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**FIRST MEETING OF THE NATO COMMITTEE FOR STANDARDIZATION  
SETS NEW NATO STANDARDIZATION ORGANIZATION IN MOTION**

The inaugural meeting on 12th April of the NATO Committee for Standardization heralded the commencement of work of NATO's new Standardization Organization, recently established by the North Atlantic Council. This new Council Committee which replaces the NATO Standardization Group, will provide advice to the Council on overall standardization matters in NATO. It is composed of high-level representatives from all NATO nations who will provide their nations' co-ordinated viewpoints on these matters.

In his opening address, the Deputy Secretary General, Ambassador Sergio Balanzino underlined the importance of having a focal point that can harmonize efforts by NATO bodies involved in NATO Standardization. He stressed that the new organization will provide a "unique forum for exchange of information for all involved in NATO Standardization and will focus on the interoperability needs of the Alliance".

The NATO Committee for Standardization, co-chaired by the Assistant Secretary General for Defence Support, Mr. Robin Beard, and the Director of the International Military Staff, Lieutenant General G.J. Folmer, approved the 1995 Programme of Work for the Organization. Apart from the enhancement of co-ordination between all aspects of standardization policies, its main task is the development of an initial NATO Standardization Programme which will address prioritized objectives for standardization by the end of this year.

Taking into account the significant interest expressed by Partners in interoperability issues, the Committee is looking forward to active participation in the Partnership for Peace process.

Other objectives for the NATO Standardization Organization, which will be pursued in due course, are the promotion of collaboration with other organizations such as the WEU, and the adoption of civil standards as NATO Standards and collaboration with Civil Standards Organizations.

Speaking after the meeting, Mr. Robin Beard and Lieutenant General Folmer said that the new NATO Standardization Organization "would have an essential contribution to make to the fulfilment of the Alliance's new rôles and mission".

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