

**GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO THE 14<sup>th</sup> REPORT OF THE STANDING  
COMMITTEE ON NATIONAL DEFENCE ‘RESPONDING TO RUSSIAN AGGRESSION  
AGAINST UKRAINE, MOLDOVA AND GEORGIA IN THE BLACK SEA REGION’**

## **INTRODUCTION**

The Government of Canada has carefully reviewed the report of the Standing Committee on National Defence (hereafter referred to as the Committee) and thanks its members for their interest. The Government appreciates that the Committee has devoted considerable attention to this important issue and welcomes the continuing interest of the Committee in Canada's engagement in Ukraine, Moldova and Georgia.

The Government is pleased to note that many of the Committee's recommendations are largely consistent with Canada's current approaches.

Below is the Government's response to specific recommendations made by the Committee.

### **RECOMMENDATION 1**

That Canada facilitate and strengthen parliamentary dialogue between Canada and Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine.

### **RESPONSE**

The Government of Canada supports this recommendation, underlining that Canada has consistently supported various forms of Parliamentary dialogue between Canada and Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine. Canada has been well-represented at a number of parliamentary exchanges over the past years which have involved Ukraine, Georgia and Moldova.

The Canadian NATO Parliamentary Association has participated in a number of parliamentary exchanges with Ukraine, including meetings of the Ukraine-NATO Interparliamentary Council (June 2015, November 2015, June 2016, April 2017, March 2018). More recently, the Ukraine-Canada Parliamentary Friendship Group - an all-party delegation of the Verkhovna Rada - visited Ottawa in June 2018. In May 2017, a Canadian delegation also participated in the NATO Parliamentary Assembly held in Tbilisi, Georgia.

Canada has also been well-represented in the various activities of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly (PA). The OSCE PA meets three times a year and is an important forum to establish and develop dialogue with other Parliamentary delegations including Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine. It is currently presided by George Tsereteli (Georgia), and the Canadian delegation, headed by MP Dr. Hedy Fry, is very active and engaged. In her capacity as Special Representative on Gender Issues, Dr. Fry travelled to Ukraine in the summer of 2018. In July 2016, a delegation of eight Canadian parliamentarians attended the Assembly's PSCE PA Annual Session in Tbilisi, Georgia.

The Canadian delegation to the OSCE PA participated in election observation missions that monitored the presidential and parliamentary elections in Ukraine in both May and October 2014. The Canadian delegation also participated in an election observation mission that monitored the parliamentary elections held in Moldova in November 2014.

The Embassy of Canada to Turkey in Ankara, which represents Canadian interests in Georgia, will be providing funding for a visit by the Parliamentary Centre, a Canadian NGO based out of Ottawa, to Georgia in March 2019. The Centre will travel to Tbilisi to conduct a needs assessment of the Georgian Parliament to learn how the Parliamentary Centre can best provide capacity-building support to Georgian parliamentarians as their system transitions from a presidential to a parliamentary system, as well as to consider the appetite for targeted training

on security/defence/intelligence service oversight. The ultimate aim of the visit is to explore opportunities for future cooperation aimed at strengthening Georgia's parliament as it moves from a presidential to a full parliamentary system. The funding for the Centre's accommodation and travel will come from Global Affairs Canada's Post Initiative Fund (PIF).

The visit of then-Treasury Board President Scott Brison to Georgia in July 2018, together with the Prime Minister's Special Envoy on LGBTQ rights, Randy Boissonault, MP, fostered ties with Georgian parliamentarians. Both then-President Brison and MP Boissonault met with Georgian MPs among others and discussed how to improve and support the protection of LGBTQ rights, strengthening transparency, and tackling corruption among other issues.

## **RECOMMENDATION 2**

That the Government of Canada issue a notice of early renewal of Operation UNIFIER as a signal of continued support between Canada and Ukraine.

## **RESPONSE**

Canada's support to Ukraine is unwavering. Since 2015, the CAF has provided much valued individual and collective training to the Security Forces of Ukraine through Operation UNIFIER. The Government of Canada remains committed to continue working with Ukraine and other Allies and Partners to identify how best to support the individual and collective training needs of the Security Forces of Ukraine, as well as Kyiv's reform agenda in the defence and security sectors.

## **RECOMMENDATION 3**

That the Government of Canada continue to provide effective and relevant military training to the Ukrainian Armed Forces and that it look for opportunities to expand the type of training and support provided by the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) through Operation UNIFIER beyond March 2019.

## **RESPONSE**

The Government of Canada is committed to providing effective and relevant military training to the Security Forces of Ukraine. Since 2015, the most visible and tangible expression of Canada's military and defence assistance to Ukraine via Operation UNIFIER is the teaching of

vital skills to Ukrainian personnel, which enhances their ability to succeed on the battlefield. Canada's experience of working with Ukraine through Operation UNIFIER has underscored the effectiveness of tactical training provided by the CAF, which helped build a more capable fighting force in Ukraine. Canada's efforts are also helping Ukraine meet its commitment to adopt Euro-Atlantic standards and principles by supporting the development of professional and capable security forces. The training provided by the CAF through Operation UNIFIER is highly valued by both Ukrainians and other Allies and partners.

#### **RECOMMENDATION 4**

That the Government of Canada demand the immediate release of all illegally captured Ukrainian sailors, release the Ukrainian Navy ships, and restore free passage through the Kerch Strait.

#### **RESPONSE**

The Government of Canada agrees with this recommendation. On November 26, 2018, the Minister of Foreign Affairs issued a statement condemning Russia's actions against Ukraine in the Sea of Azov and Kerch Strait and called on Russia to immediately de-escalate, release the captured crew and vessels and not impede passage through the Kerch Strait.

On November 30, 2018, Canada, along with its G7 partners, issued a statement expressing concern over Russia's actions against Ukraine in the Kerch Strait and surrounding waters. G7 foreign ministers also called on Russia to release the detained crew and vessels and refrain from impeding lawful passage through the Kerch Strait.

In a November 27, 2018, statement by the North Atlantic Council, NATO Allies, including Canada, called on Russia to release the Ukrainian sailors and ships it seized, without delay. Canada also regularly calls for the release of the sailors and ships in its interventions at relevant North Atlantic Council meetings at NATO, including during a NATO-Russia Council meeting on January 25, 2019.

The Government, via its mission to the OSCE, has also regularly called for the immediate and unconditional release of the vessels and their crew in weekly OSCE Permanent Council statements since the incident on 25 November. The Minister of Foreign Affairs also demanded their release at the OSCE Ministerial Council Meeting in Milan on 6-7 Dec 2018.

Canada is actively engaged in discussions with its partners, including Ukraine, on how to de-escalate tensions in and around the Kerch Strait.

#### **RECOMMENDATION 5**

That the Government of Canada demand the release of all Ukrainian, Moldovan and Georgian political prisoners held by Russia.

## **RESPONSE**

The Government of Canada takes note of the recommendation to demand the release of all Moldovan and Georgian political prisoners held by Russia, while underlining that it has been active in demanding the release of all Ukrainian political prisoners held in Russia. Canada has spoken out on Russia's illegal detention of Ukrainians from Crimea—and on the case of Oleg Sentsov specifically—on a number of occasions and has demanded their safe return to Ukraine. Through Canada's Permanent Mission to the OSCE, we regularly draw attention to Ukrainian political prisoners and illegal detainees held by Russia and call for their release in weekly Permanent Council statements.

Canada has taken a firm stand in condemning unlawful and arbitrary detention and arrest, and has publicly raised concerns about apparent bias and politically motivated prosecution. On March 16, 2018, the Minister of Foreign Affairs issued a statement on the fourth anniversary of Russia's illegal annexation of Crimea, calling for the release of Mr. Sentsov and all political prisoners held by Russia. In June 2018, Canada signed onto a joint letter with like-minded partners at the United Nations (UN) calling for further UN engagement on the issue of Ukrainians unlawfully detained by Russia and for the UN Secretary-General to use his good offices and mediation to facilitate the release of all Ukrainians illegally detained by Russia. In July 2018, Canada's Embassy to Russia signed and put forth a joint appeal with like-minded partners in Moscow addressed to the Russian authorities regarding the case of Mr. Sentsov.

As a member of the OSCE "Group 10 on Ukraine" and the "Friends of Georgia" at the OSCE, Canada works consistently to keep Russian aggression against Ukraine and Georgia high on the OSCE agenda, including most recently delivering the Friends of Georgia statement at the OSCE Ministerial Council in December on behalf of the 14 members of the Friends. We continue to monitor the situation with regards to both Moldovan and Georgian political prisoners held by Russia.

## **RECOMMENDATION 6**

That the Government of Canada support Ukraine, Moldova, and Georgia in their efforts to reduce corruption, and enhance accountability and transparency in government.

## **RESPONSE**

The International Monetary Fund lists corruption as one of the top risks to Ukraine's economic development, along with the on-going conflict in eastern Ukraine. With Canada aiming to support Ukraine in achieving stability, security and stability, Canada's development programming is grounded in principles of good governance and the rule of law, helping Ukraine strengthen its institutions and practices, free of corruption, nepotism and fraud. To achieve this, anti-corruption efforts are integrated in all of Canada's Bilateral Development projects in Ukraine. Supporting the reform process of the Government of Ukraine, Canada's development programming aims to strengthen legislative and policy frameworks, as well as institutions, processes and practices with adequate controls and oversight. For example, Canada helped the Ministry of Finance launch an automatic Value-Added Tax (VAT) refund system and electronic register of VAT refund payments, which substantially increased transparency of VAT repayments from the state budget and removed many long-lasting corruption schemes.

In addition to crosscutting anticorruption efforts, Canada helps Ukraine implement politically-sensitive yet critical anti-corruption-specific reforms. For example, Canada supported the establishment of the High Anti-Corruption Court, including funding the membership of a former Canadian judge on Ukraine's Public Council of International Experts - an independent non-governmental advisory body with a legal mandate to assist in the selection of the judges of the High Anti-Corruption Court. Canada is also strengthening the corruption complaints mechanisms within various ministries, including the Ministry of Health facing a greater number of public sector complaints during the reform process. Lastly, Canada is supporting a number of institutions that are systematically fighting corruption, including the State Fiscal Service and the National Agency for the Prevention of Corruption.

Canada is actively involved in the efforts to enhance accountability and transparency within Ukraine's security and defence sector. Through our membership in the Defence Reform Advisory Board, Canada contributes to enhanced transparency within Ukraine's Ministry of Defence, including on such critical areas as budgetary processing and military procurement. Through continued engagement with the relevant decision-makers, Canada remains a strong advocate for increased civilian (parliamentary) oversight of the security and defence sectors, including within the Armed Forces, the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the Security Service of Ukraine. These efforts are coordinated with the other major partners, particularly the NATO Liaison Office, and serve to reform Ukraine's security sector in the light of its Euro-Atlantic aspirations.

Canada's efforts on anti-corruption recognize the importance of and, therefore, prioritize public awareness and oversight. In addition to Canada's efforts helping the Government of Ukraine at the national and local levels to increase transparency and participatory and consultative decision-making processes, Canada strengthens the capacity of the Ukrainian Parliament, media (investigative journalism), civil society, as well as supports civic engagement and civic action, enabling the Ukrainian people to engage, influence and oversee the decision-making process, as well as hold their government to account.

On Georgia, Canada has concentrated its Canada Fund for Local Initiatives (CFLI) programming in 2018/19 on peace and security (focused on peacebuilding and peace journalism in the Abkhazia and South Ossetia context) and gender equality (focused on developing gender-sensitive standards in the education system and countering sexual harassment in the workplace). CFLI funding in 2017-18 in Georgia focused on raising awareness on early child marriage and sexual reproductive health; advocating for the use of renewable energy technologies; and promoting non-violent conflict resolution among IDP communities.

In July 2018, then-Treasury Board President Scott Brison visited Georgia as head of Canada's delegation to the Open Government Partnership. This visit came ahead of the transfer from Georgia of the chair of the Open Government Partnership (OGP) to Canada in 2018 – 2019. During then-President Brison's visit and throughout our membership in the OGP, Canada continues to encourage Georgia's active participation in and adoption of best practices from the OGP to help improve Georgia's transparency and anti-corruption practices. Georgia's OGP

membership also encourages and supports Georgian Civil Society to participate in programs such as election observations and consultative legislation processes.

Georgia was the first country outside of the EU that the Prime Minister's Special Envoy to the EU and Europe, Ambassador Stéphane Dion, visited. In October 2017, Ambassador Dion met with Georgia's Prime Minister, Vice-Speaker of the Parliament, Foreign Minister, and civil society and delivered an address at an Atlantic Council Roundtable. During each interaction, with Georgian officials and members of civil society and the public, Ambassador Dion was careful to underline that Canada stands shoulder to shoulder with Georgia in its democratic reform efforts. Ambassador Dion's visit demonstrated visible and outspoken Canadian support to Georgia at a critical period for Georgia, as it contends with Russian messaging that attempts to deter its democratic reforms as well as continued Russian occupation of nearly 20% of its territory.

Canada's has concentrated its Canada Fund for Local Initiatives (CFLI) programming in 2018/19 on support for free media and investigative journalism as press freedom has been consistently undermined and threatened in Moldova. Previous CFLI funding has supported civil society efforts to encourage women and members of minority groups to become actively involved in the democratic process as well as promoting the efforts of human right defenders to freely organize activities.

## **RECOMMENDATION 7**

That the Government of Canada increase sanctions under the *Justice for Victims of Corrupt Foreign Officials Act (Sergei Magnitsky Law)* against those connected to the ongoing aggression against Ukraine, Moldova, and Georgia, and that it specifically list the Russian agents involved in the attacks against Alexander Valterovich Litvinenko and Sergei Viktorovich Skripal.

## **RESPONSE**

The Government of Canada takes note of the recommendation to expand Canada's sanctions measures as necessary and in coordination with partners and allies. Canada has imposed a broad range of sanctions, including listing over 300 Russian and Ukrainian individuals and entities for their role in contributing to Russia's illegal annexation of Crimea and ongoing support to the insurgency in Eastern Ukraine, in regulations adopted pursuant to the *Special Economic Measures Act* (SEMA). These measures remain in place until repealed, and their duration is clearly linked to Russia's complete implementation of its commitments under the Minsk agreements and respect for Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity. Canada is judicious when it chooses to deploy sanctions and is committed to their effective and coordinated use, working closely with our international partners and allies, including the G7, NATO Allies, and the EU, to maintain appropriate pressure on Russia.

The *Justice for Victims of Corrupt Foreign Officials Act* (JVCFOA), along with recent amendments to the SEMA provides Canada with new tools to respond to cases of gross violations of human rights and acts of significant corruption. At this time, Canada has imposed sanctions on 70 foreign nationals under the *Justice for Victims of corrupt Foreign Officials Regulations* who, in the opinion of the Governor in Council, are responsible for or complicit in

gross violations of internationally-recognized human rights or are foreign public officials, or their associates, who are responsible for or complicit in acts of significant corruption. The list includes 30 Russian nationals for their involvement in the Sergei Magnitsky case.

## **RECOMMENDATION 8**

That the Government of Canada consider sanctions against Russia in the financial and energy sectors in response to its escalation of hostilities against Ukraine.

## **RESPONSE**

The Government of Canada takes note of this recommendation, underlining that both the financial and energy sectors have been targeted by the SEMA (Russia) Regulations, and that Canada has worked closely with its like-minded partners to coordinate respective sanctions regimes. The coordination strategy has two purposes, one is to maximize the impact on the persons (individuals and entities) sanctioned as much as possible; the other is to ensure coherence among our like-minded partners. Coherence of sanctions regimes is important in reducing inadvertent advantages for countries who have not sanctioned a particular person, and in avoiding the creation of incentives for companies to move their operations to like-minded jurisdictions where the transactions would not be sanctioned.

While there is not an embargo in place for the Russian Market, Sanctions against Russia were enacted by Canada and its like-minded partners in response to Russia's illegal annexation of Crimea. Canada's position has been that the depth and duration of sanctions is tied to the Russian regime respecting the commitments it has agreed to in the Minsk Peace Process.

The most restrictive listing under the various Schedules of the SEMA (Russia) Regulations is Schedule 1 – which is in effect a full dealings prohibition. Schedule 1 prohibits any person in Canada, or any Canadian outside of Canada to deal in the property of any person (individual or entity) listed under Schedule 1. Canada has listed 11 Russian banks and investment firms under Schedule 1. These listings are aligned with Canada's like-minded partners in that the US lists all of these banks and investment firms, while the EU lists one of them.

In response to an increase in deadly clashes between Ukrainian security forces and pro-Russian separatists, and in response to the downing of the Malaysian Airlines flight on July 17, 2014, the Government of Canada updated the SEMA (Russia) Regulations on July 24, 2014. This update expanded the SEMA (Russia) Regulations to include two new Schedules to restrict the credit available to Russian banks and energy companies. Schedule 2 restricts financing for new debt of longer than 30 days maturity to designated persons listed in Schedule 2, to the property of designated persons listed in Schedule 2, or to the interests or rights in property of a designated person listed in Schedule 2. Schedule 3 restricts financing for new debt of longer than 90 days maturity to designated persons listed in Schedule 3, to the property of designated persons listed in Schedule 3, or to the interests or rights in property of a designated person listed in Schedule 3. The SEMA (Russia) Regulations currently list 6 banks under Schedule 2, and 6 energy companies under Schedule 3; the US sanctions regime mirrors all those listings, while the EU sanctions capture 8 of those listings.

Further, on December 19, 2014 the SEMA (Russia) Regulations were again expanded in response to reported violations of ceasefire agreements made in Minsk, Belarus on September 5 and 19, 2014; and in response to November elections held in the Donetsk and Luhansk “People’s Republics”. These SEMA (Russia) Regulation updates introduced new prohibitions on oil exploration or production, and clarified the scope of the new debt financing and new equity financing provisions by spelling out the specific instruments or interests captured by these restrictions. These restrictions were extended to bonds, loans, debentures, extensions of credit, loan guarantees, letters of credit, bank drafts, bankers’ acceptances, discount notes, treasury bills, commercial paper and other similar instruments. Further, the sectoral prohibitions on oil exploration and production was broadened to include a new Schedule which listed the Harmonized Commodity Description and Coding Systems codes for goods prohibited for export – Schedule 4.

This expansion of prohibitions on oil exploration and production, as elucidated in the December 2014 Regulatory Impact Assessment Statement to continue to collaborate in imposing additional coordinated sanctions on Russia, including sanctions targeted at key sectors of the Russian economy. This list of goods is prohibited for export by any person in Canada and any person outside of Canada to export sell, supply or ship, to Russia or to any person in Russia for use in offshore oil exploration or production at a depth greater than 500 m; oil exploration or production in the Arctic; or shale oil exploration or production. The Schedule 4 list includes 18 items critical for oil exploration and production – ranging from pipes and drilling tools to mobile drilling derricks and submersible drilling platforms.

The Government of Canada continuously monitors the situation in Ukraine, and actively considers calibrating our sanctions to appropriately respond to Russian aggression, while working in concert with our like-minded partners.

### **RECOMMENDATION 9**

That the Government of Canada negotiate defence cooperation agreements with Moldova and Georgia.

### **RESPONSE**

The Government of Canada agrees that it is important to bolster defence cooperation and participate in defence activities with key Partners and Allies in the Black Sea region. The Government of Canada continues to review its core engagements with Moldova and Georgia to determine whether defence cooperation agreements are needed to further our defence relationships.

Canada’s bilateral cooperation with Moldova in the field of defence and security remains modest but positive. Positive bilateral defence relations with Moldova and other countries in the Black Sea region contribute to regional peace and security.

Defence relations between Canada and Georgia are positive but very modest, based primarily on Georgia’s membership in the Department of National Defence’s Military Training and Cooperation Programme. Through this program, the Department of National Defence has

contributed to the professionalization of Georgia's military and enhanced its ability to operate in partnership with Western countries by providing training in the areas of language, staff officer development, peace support operations, exercise development, and military professional development. Since 2011, over 120 Georgian officers have participated in the Military Training and Cooperation Programme. Canada also contributes to the Substantial NATO-Georgia Package, which is a set of initiatives that aims at strengthening Georgia's defence capabilities and interoperability with NATO, and furthering its defence reforms, with the objective of reaching NATO standards. Canada's contribution comprises an expert advisor from the Royal Canadian Air Force on a rotational basis. Canada also provides a small contribution to the Aviation Project of the Substantive NATO-Georgia Package (SNGP).

### **RECOMMENDATION 10**

That the Government of Canada establish Canadian election observations missions in Ukraine, Moldova and Georgia.

### **RESPONSE**

The Government of Canada agrees with this recommendation. The promotion and protection of democratic rights is a priority for the Government of Canada, including the need to strengthen democratic norms and institutions around the world. For this reason, Global Affairs Canada continues to provide support for election observation by both international and domestic observers, and works with various organizations to do so.

On December 6, 2018, the Government of Canada announced up to \$24 million to facilitate projects supporting fair, transparent and legitimate democratic elections in Ukraine. This is part of Canada's commitment of up to \$50 million annually, in support of socio-economic programs to build a strong and accountable democracy, and contribute to peace and security in Ukraine and the region as a whole.

Electoral observation missions are key contributors to strengthening democratic institutions. Canada will support Ukraine by committing a significant number of Canadian observers to support both a Canadian bilateral observation mission and an Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) election observation mission. Canada's support will focus on the greater democratic participation of civil society, the empowerment of women in the democratic process and combatting the spread of disinformation and interference.

In Moldova, Canada will be participating in the upcoming Election Observation Mission (EOM) of the OSCE, by deploying more than 10 election observers selected from GAC missions in Europe. The OSCE is actively engaged in Moldova, and Election Observation Missions (EOM) are a critically important part of the mandate of the OSCE's Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights' (ODIHR), which Canada strongly supports. Canada's Embassy to Romania with accreditation to Moldova will lead a group of international observers in the upcoming Parliamentary elections on February 24th. The embassy previously led a group of short-term election observers from like-minded embassies during the 2016 presidential elections.

Canada's Embassy to Turkey, which is also accredited to Georgia, has participated in election observation missions by sending Government of Canada representatives as short-term election observers under allied Embassy observation teams, when the budget allows. The Government of Canada also provides financial support to local Georgian NGOs in support of local observation missions. Most recently, Canada provided over \$4,000 to a local Georgian NGO to train election observers for Georgia's presidential elections in October and November, 2018.

Canada remains committed to strengthening democratic values, institutions and processes around the world, to ensure that governments better serve all citizens, respect human rights, uphold the rule of law and encourage greater political participation, particularly by women and girls. Support for election observation will continue to be a key facet of this commitment.

#### **RECOMMENDATION 11**

That the Government of Canada advocate for an increased NATO presence to respond to Russian escalation in the Black Sea.

#### **RESPONSE**

The Government of Canada takes notes of this recommendation. Canada, with its NATO Allies, calls for calm and restraint while reiterating our full support for Ukraine's sovereignty and integrity within its internationally recognized borders and territorial waters. Canada continues to demonstrate its commitment to peace and stability in the Black Sea region in the land, air and sea domains.

Within the land domain, the CAF continues to provide training to the Security Forces of Ukraine and support reform efforts of its defence and security sectors. Canada and its NATO Allies are committed to enhancing the coordination of efforts in Ukraine. In the maritime domain, Canada participates in Exercise SEABREEZE, a multinational exercise in the Black Sea Region that focuses on enhancing interoperability and combined response capabilities. In the air domain, Canada continues to play an important role in reinforcing the NATO air policing efforts in the Black Sea region. Canada's first rotation was in April 2014, with subsequent rotations in 2017 and 2018. The next rotation is currently scheduled for September 2019.

#### **RECOMMENDATION 12**

That the Government of Canada support the aspirations of Ukraine, Moldova and Georgia to join the NATO alliance in due course.

#### **RESPONSE**

The Government of Canada supports the aspirations of Ukraine and Georgia to join NATO in due course. While Moldova does not aspire to join NATO due to neutrality enshrined in its Constitution, its government has been cooperating with the Alliance in several ways.

An independent, sovereign and stable Ukraine, firmly committed to democracy and the rule of law is key to Euro-Atlantic security. NATO Allies stand firm in their support for Ukraine's right to decide its own future and foreign policy course, free from outside interference. NATO Leaders support Ukraine's aspirations for NATO membership. Ukraine is a valued NATO partner and an

active contributor to NATO operations, which is why the CAF continues to support Ukraine so that it can become interoperable with NATO forces in the coming years.

Since 1993, Ukraine has been a member of DND's Military Training and Cooperation Programme. With nearly 2,300 Ukrainian military personnel having participated in the Military Training and Cooperation Programme, it is the single-largest recipient of training and funding in the programme. In the 2018-19 fiscal year, Ukraine has been allocated 266 positions on training activities that include in-Canada language training, staff officer training, peace support operations training, professional development, strategic leadership and international exercises. This training supports the development of NATO interoperability and accelerates the pace of Security Forces of Ukraine reforms.

Canada supports Georgia's long-term Euro-Atlantic aspirations, and echoes NATO's previous commitments to Georgia and the continuing relevance of its "Open Door" enlargement policy, which states that membership is open to any European state in a position to further NATO principles and contribute to the security of the Euro-Atlantic area. From a military perspective, Canada currently provides modest support to Georgia through the Military Training and Cooperation Programme, and contributes to the Substantial NATO-Georgia Package, which aims to facilitate better military alignment with NATO standards. More specifically, implementation of this Package includes defence capacity building, training, exercises, strengthened liaison, and enhanced interoperability opportunities.

As a result of its neutrality, Moldova does not aspire to join NATO. However, over the past 25 years Moldova has cooperated with the Alliance through various initiatives and programs:

- **1994:** Moldova joined NATO's Partnership for Peace Program;
- **2006:** Moldova and NATO agreed to the first two-year Individual Partnership Action Plan;
- **2014:** Allies (including Canada) offered to strengthen NATO's support, advice, and assistance to Moldova through the Defence and Related Security Capacity Building Initiative. The purpose of this initiative is to reinforce NATO's commitment to partner nations and to help the Alliance project stability without deploying large combat forces.
- **2017:** NATO Liaison Office opened in Chisinau.

### **RECOMMENDATION 13**

That the Government of Canada commit to supporting Ukraine, Moldova, and Georgia in their resistance to hybrid warfare attacks, specifically with regard to cyber-attacks on government systems and critical infrastructure, and resistance to the dissemination of foreign propaganda and disinformation through the media.

### **RESPONSE**

The Government of Canada takes note of the recommendation and underlines that it remains concerned by reports of Russian efforts to misinform both Russian and non-Russian-speaking audiences about its actions in Ukraine, Moldova, Georgia and elsewhere as well as its malicious cyber activity on government systems and critical infrastructure. The Government of Canada works together with NATO and other relevant partners to support the provision of factual, objective information. We have joined likeminded countries in a collective effort to identify and

expose a series of malicious cyber activities by the Russian military that form part of a broader pattern of activities by the Russian government that lie well outside the bounds of appropriate State behaviour in cyberspace, and demonstrate a disregard for international law and undermine the rules-based international order.

Canada is part of the Hybrid Platform Management Board, which gives direction to the NATO-Ukraine Platform for Countering Hybrid Warfare, established under NATO's 2016 Comprehensive Assistance Package for Ukraine. Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Ukraine and NATO are the other members of the board so far. Poland hosted the first event under the Platform in October 2017 and Lithuania organized a seminar on strategic communications in April 2018. Other potential events for the Platform are currently under consideration.

Additionally, under Operation UNIFIER, Joint Task Force-Ukraine, Canada is involved with the Ukrainian Armed Forces in enhancing our mutual understanding of hybrid warfare.

Global Affairs Canada Peace and Stabilization Operations Program (PSOPs) is working to develop and implement projects that will focus on countering Russian state-sponsored disinformation activities in advance of Ukrainian presidential and parliamentary elections scheduled for March and October 2019 respectively. The projects implemented under this package will build Ukraine's capacity to resist state-sponsored and other disinformation campaigns beyond the 2019 elections, addressing the ongoing, pervasive and highly corrosive nature of such activities, particularly those implemented by and/or with the support of Russian state actors.