



For Immediate Release
Office of the Press Secretary
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Joint Statement by President George W. Bush and Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder on a Transatlantic Vision for the 21st Century

The United States of America and the Federal Republic of Germany are linked by a deep friendship. Our meeting today opens a new chapter in our close relationship. At the beginning of the 21st century, we reaffirm our common commitment to the lasting principles which are at the basis of the Transatlantic community of values -? freedom, democracy and human rights. On this basis, we are resolved to strengthen and further develop the partnership between the United States of America and Europe. In the age of globalization we want to give it a new quality.

We agree that our cooperation within the Atlantic Alliance continues to be of decisive importance for the security and stability of the Euro-Atlantic region and that this includes an adequate military presence of the United States in Europe. The Atlantic Alliance has adapted itself to the historic changes in Europe after the end of the Cold War and today also plays an important role in promoting stability in the states of Central, Eastern, and Southeastern Europe. The openness of the Alliance for new members and its offer of a comprehensive partnership to the new democracies on the European continent contribute to peace and security in all of Europe. They are directed against no one.

We share the view that Russia can make an important contribution to maintaining peace and stability in Europe and the world. We encourage the Russian government to further pursue a policy of democratic reforms and offer our cooperation to this end.

We will be partners for the states in Southeastern Europe on their way into a peaceful future. War, aggressive nationalism and extremist acts of violence must belong to the past. We will lend our support to the process of stabilization and democratization in the Balkans, continuing to act in close consultation and jointly. In these efforts, the Stability Pact will continue to play a central role.

Both our countries have long-standing commitments to the territorial integrity of Macedonia. We strongly condemn the violence perpetrated by a small group of extremists trying to destabilize that country's democratic, multi-ethnic government. Their violent methods are hurting the long-term interests of ethnic Albanians in Macedonia, Kosovo, and throughout the region. We strongly support President Trajkovski and the Macedonia government in taking proportionate steps to prevent further violence and urge that they work closely with elected representatives of the Macedonian Albanian community to address legitimate minority concerns. We welcome steps being taken by NATO, the European Union, and the OSCE to help Macedonia contain the insurgents as well as to facilitate a political solution.

We are convinced that the uniting Europe will enrich Transatlantic relations. From the beginning, the United States of America has offered its support to European unification, for a Europe that is strong and capable lies in the interest of the United States just as much as Europe needs a strong American partner. Therefore we view the development of a European Security and Defense Policy as an important contribution to sharing the burden of securing peace which will strengthen the Atlantic Alliance.

The United States and Germany welcome the efforts of the European Union to assume greater responsibility for crisis management by strengthening capabilities and developing the ability to take actions where NATO as a whole chooses not to engage. In this regard, the United States welcomes the European Union's European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP), aiming at making Europe a stronger, more capable partner in deterring and managing crises affecting the security of the Transatlantic community. This involves:

- Developing EU capabilities in a manner that is fully coordinated, compatible, and transparent with NATO;

- The fullest possible participation by non-EU European NATO members in the operational planning and execution of EU-led exercises and operations, reflecting their shared interests and security commitments as NATO members;
- Working with other EU members to improve Europe's capabilities and enables the EU to act where NATO as a whole is not engaged.

Together we are resolved to undertake new efforts in countering the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and increasingly sophisticated missiles for their delivery. We agree on the need for substantive bilateral consultations, as well as close consultations with other allies and interested parties. We will work together toward a post-Cold War strategy that increases our common security and that encompasses the appropriate mix of offensive and defensive systems, and that continues nuclear arms reductions and strengthens WMD and missile proliferation controls as well as counter-proliferation measures.

We are resolved to increase our efforts to abolish barriers impeding trade between the European Union and the United States of America. In areas where we have differences of opinion we will strive to bring our positions closer together.

In the framework of G-7/8 we will contribute to helping the poorest countries in drawing more benefit from technological development, in particular in the field of information technology. Together we will also increase our efforts towards bringing about a stable global finance system. This will also be of help in overcoming hunger, poverty, and disease in large parts of the world that represent a challenge to all of us.

We share a common concern about global climate change. We openly note that we differ on the best way to protect the earth's climate. The Federal Republic of Germany, host of the Climate Change Conference in Bonn in July, emphasizes that the targets to reduce greenhouse gases agreed in Kyoto are indispensable to combat global climate change effectively. The United States opposes the Kyoto Protocol because it exempts many countries from compliance and would cause serious harm to the American economy. Both sides, however, are prepared to work constructively with friends and allies to solve the problem. In this context they deem it necessary to develop, among other means, technologies, market-based incentives, and other innovative approaches to meeting the challenge of global climate change.

We attach particular importance to the fight against HIV/AIDS. We want the G-7/8 to intensify their efforts to ease the suffering of millions of people who are inflicted by this disease. We consider it to be of particular importance for the pharmaceutical industry to take additional measures so that HIV/AIDS patients in affected developing countries can be supplied with medication at affordable prices.

We welcome the agreements on the establishment of the German Foundation Remembrance, Responsibility, and the Future for compensation payments to former forced laborers. We note with great satisfaction that the German companies now have made available their total share in the Foundation. We call for a swift implementation of the agreements on all-embracing and enduring legal peace so that payments to the aged former forced laborers can begin as soon as possible.

German-American friendship constitutes a pillar of Transatlantic relations. It must continue to be based on broad popular support in the new century. To this end, we will, on both sides of the Atlantic, encourage even more contacts among members of the younger generation.

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