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PM joins world leaders in supporting NATO's commitment to Afghanistan

Canada achieves its objectives at a historic NATO Summit

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Strasbourg, France

Prime Minister Stephen Harper today emphasized the importance of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) remaining committed to Afghanistan. He was speaking at the conclusion of the two-day NATO summit held in Strasbourg, France and Kehl, Germany.

“Canada’s principal objective at this Summit was to emphasize the importance of the commitment of NATO and its Allies to securing and stabilizing Afghanistan,” said the Prime Minister, who was joined by Minister of National Defence Peter MacKay and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lawrence Cannon at the summit. “This was Canada’s key priority going into the summit and it remains Canada’s key priority today.”

The Prime Minister welcomed the announcement by the United States that it will provide more resources for both the civilian and military aspects of the mission, and continue to work with the Afghan Government and all partners.

“We are delighted that President Obama consulted with us in the development of his new approach and priorities for this mission,” added the Prime Minister. “We are pleased that this new strategy pursues objectives that are consistent with our own efforts to have the Afghan people assume responsibility for their own security as soon as possible.”

Prime Minister Harper used the summit to raise Canada’s significant concerns regarding the protection of the rights and opportunities of women in Afghanistan.

“Canada continues to call on the Afghan government, in the strongest of terms, to honour its human rights treaty obligations under international law, including respect for the equality of women before the law,” said Prime Minister Harper. “We cannot state strongly enough our concern for the rights of women in Afghanistan.”

The Prime Minister also welcomed Albania and Croatia into NATO as well as France’s decision to return to the alliance’s military command structure.

Canada was a founding member of NATO, and Canadians are proud to take part in the celebration of NATO’s 60th anniversary. The Prime Minister reiterated Canada’s support for the Alliance going forward.

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