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Charting a New Course in the Transatlantic Relationship

Richard N. Haass, Director, Policy Planning Staff

Remarks to the Centre for European Reform

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Thank you for inviting me to the Centre for European Reform (CER) for a discussion of the future of the transatlantic relationship. I was particularly flattered when I read on your Web site that the CER "represents a younger generation of British professionals, business people and academics." I can only assume that I was invited here as a peer of this young and dynamic group.

Ladies and gentlemen, it seems we are in another one of those recurring periods when it is fashionable to question the transatlantic relationship. The CER itself has publicized Charles' *Wall Street Journal* article titled, "Dark Clouds over the Atlantic" and is hosting an electronic debate on NATO's future. I'm glad to see that both Charles Grant and Ron Asmus at least agree that NATO **has** a future.

Elsewhere, on both sides of the Atlantic, the relationship is being analyzed, psychoanalyzed, diagnosed and, I dare say, misdiagnosed. Some have even pronounced it dying, if not already dead.

So let me jump right into the fray and offer my diagnosis. It is simple and clear: The transatlantic relationship remains critical for both the United States and Europe.

Let me also offer a prescription. Like any enduring relationship, this one needs an occasional spark to stay healthy. Or, as Giuseppe de Lampedusa put it so succinctly in his classic novel, *The Leopard*, "If we want things to stay as they are, things will have to change."

What does Lampedusa's insight hold for the transatlantic tie? It is this: Because of the relative peace and stability Europe enjoys today, there is less that the United States and Europe have to do together **in** Europe and more that they should do together **beyond** Europe. The challenge is to articulate and agree on a broader agenda for the transatlantic partnership in what my boss, Secretary of State Colin Powell, has termed the **post**-post-Cold War world.

To The Post-Post-Cold War World

As the "post-post-Cold War" label suggests, an understanding of today's challenges and opportunities requires an appreciation of the historical context. For those who came of age during the Cold War, its key features are etched in our memories. From the late 1940s until the demise of the Soviet Union, the Cold War defined the main contours of the international landscape. It was, at its core, an ideologically charged confrontation between the United States and its allies on one side, and the Soviet Union and its satellites on the other. Publics on both sides of the Atlantic understood that the stakes involved were nothing less than the preservation of their way of life – in addition to life itself.

Europe was the prime geographical and ideological battleground. The security and stability of Western Europe, guaranteed by America, were at the core of both American policy and the transatlantic relationship. "Europe," meaning the democracies west of the Iron Curtain, was our most important ally, and vice versa. The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) was established to cement the linkage.

The dissolution of the Soviet Union introduced the post-Cold War interlude. It is now apparent that this was a decade of transition defined by U.S. and European efforts to reorder and restabilize the European continent. However, in the absence of a single existential threat, the meaning and purpose of the transatlantic relationship and its core institutions – in particular NATO –

were uncertain and subject to debate.

The focus remained on Europe, but the emphasis shifted from collective defense to both collective security and political and economic integration. The democracies of Western Europe strengthened the European Union, while NATO reached out to pull in several newly free central and east European countries.

The notable exception to these largely positive changes in Europe was the violent political disintegration of Yugoslavia. Much of our joint transatlantic effort over the past decade has been dedicated to returning peace and security to southeast Europe.

Then, on September 11, the post-post-Cold War world began. With the attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon came the realization of a new unifying threat – terrorism, weapons of mass destruction, and the linkage between them. I say "unifying," because the type of terrorism represented by the murderers of September 11 is not against the United States alone, but a threat to all the countries and peoples of the world.

The transition to the post-post-Cold War world has profound implications for the transatlantic relationship. The Soviet Union is gone, and most of Europe is enjoying peace, stability, democracy, and increasing prosperity. The tumultuous transitions of the last decade are beginning to wind down. The threat is now global. The opportunities are global as well. So must be the transatlantic response.

As with any historic change, the transition to the post-post-Cold War world is not without frictions. This should come as no surprise, for transatlantic relations have never been immune from them. As those of us on both sides of the Atlantic analyze the current state of relations, then, we should be careful not to romanticize the past.

True, by any standard, the successes have been remarkable. Together, the United States and our European allies outlasted the Berlin blockade, negotiated away Soviet nuclear missiles from Eastern Europe, saw the Soviet Union and Warsaw Pact dissolve and Germany unified within NATO, rolled back Iraq's aggression against Kuwait with the help of other friends and allies, and ended war within the former Yugoslavia.

But the alliance also had to endure the Suez Crisis, DeGaulle's pullout from NATO's unified military command, Vietnam, *Ostpolitik*, the Soviet pipeline deal, the nuclear freeze movement, and the euromissile deployments, to name but a few such moments.

I speak from personal experience. I remember a time during the euromissile debate when I was living in London, working on the staff of the International Institute for Strategic Studies and doing a lot of media interviews defending the missile deployments. Those were the days when women were picketing Greenham Common and everyone was an expert on nuclear strategy, including my dentist. But it wasn't until I was in the chair, with the drill in my mouth, that my dentist decided to let me know he had seen me on television defending the deployments – and that he happened to be the head of the local chapter of CND, the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament. Believe me, you don't know what transatlantic *frisson* is until you've experienced it up close and personal in a dentist's chair!

I don't mean to discount current frictions between the United States and Europe. Differences do exist; ties that bound previous generations cannot be taken for granted. Still, I do think it's important not to lose perspective. As Mark Twain said of Wagner's music, the relationship is better than it sounds – even if it can and should be made to sound better than it does.

New Opportunities for Cooperation

Our goal should be to ensure that the transatlantic relationship remains relevant to today's challenges and that inevitable differences do not make it impossible to pursue broader common interests together.

The end of the existential Soviet threat has opened up unprecedented opportunities for the United States and Europe to "reprogram" much of the tremendous amount of political, economic and military capital once devoted to survival and invest it elsewhere. The United States and Europe can afford to evolve from being great partners **in** Europe to being global partners **beyond** Europe.

This new opportunity is emerging alongside new European capabilities, especially as the European Union (EU) becomes an increasingly important partner for us. As the EU grows ever more capable, we look forward to working even more closely with it. We don't have Henry Kissinger's problem, and we do call often.

There is plenty of work for a global American partnership with a stronger Europe. As I look at the post-post-Cold War world, I see three broad sets of challenges that cry out for transatlantic cooperation. Each has a European dimension, but each also extends well beyond Europe. They are:

- Fighting and winning the war against terrorism and other transnational challenges;
- Integrating key states into the international order; and
- Dealing with regional crises.

Let me take each in turn.

Winning the War against Terrorism

The response to the terrorist attacks of September 11 is an encouraging model for transatlantic cooperation.

As NATO, the United States and Europe invoked the Article V mutual defense clause for the first time. NATO surveillance planes patrolled the skies over the United States until just last month. NATO Allies have provided blanket overflight rights, access to ports and bases, and refueling assistance in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. "Out of area," Allies have flown air sorties and refueling missions, sent ships to strategic locations throughout the world, and put forces on the ground in Afghanistan. Sixteen of the 19 NATO allies are in the Afghan theater. Nearly all troop contributors to the International Security Assistance Force for Afghanistan are either current Allies or NATO Partners. Among them are German troops – the first major "out of continent" deployment of the Bundeswehr. This month, Turkey assumes command of the force from Britain.

The European Union and its member states have also responded vigorously outside the military sphere. EU members have agreed on a common arrest warrant, tightened money laundering laws, and intensified the sharing of law enforcement and intelligence information among themselves and with the United States. Domestically, they have rounded up terrorist cells, frozen terrorist assets, improved aviation security, and enhanced border security.

The rebuilding of Afghanistan would not be imaginable without leadership and donor support from Europe and the United States. Together with Japan and Saudi Arabia, the United States and the EU led the effort that mobilized initial pledges of \$4.5 billion for the reconstruction effort there.

The transnational agenda is growing, and it is not defined by terrorism alone. The international community is threatened by disease, illegal drugs, transnational crime, human trafficking, and environmental degradation. None of these problems is confined to Europe or the United States. None of these can the United States or Europe hope to defeat alone.

Combating third world poverty and promoting sustainable development are also high on the list of global issues on which the United States and Europe can work together. Indeed, there is already transatlantic cooperation in all of these areas, but there is an opportunity and a need to do even more. All will take hard work, tough decisions, and close cooperation.

Integrating Key States and Regions

Defense against transnational threats is not our only task. The United States and Europe also share a positive agenda aimed at integrating other countries and peoples into arrangements that will sustain a world consistent with shared interests and values, and thereby promote peace, prosperity and justice as widely as possible. By shared interests I mean core principles such as democracy, open trade, and the peaceful resolution of conflicts.

This process of integration has proceeded furthest in Europe. With the fall of the Berlin Wall, America joined Western Europe in a collective effort to create a Europe whole and free. This effort to consolidate the gains for democracy, free markets and stability throughout Europe and the independent states of the former Soviet Union will continue bilaterally and multilaterally through NATO, the EU and the OSCE.

NATO and the EU are helping to unite Europe as they extend membership to more of Europe's emerging democracies. The next round of NATO enlargement, for example, will further widen the circle of democracies and expand the zone of stability and security through the Baltics and the Balkans. Though it was founded in a different time for a different purpose, NATO now has an essential role to play in helping democracy take root and maintaining stability in regions of Europe that have long suffered from political and social upheavals. The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) is also making important contributions to conflict prevention, crisis management, post-conflict rehabilitation, human rights, and democratization.

We welcome an increasingly strong and effective EU, the introduction this year of the euro, and development of a successful European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP) that is closely coordinated with NATO and includes a crisis management and civilian policing capability available for international deployment. As President Bush recently said, "in all these steps, Americans do not see the rise of rival, we see the end of old hostilities. We see the success of our Allies, and we applaud [their] progress." We understand that a more capable and independent Europe will sometimes disagree and go its own way, but this is a small price to pay compared to the benefit of having a strong partner to help us meet regional and global challenges.

The U.S.-European relationship also remains vital to the political and economic integration of Russia into the West. America and Europe share a common interest in working with Russia to encourage continued progress on human rights, religious and press freedom, rule of law, and political and economic reform.

All benefit when a democratic and economically viable Russia is able to build real partnerships with Europe's core institutions, including NATO and the EU, and to join international institutions like the World Trade Organization.

Since September 11, NATO and Russia have given new impetus to their extensive cooperation. The recently created NATO-Russia Council will facilitate joint decisions and actions in areas of common concern. NATO is also intensifying its relationship with Ukraine and other Partners to further the integration and stability of Europe.

Similarly, the United States and Europe share an interest in ensuring that China's internal development and its emergence as a rising power unfold in a peaceful and stabilizing manner. We are encouraged by Beijing's entry into the World Trade Organization last November and by its cooperation in the war against terrorism. In dealing with China, the United States and Europe must avoid sending conflicting signals on trade, human rights, proliferation, and other concerns, but instead use interactions to reinforce the core message.

The Bush Administration is also aggressively promoting trade as a way to integrate more nations and peoples into a more stable, prosperous, and equitable international order. As the United States' chief commercial rival and partner in the international economic policymaking arena, Europe shares responsibility for the health of the international economic system.

Trade disputes are inevitable in the \$2 trillion transatlantic economic relationship. But, bound by internationally agreed rules governing dispute settlement, the United States and Europe must set an example for the world and ensure that bilateral trade disputes do not spill over into other aspects of the relationship, permanently damage the enormously successful institutions created over a half-century ago, or jeopardize the prospects for concluding the Doha Development Round by 2005. America and Europe must advance to the high ground and take the tough decisions necessary to expand the circle of benefits to the developing world.

Managing Regional Challenges

U.S-European cooperation is also essential to managing regional crises. Cooperation has been particularly close and successful in Southeast Europe where, after a shaky start, the United States and the EU have implemented sweeping judicial reforms in Bosnia in cooperation with the government, overseen peaceful elections in Kosovo, and concluded the Framework Agreement in Macedonia that likely prevented another Balkan war.

The United States played an important supporting role in the EU's success in brokering an agreement between Serbia and Montenegro to preserve the Yugoslav Federation. Now, America and Europe need to keep the spotlight on the Balkan states to press ahead with political and economic reform and to deliver all remaining indicted war criminals to the Hague Tribunal.

The Balkans were the first test. Together, the United States and Europe are passing it, but there is still work to do, and we will stay until it is done. As Secretary Powell has said: "We need to finish the job in the Balkans – and we will. We went in together with the Europeans, and we will come out together."

America and Europe can extend and are in fact extending this experience of successful cooperation in Europe to other regions. The United States and the EU worked smoothly to help resolve the recent standoff in Bethlehem's Church of the Nativity. The two of us have joined with Russia and the UN in the "Madrid Quartet" in an effort to bring about an enduring cease-fire and a parallel political process in the Middle East. On the Indian sub-continent, a succession of visits by European and American diplomats has sought to prevent the outbreak of war.

But such cooperation is just a start. The United States and Europe also have a mutual stake in managing such regional challenges as deterring war on the Korean Peninsula, preserving Colombia's democracy from terrorists, and addressing the threat posed by an Iraq with weapons of mass destruction.

Adapting European Institutions

In the same spirit with which transatlantic cooperation built institutions for the Cold War, the United States and Europe must now adapt them to the challenges of the post-post-Cold War period. As the preeminent transatlantic institution, NATO is at the top of the list for reform. Collective security complements, but does not replace, NATO's traditional focus on collective defense. Both are important elements of NATO's future mission.

September 11 is a reminder that the end of the Cold War did not eliminate all security threats. That is why NATO must have the new capabilities needed to meet today's threats, such as terrorism, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and the linkage between them.

It will not surprise you to hear me say that the biggest threat to NATO's viability as a military organization comes from within. I am talking about the growing gap in military capabilities between the United States and Europe. Our NATO allies need flexible, sustainable forces, able to move long distances in a hurry and deliver overwhelming firepower on arrival.

Today, the United States has the vast preponderance of such forces. Other allies have only limited capabilities in lift, precision weapons, intelligence and surveillance platforms, and protection of forces against chemical and biological agents. NATO members have themselves committed to bridging this gap, and it is critical that our allies succeed in refocusing their defense efforts – if need be by pooling their resources to do collectively what they are unable to do individually.

This November's Prague Summit will mark a crucial step in the effort to adapt and shape NATO for the new century. The Prague agenda will focus on the themes of new capabilities, new members and new relationships. Alliance leaders will approve recommendations to ensure that NATO has the new capabilities needed to meet today's threats, to extend NATO's membership to more of Europe's newer democracies, and to intensify NATO's relationship with Russia, Ukraine and others.

Managing Disagreement

Given the rapid pace of change and the complexity of the challenges, it's not surprising that there are frictions in the transatlantic relationship. From Europe, we hear rumblings about unilateralism, even arrogance.

From our side of the pond, there are complaints about European self-absorption, along with open irritation with Europeans who complain about American predominance, but are unwilling to spend more to close the gap in military capabilities or to exercise greater global leadership. Both Europeans and Americans find fault with the other's trade policies.

Such frictions are hardly surprising, in particular at this juncture in history. Without the existential threat posed by the Soviet Union, differences over other issues are naturally more exposed.

But these frictions are not due to lack of consultation. The Bush Administration has tried to consult fully and to bridge differences. We have consulted intensively with Europe – the EU, NATO, and bilaterally – on the global war on terrorism, environmental policies, missile defense and weapons of mass destruction, peace in the Balkans, and the situation in the Middle East. Where the United States could not go along with a proposed approach, such as the Kyoto Protocol, we put forward alternative proposals to address the underlying concern. The same will be true with respect to our position on the International Criminal Court. On some social issues, like the death penalty, the United States and Europe will simply have to agree to disagree.

As the United States and Europe continue to cooperate in transforming Europe and collaborate increasingly on global issues of mutual concern, they will inevitably, as in the past, have to manage disagreements large and small. Sometimes differences are just that – differences over priorities, policies, perspectives and even values. Sometimes, these differences require that the United States act on its own. It would be wrong to label such differences as American "unilateralism." Just as Europeans can disagree among themselves without threatening the viability of the EU, we can disagree with some or all Europeans without weakening the transatlantic bond. The bottom line is that there is virtually nothing we can do alone that we cannot do better together with our allies and partners in Europe.

Prescriptions for the Future

Just as the United States and Europe have done successfully at every prior juncture, they must be prepared to adapt their relationship, their institutions, and their consultations to new realities. It is time to evolve from being great partners in Europe to being global partners beyond Europe.

Let me leave you today with six modest suggestions for steps the United States and Europe can take together to tackle the global agenda we share:

First, America and Europe must complete the consolidation of a Europe whole, free and at peace. This means continuing the enlargement and adaptation of institutions such as NATO and the EU that are important anchors for a united, strong and democratic Europe.

Second, America and Europe must reorient their focus and energies beyond the borders of Europe. We want to know we have European partners in confronting the global challenges of terrorism, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, the threat posed by an Iraq with such weapons, humanitarian tragedies in Africa, and the potential for instability in Latin America posed by narcoterrorism in Columbia. Only by addressing such regional and transatlantic challenges can the transatlantic relationship be relevant; only by being relevant can the transatlantic relationship withstand the inevitable disagreements and divergence.

In reaching beyond Europe's borders, we do not expect every partner to make the same commitment to every coalition. Differences in capabilities, location, foreign policy outlook, and domestic concerns make this impractical. Some multilateral efforts will become embedded in more formal institutional structures, such as NATO. Others will be built around narrower and less permanent coalitions of the willing. Clearly, the idea of "flexible response" has taken on a whole new meaning. This said, it is important to keep in mind that too much division of labor can be a dangerous thing. If the United States and Europe are not making similar contributions and sacrifices, this can lead over time to even greater divergences of views and values.

Third, to do more together as equal partners, America and Europe must bridge the growing gap in military capabilities between the European members of NATO and the United States. Let me assure you, this gap will not be bridged by the United States doing less. It will only close if Europeans do more, individually and collectively.

Fourth, America and Europe must work together to integrate Russia further into Western institutions and norms. The NATO-Russia Council is an important step in that direction, as is Russia's inclusion in the Madrid Quartet. Russian entry into the World Trade Organization (WTO), once Russia has taken the necessary steps, would be another milestone. Russia must be integrated, willingly, into Europe more tightly than even Peter the Great ever imagined.

Fifth, America and Europe must lead the way to completion of the Doha Development Round. Although transatlantic trade disputes will continue, the larger prize must remain in view. The successful launch of the Doha Round demonstrated what Europe and the United States can achieve when cooperating to advance common interests in opening markets, restoring global economic growth, and alleviating poverty. So far, the Round is all about promise. It is time to make that promise a reality.

Last, but certainly not least, America and Europe must strengthen consultation – between the United States and the EU, within NATO, and at the bilateral level – on the full range of regional and transnational issues. Current consultations and coordinated efforts on terrorism, Afghanistan and the Middle East are excellent models. It matters less where and in what forum such consultations take place. What is important is that the consultations are serious and, as was once said about voting in Chicago, they happen early and often.

Conclusion - New Strength from a New Global Partnership

At the dawn of the "European project," Jean Monnet clearly saw that "problems are arising that only Europe and the United States together have the resources to deal with." He was referring to the situation in post-War Europe and, together, Europe and the United States did deal with the Cold War Soviet threat, and with poverty and instability in Europe.

With those problems largely solved or on the way to solution, discussion has inevitably turned to "what next?" and "do we still have a mission?" I firmly believe we do still have a mission, and that "what's next" for the transatlantic relationship in the post-post-Cold War world is clear -- the United States and a strong, cohesive Europe must pool their resources to meet global challenges and seize global opportunities. How well we meet this test will go a long ways toward determining how history judges our joint response to this new era in international relations.

Thank you.

For texts of other statements, testimony and articles by Richard Haass and other members of the Policy Planning Staff, please go to the [Policy Planning home page](#).

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