-operation should be encouraged, especially as UN peacekeeping seeks to modernize and become better equipped.

Four, NATO has 24 centres of excellence, but none on peace support operations, or PSOs, and none in Canada. Since the Minister of National Defence is mandated to lead international training efforts in peace operations, creating a PSO centre of excellence in Canada would be a major step forward. Since the closure of the Pearson Peacekeeping Centre in 2013 due to lack of government funding, Canada lacks a place where military, police, and civilians from different countries can train together.

Finally, speaking to parliamentarians, NATO has a parliamentary assembly, which had a Canadian MP as president at its founding conference and which serves as a consultative body to the North Atlantic Council. That can be a model for a future UN parliamentary assembly, bringing together legislators from all member states. The NATO PA accepted NATO members and then went further by integrating parliamentarians from the European Parliament and associated countries.

I have just a couple of other final points. As the UN modernizes, NATO could provide the UN with many technologies and procedures. NATO already has someone stationed at UN headquarters, and it has provided satellite imagery of Syria, for example, to the UN, but it could do much more.

It wouldn't be fair unless I had a note on women, peace, and security, where NATO's policy is built on UN Security Council resolution 1325, but NATO is considerably behind the United Nations and many member states, including Canada, in its implementation, so Canada could certainly push in that area.

I thank you for your attention and for letting me share some thoughts and ideas with you.

The Chair: Thank you for your testimony, Dr. Dorn.

Just before we start with questions, I have two options, given the fact that Dr. Dorn has to be out of here in 40 minutes. We could run the questions as agreed, and it ends where it ends when we get to 4:25, or I could reduce it to five, four, and two minutes and get everyone through.

I see heads shaking, so we will take the normal course.

Mr. Fisher, you have seven minutes.

Mr. Darren Fisher (Dartmouth—Cole Harbour, Lib.): Thank you very much, Mr. Chair, and to you, sir, for being here. Your testimony is certainly appreciated.

In Canada's new defence policy, our government is moving forward and will conduct, I quote, "active cyber operations against potential adversaries in the context of government-authorized military missions." It's clear Canada has taken an aggressive approach to the cyber domain.

Is NATO's cyberdefence pledge enough? Is it enough to ensure that NATO is evolving the way it needs to?

Prof. Walter Dorn: This is an area where we have to tread very carefully. Because we want the norm to be non-intervention and non-attack, we have to make sure that Canada and other NATO allies are not pushing the envelope.

I am a strong believer in defensive measures against cyber-attacks and direct response in the form of self-defence under imminent

threat, but creating an overall strategy for active or offensive cyber-operations is a very slippery slope that could lead the international community into a perilous domain in which real democracies will suffer most.

Mr. Darren Fisher: Article 5 has apparently only been invoked once. What's the state of readiness amongst all of the NATO nations if something were to happen? We talked about ballistic missiles coming towards North America and "all for one and one for all". What's the state of readiness of the NATO members?

Prof. Walter Dorn: NATO is the most powerful alliance in the world. It funds far more than any adversary. I would say—given that the U.S. spends well over \$600 billion on defence and has formed the backbone of NATO—it's as good as you can get in the world of human affairs.

The sense of "all for one and one for all" is important. An attack against North America—or an attempted attack, because I don't believe that North Korea has the missiles to be able to reach North America, and certainly not with a nuclear warhead—would result in a huge amount of sympathy and solidarity, but the co-operation of other nations in that domain, far out of NATO's traditional sphere of operations, for me is still an uncertainty. It's such a unique type of issue to be thinking about NATO for North America rather than NATO for Europe.

• (1545)

Mr. Darren Fisher: Fair enough. Just to clarify, the state of readiness amongst individual nations.... NATO as a whole might be ready because some of the bigger players are ready, but are some of the smaller players ready as well, and is there an expectation that they be at a certain level of readiness?

Prof. Walter Dorn: There is an expectation. There are standards, but at the same time you have to ask if it is necessary that the smallest nations be ready. Their contribution will be relatively minor compared to the bigger players, but we do want to increase everyone's standards, and that's why NATO coordination and co-operation are so vital.

Mr. Darren Fisher: Thank you.

We've heard lots of testimony that Canada's playing an important and very successful role through Operation Unifier in Ukraine, and there's been lots of talk about the 2% of GDP. At our current level of spending, where do we rank? Where would we relate compared to other NATO countries, as far as contributions to NATO and as far as operations and security go?

Prof. Walter Dorn: It depends on which figures you use. If you use the percent of GDP, we're down on the list, around 1%, but if you look at threat and risk versus what Canada contributes, I'd say Canada is contributing what people can expect of it. Turkey, next to a civil war in Syria, will naturally spend six times the amount that Canada does. There are good reasons for that. I think that the contribution to defence, or defence spending, should actually meet the nation's needs, and the 2% that NATO has suggested is only a guideline. Both the previous government and the current government don't consider it to be a mandate or a requirement from NATO.

Mr. Darren Fisher: With relations between NATO and Russia in such a mess, do you feel that Russia has increased military spending in response to NATO's enhanced forward presence along the eastern border?

Prof. Walter Dorn: I think Russia's increased military spending comes out of its general view towards its position in the world. It wants to regain a superpower status. In so many areas, with the Russian economy declining, with population declining, and with so many challenges, they look to that as being one of their premier ways of showing that they are a force in the world. Yes, they may use NATO's presence in the Baltics as one of the reasons, and it may change the way that they position their forces, but at the same time, it's a much deeper problem than just Russia responding to what they call NATO's aggressive measures.

Mr. Darren Fisher: I have a question that I've asked numerous witnesses here before. Is Ukraine a buffer between Russia and NATO or is Ukraine part of a legacy of empire-building by Putin?

Prof. Walter Dorn: The Russians do call the former Soviet Union states the "near abroad". They consider it a special status and they may view it as a kind of buffer to NATO. I don't like the term because it makes Ukraine look like it's a pawn in a chess match. Ukrainians are people who deserve to live in security and prosperity, and they shouldn't be subjected to the great power politics.

To a certain extent, in reality it forms a buffer, so you can't have an invasion through the country. However, on the other hand, it's a country in its own right that has the right to stand up among the nations and have its ability to defend itself against all forms of encroachment on its sovereignty and territorial integrity.

Mr. Darren Fisher: Excellent. Thank you so much.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

• (1550)

The Chair: Dr. Dorn, if you see me going like this when you're responding, that means to please wrap up within 30 seconds so I can get to the next person.

Prof. Walter Dorn: I appreciate your efforts.

The Chair: It's a pleasure.

Mr. Yurdiga, you have the floor.

Mr. David Yurdiga (Fort McMurray—Cold Lake, CPC): Thank you, Mr. Chair. Thank you, Dr. Dorn, for being here today. This is a very important subject of mine and for everyone around the table, I assume.

Given the recent China-Russia naval co-operation, do you believe that strengthening relations between the two nations gives NATO cause for concern?

Prof. Walter Dorn: I'm not very concerned about it, because the co-operation is not strong in the military domain. It's more in the economic domain, with China needing resources and Russia, as the largest country in the world, having abundant natural resources. That kind of co-operation, like the Shanghai Co-operation Organization and others, is primarily in the economic domain. I don't see the ideologies of the two countries meeting. Even during the Cold War, there was one version of Communism that was Russian and another version that was Chinese, and they didn't see eye to eye. There's so much that divides them, and there are even challenges on their borders. No, I don't actually see the danger of a renewed Warsaw Pact or alliances that could challenge the NATO alliance.

Mr. David Yurdiga: Thank you.

Given the current perceived position of the U.S. on NATO, do you foresee the United States making drastic changes to their NATO contributions? If that happens, will our allies, the other members of NATO, have to contribute more money?

Prof. Walter Dorn: Well, asking an academic to predict the future is a very dangerous thing. Our crystal balls are not very good. At the same time, I do appreciate that the United States government is acting in ways that aren't as predictable as they were for 70 years. We have to be aware that we might find ourselves in situations that will require new solutions to new problems coming from new sources.

Mr. David Yurdiga: Thank you. It's a real concern for everyone that if the U.S. does pull back, somebody is going to have to fill the void. Looking forward, I think governments have to look at that possibility very seriously.

We talked a bit about the buffer zone and using Ukraine as a buffer zone. We had the ceasefires and treaties, and they always failed for one reason or another.

From your perspective, why have these treaties failed? Do you believe Russia will agree to a UN peacekeeping mission that sees UN peacekeepers within disputed areas?

Prof. Walter Dorn: That's a great question.

I don't feel that you can look on a binary success or failure for the treaties. The Minsk II treaty is still an important element of keeping the conflict in eastern Ukraine from becoming a war. We can look at it on a scale, and there could be much larger levels of fighting. There could actually be things like missiles and other forms of weaponry used. By moving it down on the scale through political means, I think Minsk II actually does help the process. I still support it, although I see that it has built-in mechanisms that are bound to fail. There are so-called poison pills in the Minsk II agreement.

I would like to see the agreement better supported, with the OSCE doing better monitoring and a UN force positioned in the Ukraine. The major dilemma or the decision point is on how far the UN force would be extended. If it went all the way to the Russian border with Ukraine, Russia would very much object. They would like to have the ceasefire line now become frozen so that they can solidify control in the Donbass region. We have to make sure, in my opinion, that it actually respects the territorial integrity of Ukraine and that a peacekeeping force does cover all of the Ukrainian territory.

Mr. David Yurdiga: How much time do I have left?

The Chair: You have two minutes.

Mr. David Yurdiga: Ukraine has expressed a sincere desire to join NATO and is working very hard to achieve that, but the concern is the conflict. Is it possible for Ukraine to join NATO when Crimea and the Donbass region are conflict areas? We see North Korea, and that's never ending. Is it possible for Ukraine to become an active NATO member when foreign forces are on their soil?

• (1555)

Prof. Walter Dorn: I would advise caution against this. You don't want Ukraine to become the start of World War III. At the same time, there's so much more that we can do to help Ukraine to reach out through the partnership for peace program and other activities to make Ukraine more secure. I don't advise giving Ukraine article 5 protection, but at the same time we should be doing much more to enhance their security.

Mr. David Yurdiga: Okay.

I realize that you did a lot of work with the UN, and I'm not sure how much Canada is doing with its current peacekeeping missions. Do you know how many Canadian soldiers are currently deployed in some sort of peacekeeping mission?

Prof. Walter Dorn: Sure. The answer is only 29. It's the lowest point in Canadian peacekeeping history. I've been tracking the figures for over a decade and a half, and at our maximum we had 3,300, but this government has brought the peacekeeping numbers down to just 29 military personnel and 44 police, for a total of 73 uniformed personnel.

I'm hoping an announcement is coming soon, but the facts on the ground are that this is a very minimal contribution, smaller than what was provided by the previous government.

Mr. David Yurdiga: Okay. Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you.

Mr. Garrison is next.

Mr. Randall Garrison (Esquimalt—Saanich—Sooke, NDP): Thank you, Dr. Dorn, for being here today.

I read with interest the piece you and Dr. Stodilka presented, called "Beyond Troops: Canadian Contributions to NATO in Three Areas Outside of Military Operations". I guess I'd have to say I was very disappointed—not in your report, but very disappointed that Canada originated these ideas but now is not making significant contributions to them, including the NATO science for peace and security program, the Euro-Atlantic Disaster Response Centre, and the centres of excellence.

Could you tell us briefly about the trajectory? What has happened to our contributions? Has there been a slow decline? Has there been any difference between the previous Conservative government and the Liberal government, or have we just let it wither away?

Prof. Walter Dorn: Seeing my colleagues in the Department of National Defence and the Canadian Armed Forces, I realize that they find they don't have enough positions to fill all of the "out-Can"—outside-of-Canada—positions. In some cases it's a question of providing the brass—that is, the generals or admirals who are required. A limit is placed on them such that they can't actually do all the co-operation they want to do in taking major roles in these three activities that you mentioned.

The small participation of Canada in the science for peace and security program is definitely disappointing, but it's also partly the fault of our scientific community. It's not their fault explicitly; rather, it's just that they don't know about these opportunities.

Ukraine is a country that has a fantastic scientific history in fields such as engineering and the development of aircraft. There's so much potential in that country. There are scientists who had well-developed programs in something like 16 universities in the Donbass region, and these scientists are now looking for work, looking for projects. We have to be careful. If we don't help find work for them, they may go where the dollar is and end up doing projects that will in the long run be harmful to the security of Canada and the world and our allies.

I'd say it's very important to engage in the science for peace and security program, and that's why we proposed an awareness-raising activity of a NATO science for peace and security information day. NATO has done these. Actually, it has done one in Ukraine already, or maybe more, and it's something that we could do in Canada.

Mr. Randall Garrison: At the beginning of your opening remarks you talked about your belief that NATO and the UN are complementary. When this committee was at NATO headquarters in Brussels, a press release was issued on the non-proliferation treaty, which I guess implied that it was contradictory to NATO's purposes to have a non-proliferation treaty—

Prof. Walter Dorn: Do you mean the nuclear prohibition treaty?

Mr. Randall Garrison: Yes, it's the nuclear prohibition treaty; I'm sorry.

Can you tell us whether, in your view, there's anything that would make the prohibition treaty incompatible with NATO membership?

Prof. Walter Dorn: I don't believe it's incompatible with membership in a legal domain, but NATO has been relying on nuclear weapons since the dawn of NATO, and so NATO has tried to express solidarity over nuclear weapons over the decades. This has been an obstacle to some countries that were really trying to get rid of nuclear weapons and taking more what I call "progressive" positions on nuclear disarmament. There are some strong-arm tactics by the U.S. government to try to make sure that the commitment to nuclear weapons isn't watered down. It's in NATO's strategic concept, renewed in 2012.

When the Liberal government under Prime Minister Chrétien, with Lloyd Axworthy, tried to challenge it in Washington in 1999, they didn't get much traction among NATO members. At the same time, I myself feel that a principled approach would be to say that we should be open to embracing the nuclear prohibition treaty and finding our own voice for such an important matter as nuclear disarmament.

• (1600)

Mr. Randall Garrison: At the end of the Warsaw summit in 2016, NATO reaffirmed its commitment to creating conditions for a world without nuclear weapons. It would seem to me that the statements from NATO itself show that it hasn't given up the idea. Do you think there's a role for Canada—you said we didn't get far in 1999—to try again?

Prof. Walter Dorn: Yes, I believe so. The Canadian government has a great record on disarmament matters. We played major roles in the chemical weapons convention, and there are many ways in which nuclear weapons should be treated in the same fashion, with abolition as a near-term target. Taking these steps in such small measure over such a long period of time isn't moving us towards a nuclear weapon-free world, which is everyone's declared end, at a pace, and it actually endangers global security.

Mr. Randall Garrison: Could we provide that leadership in NATO without signing the prohibition treaty?

Prof. Walter Dorn: Sure. We could move NATO toward a more accepting attitude of the nuclear prohibition treaty.

Mr. Randall Garrison: We wouldn't have to actually sign it to take that up.

Prof. Walter Dorn: No, we would just have to start with the political enlightenment, if I can use that word, of other NATO members.

Mr. Randall Garrison: Do you think that if Canada were to sign the treaty, it would build some support among other NATO members where this has been an issue, such as the Netherlands or Norway?

Prof. Walter Dorn: Yes, if Canada did sign, it would be really breaking the ice and it could lead to other nations deciding to come on board. It would lead to some level of division, but in the end I think it would be a healthy decision.

Mr. Randall Garrison: Thank you very much.

The Chair: Thank you.

Go ahead, Ms. Alleslev.

Ms. Leona Alleslev (Aurora—Oak Ridges—Richmond Hill, Lib.): Thank you, Dr. Dorn, for a very comprehensive overview of the relationship or interrelationship between the UN and NATO, and

Canada's perspective and thought leadership in that area, precisely in looking at things not only through the operational or pointy-end defence lens, but also in the political and economic perspective, precisely as you highlighted with article 2 and with many of the things that we initiated but now are not so much involved in.

I think it's important that as we look at the world and some unprecedented instability, we come back to some of the core principles that define us as Canadians and position us in those non-operational areas as much, perhaps, as the operational. Could you give us some compelling arguments for why that sphere matters to peace and security? I mean such things as the science for peace program, the centres of excellence and the fact that we're not accredited any longer as a centre of excellence, and the rescue coordination centres. As well, could you give us an idea of why that matters, what we should be doing, and how that does, in fact, position us going forward?

Prof. Walter Dorn: Sure.

Peace is much more than the absence of war—

Ms. Leona Alleslev: Exactly.

Prof. Walter Dorn: We sometimes talk about the negative peace, which is the absence of war, and the positive peace, which is the presence of co-operation, consultation, and engagement, and these programs are really important. It's one of the reasons that Canada pushed, at the development of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, to have the political and economic aspects. These build ties, and now NATO has very wisely created the partnership for peace to bring other nations into it. It's a way to build relationships with those nations, and in the end the only secure peace will be a positive peace in which you can withstand the trials of extremists who are trying to challenge it.

Ms. Leona Alleslev: Tell us also what lessons we can take from the UN and what we should be advocating from that to NATO, as you highlighted in your speech, and how we might go about doing that.

• (1605)

Prof. Walter Dorn: For me, the number one lesson of the UN is the importance of dialogue. Even during the height of the Cuban missile crisis, there were still negotiations being done at UN headquarters in a dialogue initiated by the UN Secretary-General. It's at those key moments that a few words can make the difference between World War III and not.

I would say to keep the dialogue open. Find some means of partnership or co-operation so that we don't entirely demonize the enemy. Even when Gorbachev came into the politburo, there was a great amount of suspicion. We didn't trust this guy and we wouldn't work with him, but the fact is that there were some voices saying that we had to give Gorbachev a chance and we had to see what he really wanted.

We didn't do enough engagement with Gorbachev. We made the mistake then; let's not make it again. When we see initiatives that are being taken by Russia that we can actually support....

Let me give you an example. Russia has destroyed its chemical weapons arsenal. The United States has not yet been able to do that, for financial reasons, but that's something that should be applauded.

Ms. Leona Alleslev: That's the strength of UN-NATO co-operation. Now highlight some of the differences between a NATO mission and a UN mission and why those differences are important.

Prof. Walter Dorn: If you are talking about a peace operation, there are times when a NATO operation has advantages and times when it's a disadvantage. There are some regions of the world, like the Balkans, where you need to show a lot of force because the language of the day in the 1990s, of Milosevic and Karadzic and others, was to really respect force.

The fact that the NATO IFOR and SFOR forces were backed up by aircraft carriers in the Mediterranean made a big difference in being able to keep the conflict down. Eventually, it transitioned to a European Union mission with much less force, but there are times when you want to have the peace enforcement capability to go along with a peace initiative that the UN is leading.

I foresee that if the UN were ever to create a peacekeeping force in an area like Libya to help disarm the various militia groups, they could have some NATO backing. If it was necessary to have force behind the mission, they could call upon NATO.

Ms. Leona Alleslev: Would you say that part of Canada's plan to engage in any sort of NATO mission would be to also look at what might come afterward in terms of the UN mission?

Prof. Walter Dorn: Absolutely. That's the lesson of Libya and of so many conflicts. It's much harder to deal with peace than it is to deal with the war, so when you're fighting the war, think about the peace afterwards.

Ms. Leona Alleslev: There is a continuum of security and peace, perhaps?

Prof. Walter Dorn: Correct.

Ms. Leona Alleslev: Excellent.

Mark Gerretsen, did you want to ask anything?

The Chair: You have one minute and 30 seconds.

Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.): Just in follow-up to Mr. Garrison's questions about signing a nuclear ban declaration, are we not required, under our obligations with NATO, to not sign such a ban?

Prof. Walter Dorn: My interpretation is that it's not a legal requirement. It's political pressure that would prevent Canada from signing.

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: It's a political pressure that was created by NATO, which was created by the allies.

Prof. Walter Dorn: Yes. That's correct.

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: It's not really a pressure if it's created by the people that—

Prof. Walter Dorn: I think there's a substantial political and—

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: Where's the pressure coming from, then?

Prof. Walter Dorn: I'd say mostly from the United States, because it's U.S. weapons that are deployed in five NATO countries under the NATO umbrella.

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: Okay.

You have expertise in peace operations. This government is committed to bringing Canada back, so to speak, to prominence in the international scene, in particular as it relates to peace operations. As you would know, being from RMC, right on Highway 15 is the new peace training facility that's been built. Where do you see Canadian troops being effective in peacekeeping?

Prof. Walter Dorn: Canada has so much to offer. I'm very proud to be working with really bright individuals, the soldiers who are training at RMC and the Canadian Forces College. We have so much to offer.

The Peace Support Training Centre that's inaugurating a new building on Friday—

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: I'll be there.

Prof. Walter Dorn: The Peace Support Training Centre is a key element in giving us the expertise that we need to become the prolific and important UN peacekeeper again.

The Chair: Thank you.

Mr. Robillard, you have five minutes.

• (1610)

[Translation]

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

Mr. Dorn, thank you for joining us this afternoon.

Among your recent works is "Eyes in the Sky for Peacekeeping: The Emergence of UAVs in UN Operations".

What is your vision of the presence and use of surveillance drones in UN's peacekeeping missions?

Prof. Walter Dorn: Thank you for your question.

[English]

I think that the UN is making tremendous progress in technology. In the last five years, it's made more than in the previous 25 years that I've been observing the UN and its use of technology.

It acquired its first drone as a mission asset, and I should add these are unarmed surveillance drones. They are there to be the eyes and ears of the United Nations and not to be firing.

It's very important that the UN be supported in this initiative. They went from the original half dozen drones in 2013 to over 100 drones now. Countries with technological expertise could help the UN so that they can better use them for peace missions. If we provide an air or reconnaissance capability through helicopters or other means, they can also have cameras attached that could be integrated with the UN's own drones so that we had a much better situational awareness in these conflict areas.

[Translation]

Mr. Yves Robillard: Thank you.

You submitted a brief on NATO's Science for Peace and Security Programme. What could Canada's concrete contributions to that program be, and to what areas of expertise should we contribute?

[English]

Prof. Walter Dorn: Under the science for peace and security program, we could help partner Canadian scientists with scientists from Ukraine and other partnership for peace countries in order to do scientific research relating to security. That could help both our own capacity in the scientific domain as well as help employment and capacity in the partnership for peace countries. We could link them up. We could use some of the findings to better improve security in the world, as well. There are some amazing programs for detecting mines and for looking at robotics that can come out of these programs. That would be well worth the investment in money and time.

Mr. Yves Robillard: Thank you.

The Chair: You have another minute and 30 seconds. If Mr. Gerretsen...?

Mr. Yves Robillard: I'll share with my colleague.

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: Mr. Dorn, do you know how many of NATO's peacekeeping troops are women?

Prof. Walter Dorn: I do not have that figure. I have not seen it released by NATO. The NATO peacekeeping contribution is currently the KFOR mission in Kosovo, so it would be a question of looking at what percentage of the KFOR mission—

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: Of Canada's contribution, do you know what percentage would be women?

Prof. Walter Dorn: Yes, it's approximately 15% to 20%.

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: Can you give some suggestions as to what could be done, both internally within Canada and perhaps within the NATO perspective, to break down some of the barriers to involvement of women in peacekeeping? How do we increase the number of women peacekeeping troops?

Prof. Walter Dorn: I think we should start deploying. Take the number we have now and double or triple it almost immediately. Let them get experience, so that when we do deploy the promised 750 uniformed personnel, or up to that limit, we have people who are already experienced, and put in some high-quality women military officers and police officers.

By the way, on the 15% to 20% figure, the UN counts by uniformed personnel, not just military, in the current UN's 4%. Women police officers have distinguished themselves in the Haiti mission very well and have shown why there are advantages for UN missions in having more women in the field.

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: You would agree, then, that we should be adding more women, would you?

Prof. Walter Dorn: Absolutely.

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: Thank you. That's probably it.

The Chair: Mr. Hoback is next.

Mr. Randy Hoback (Prince Albert, CPC): Thank you, Mr. Dorn, for being here.

It's hard to know where to go. There are so many things I'd like to ask, and five minutes isn't enough time. Maybe I'll start off with your ideas on how NATO would go about de-escalating what's going on in Ukraine and seeing some resolution that would create a solution all parties could live with. Do you have any quick thoughts on that?

I have about 10 more questions for you.

Prof. Walter Dorn: Sure. The Russians will say that NATO would only escalate by playing a greater role in Ukraine. In fact, however, if you look at the capacity to show both hard and soft power, NATO would play an important role in the hard power, showing that attacks in Ukraine are considered a threat to the security of the NATO alliance. That should be giving Russia second thoughts about intervening.

• (1615)

Mr. Randy Hoback: As far as Canada allowing Ukraine to have the armaments they require to defend themselves is concerned, then, would you say at this point that it would make sense?

Prof. Walter Dorn: Yes, but I think we should be very judicious in the choice of armaments. We don't want them to fall into the wrong hands; they have to be provided in a very professional fashion, with proper command and control. I am in favour, though, of starting to provide some weapons to Ukraine.

Mr. Randy Hoback: My colleague talked about drones. I was at a conference a couple of years ago. They were using drones to provide humanitarian aid in areas where conflict was ongoing and you couldn't get people in, but you could get medication in through drones. They had issues with securing those drones and making sure they weren't swiped and used for other purposes.

I'm curious, as you talk about hybrid warfare and cyber-technologies, about NATO's role in cyber-technologies. They've been relatively hesitant until the last few years to even acknowledge that there's a cyber issue.

How would you suggest Canada show leadership with NATO in cyber-technologies? As we listen to the President in the U.S. talk about upping our ante, the amount of money we spend, and with the issues we have with spending money here in Canada and getting it through the process, is this a way we might actually add value?

Prof. Walter Dorn: Speaking about drones, it's an excellent area in which the western countries can help Ukraine get better situational awareness of what's happening. The OSCE has flown drones as part of its mission in Ukraine but has found that they've been hijacked or been shot at and that sort of thing. The OSCE, then, also needs support to back its ceasefire monitoring in Ukraine.

As far as cyber goes, NATO has a centre of excellence in Tallinn dealing with the cyber domain. The centre produced the "Tallinn Manual 2.0", which is really the best document on the laws in the cyber domain.

Mr. Randy Hoback: When did that get up and running, just for my inexperience? When did it come into place in Tallinn? Was it just in the last couple of years?

Prof. Walter Dorn: It was in Tallinn in 2008, a few years ago.

Mr. Randy Hoback: Have resources been flowing to it in an appropriate manner, in your opinion?

Prof. Walter Dorn: We could always do more, because the cyber domain is an emerging domain. It's hard to catch up with the challenges, and each piece of breaking news about what the Russians have been doing relating to the U.S. election means that we all the more have to put a huge effort into trying to prevent such activities; it's a form of self-defence.

Mr. Randy Hoback: Then in regard to other threats that NATO may look at or be experiencing, do you see anything on the radar that maybe NATO should take a little more time and look at a little more seriously? Is there something they haven't given the appropriate time to or shone a light on appropriately that is a potential threat to NATO that they need to acknowledge?

Prof. Walter Dorn: Do you mean threats besides cyber and—

Mr. Randy Hoback: Cyber or—

Prof. Walter Dorn: Yes, okay.

Hybrid warfare is an old form of warfare that is finding new ways of being used, and it's extremely dangerous. It uses your own sense of humanity and dignity to try to co-opt and coerce people to not engage, as gradually the military initiative is being taken in a very deliberate fashion. The seizure of Crimea was done using hybrid warfare. They used the fact that the Ukrainian soldiers did not want to shoot at other individuals to gradually take over the Ukrainian bases and stations. We have to find means to deal with that.

Here's a key area where there's a new area for a revolution, and that's non-lethal weapons. To deal with the cyber-threats as well as the threats of hybrid warfare, we need means to deal with that gradual escalation of the use of force that stops short of using lethal force.

Mr. Randy Hoback: I agree with you on that. Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you.

Just to respect your time, I'm going to give Mr. Spengemann three minutes, and we'll get you out of here at 25 after the hour.

Mr. Sven Spengemann (Mississauga—Lakeshore, Lib.): Thank you, Mr. Chair, very much. I'll use those three minutes judiciously.

Professor Dorn, thank you very much for being with us. I'm going to put a statement to you that comes, to my knowledge, out of the

Jim Baker and Condoleezza Rice administration, Bush I, and it's the statement that we don't nation-build. To what extent is that still true, whether as a function of official policy or as a matter of fact on the ground?

Also, could you circle back to some of what you said in terms of the whole-of-government approach pre-conflict, conflict, post-conflict and the tentacles that NATO has at its disposal to connect with other institutions like the UN and OSCE institutionally?

• (1620)

Prof. Walter Dorn: Well, I think the Bush administration had to swallow its words when it had to do major nation-building in Iraq and Afghanistan. It just goes to show how you can't take military action without some building afterwards in the continuum that you mentioned.

This is a role in which the U.S. has not proven particularly effective. In fact, I think the long, slow approach of the United Nations is much more effective. That's an area where Canada can also make a major contribution and receive gratitude from the United States if we're going to be committing to the long term, just as we have done in Haiti. The U.S. was very worried about boat people coming to the shores of Florida and were quite happy that Canada has been engaged in the initiative to try to keep the Haitian problem from overflowing and causing massive migration.

I think we can see that as an expertise for Canada. It's just that we ourselves have to get back to where we once were with places like the Pearson Peacekeeping Centre to be able to do the training.

Mr. Sven Spengemann: I'm sorry to interrupt, but what are the key institutional connecting points between NATO and the UN and NATO and the OSCE and potentially other organizations, even like the OECD, depending on how far down the root cause question you would like to go?

Prof. Walter Dorn: We need more peacekeeping training centres. There have been so many since the Pearson Peacekeeping Centre was founded, but there needs to be specialization, for instance, in nation-building. How exactly do you do that?

The Security Council is now thinking about sequenced mandates. How do you sequence a mandate? What are the best steps to do first, and how do you customize it for specific countries? Hopefully, we'll see nation-building done in Libya, in Yemen, eventually in Syria, and you'll need to have a good study of lessons learned and novel ways of tackling these very difficult questions.

Mr. Sven Spengemann: In my final 30 seconds, why do you think NATO is behind the UN on the status of women in peacekeeping and security?

Prof. Walter Dorn: I think that NATO has a history of being a macho organization that prides itself on the ability to use force and on being capable of using force. It takes a cultural shift from that to see that integrating women will still keep you an effective fighting force and actually increase your capacity to do many other things, including nation-building.

Mr. Sven Spengemann: Thank you very much.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: Thank you.

Dr. Dorn, thank you very much for coming. We very much appreciate your comments and your opinions on the Canada–NATO front.

I'm going to suspend for a minute so we can say our good-byes, and we'll come back for committee business in camera.

[Proceedings continue in camera]

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