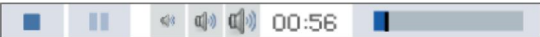


# Munich Security Conference **MSC**

## Münchener Sicherheitskonferenz

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Organization:

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## Speech at the 45th Munich Security Conference

02/08/2009

### I. Introduction

Vielen dank für die einladung und die gelegen heit in dieser wichtigen kunferenz teil zu nehmen. Ich habe die erfahrung sehr wertvoll gefunden. Delighted to be on this panel. Afghanistan is a top priority for Canada. And not just because we have been committed there since 2001 and currently have over 2800 Canadian Forces personnel deployed, making possible our reconstruction and diplomatic efforts. But because our collective engagement in Afghanistan speaks to the hard core essence of NATO - common commitment to democratic and humanitarian values; to burden sharing and to building and projecting security in partnership with all those who share our goals. Afghanistan, in my view, is not something somehow exterior to the nature and purpose of NATO. It is **exactly** the sort of mission that NATO must be able to deliver in the 21st century. We are an alliance, with a unique combination of capability, common purpose and perhaps the political will -- but **only** if we engage it. I'm concerned that we are setting up false dichotomies in the Alliance: a *global* NATO that does Afghanistan type missions; an *old* NATO that stays at home and minds its borders.

My view is that the international security environment is too complex for these sorts of stark divisions and false choices. We need to engage all of the attributes of NATO and our individual nations – and fix the areas where we are faltering and that are in need of refurbishment or repair – in order to be effective defence and security partners for our Allies, but also for the global community.

When it comes to Afghanistan and NATO, we, collectively, have had a lot of



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experience. But, to quote TS Eliot, I am increasingly worried that we have “had the experience, but missed the meaning.” There is obviously a lot we could talk about today, but I would like to focus on Afghanistan and NATO – not the *mission*; but the *meaning*.

## II. Afghanistan: The Comprehensive Approach in Action

I'd like to make three key points to feed into this discussion:

**First:** Canada has been on the leading edge of putting into practise what NATO has come to call the “Comprehensive Approach”. This is something I've been engaged on since I was Foreign Minister and, now, as Defence Minister. I strongly support the ‘comprehensive approach.’ But I'd like to suggest that this is really nothing more than what I would call a “Common Sense Approach”. If we have learned nothing else from conflicts around the world – whether Afghanistan, the Middle East, Africa – we must have learned that security is the necessary precursor for sustainable development; democratic governance and prosperity. But military and civilian efforts must be integrated. There is no military solution to the insurgency in Afghanistan – any more than there is elsewhere.

Military engagement is simply not sufficient in and of itself. Long term security cannot exist in the absence of justice and prosperity. And this isn't sophisticated strategic doctrine. It is common political and human sense that tells us that people in war torn, fragile, disintegrating or disintegrated societies want stability; want good governance from their leadership; want their dignity; and, frankly, want hope.

What's my take-away from this experience? If we don't go comprehensive – with an integrated civ/mil, multi-national, and multi-organizational approach, and all that means in terms of building, rebuilding and restoring governance, prosperity and hope – we put our mission fundamentally at risk and we should seriously consider whether we go at all.

**Second:** Critical to our progress – on the ground, in our planning, in our communication with our partners and publics – is unity of effort at every level.

This means looking beyond narrow interests to ensure that soldiers, aid workers, diplomats on the ground, commanders, senior officials, and decision makers all have to be joined up. Focusing all effort for maximum effect.

Again, this sounds pretty obvious. But the fact is, I 'm not sure we can say that we have yet developed or enjoyed real unity of effort in this mission within our individual national efforts or acting together.

Within NATO it's been difficult. We have somehow become an “à la carte” Alliance. Some allies take table d'hôte; others stay with the appetizers – or just jump to desert. And in the international community – with and through the UN - we simply have not had the joining of effort we need to meet the challenges of these complex missions.

We need to muster the individual and collective political will to act. And to act in coherent, coordinated ways. If this means taking new approaches, building new capacities or looking critically at our decision making tools and approaches. We should do it.

Afghanistan is not the first complex conflict environment we have worked in together. But we must not act as if each time *is* the first time: for NATO; for the UN; for the EU; for the OSCE. These organizations are all key instruments of international stability. We must get them working together.

Finally, the **third lesson** driven home by Canada's experience in Afghanistan is the importance of a regional approach. We only have to look to the historic role played by both NATO and the EU in fostering the peaceful political transitions and prosperity in Europe to know how fundamentally important regional players outside the main area of conflict are for any sustainable solution.

Or to transformation of the Balkans from a region of conflict to an increasingly integrated European neighbourhood. That's why I am glad that our colleague from Pakistan joins us today. There is no sustainable solution to Afghanistan that does not include Pakistan. Pakistan is an essential partner in global and regional stability and must play its full role. In regard to our common objectives in Afghanistan, in South Asia and well beyond.

While the intersection of interests can be enormously complex on a regional scale, we ignore the regional dimension at our peril. Experience has shown that while international and global action is key, there is simply no substitute for the constructive engagement and inclusion of regional players in building sustainable solutions to conflict and instability.

Just consider how crucial it is in the Israeli-Palestinian equation that neighbours – well beyond the current peace partners of Egypt and Jordan – engage to build and support sustainable peace. That is why NATO needs to continue its efforts to reach out and to engage Afghanistan's neighbours in the region. We need the insights and the buy-in of regional partners if we are to be successful in Afghanistan, or elsewhere.

We need to move to a notion of “**inclusive security**.”

### III. Conclusion

Finally, to close:

In spite of the challenges, I would suggest that, if Afghanistan was a litmus test for NATO, the Alliance has already passed.

Simply put, no other organization could have accomplished in Afghanistan what NATO already has. It has proved that it can adapt. It can be flexible. But it's a real effort. It needs continued work and attention.

We need to remember that NATO is not a multilateral institution. It is an Alliance. There is a qualitative difference – or there should be. We need to

build on our experience, and take the Alliance, to the next step.

NATO must be an Alliance that is not only capable of *adapting* to a fluid and uncertain security environment, but one that can also play a leadership role in *shaping* that environment.

We must be prepared – politically and practically – to conduct robust forward operations, to deal with security challenges where they originate. To protect ourselves, our Allies, our friends in need, we will simply have to continue to build more robust, interoperable, and flexible forces that can be deployed quickly outside our borders, often at great distances, to meet unforeseen challenges.

Above all, if we want NATO to continue to play a leadership role in transatlantic security – as Canada certainly does – we must *lead*, by working harder to welcome cooperation with partner nations and organizations, while doing more to focus all of the tremendous resources and talent we can bring together to have greatest effect.

Even in a benign environment, this test would be a daunting one. And the environment is certainly not benign. But I am very confident we have the creativity, resolve and determination to succeed.

Thank You

Danke

Merci

**Check against delivery!**

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