

The New Transatlantic Agenda

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A History of the Relationship of the United States and the European Union

Since World War II the relationship between the United States and the countries of [Western] Europe has been a special one. The continent of Europe had been devastated during World War II. Infrastructures and industrial capabilities had been virtually destroyed, and as a result their economies were in shambles. The United States was the leader in helping to rebuild Europe and provide security for the region. Major contributing actions by the United States to the post-war rebuilding and security of Europe included, establishment of the Bretton Woods system and institutions, the Marshall Plan, leading involvement in creation of the United Nations and its "family," and providing support and funding for the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. In addition, when European countries began the early stages of what has become the European Union by forming the European Coal and Steel Community, in 1952, the United States was "the first country to accredit diplomatic representation to the European Coal and Steel Community."¹ Likewise, the United States was "the first to accredit representation and ambassador to the European Economic Community (EEC) and European Atomic Energy Community (Euratom)" in 1958.² The importance that the United States placed on European integration after World War II resulted in "making it almost a condition for further Marshall Plan aid."³ During the forty years since the signing of the Treaty of Rome by six countries, which created the EEC,⁴ the organization had grown to 15 members in 1995 and changed names twice, now being called the European Union (EU).⁵

Importance of the Economic Relationship in the Late 20th Century

The importance of the United States and European Union relationship as we enter the 21st Century is highlighted by several factors:⁶

1) By late 1995, the EU had over \$315 billion invested in the U.S., and the U.S. had over \$320

billion invested in the EU, making the EU the United States' largest investment partner (European companies are the number one investor in 41 states and second in the other nine);

2) The EU is also the United States' largest economic partner and second largest trading partner, with \$270 billion in trade in 1996, directly supporting six million jobs in the United States and the EU (investment in Europe supports 12% of U.S. Manufacturing jobs);

3) The EU is playing a larger role in foreign aid in regards to humanitarian and development assistance, spending more than \$36 billion between 1995 and 1998.

By working cooperatively, these two government entities have both benefited economically. By working together in the future, the United States and the European Union will both continue to prosper and at the same time help the rest of the world develop and prosper in the late 20th and early 21st Centuries.

The Transatlantic Agenda

The development of the EU has resulted in a united economy and marketplace that challenges the United States' as we head into the 21st Century. Yet, the United States understands the importance of this unified trading and political partner in the post-cold war period. One result of the desire of the United States and European Union governments to work together closely in the post-cold war era is the development of the Transatlantic Declaration on EC-US Relations adopted in November of 1990.⁷ Subsequently, agreement to the Transatlantic Agenda, which was signed by President Bill Clinton, Spanish Prime Minister Felipe Gonzalez (president of the European Union), and European Commission President Jacques Santer in December of 1995, has resulted in a common agenda and deeper commitments for the United States and the European Union to work together.^{8,9} The 1990 Transatlantic

Declaration was designed to be a relationship of consultation, whereas, the Transatlantic Agenda is a relationship of joint action.¹⁰ The opening two paragraphs of the Preface of the Transatlantic Agenda sum-up the relationship of the United States and the countries of the European Union over the last fifty years and where that relationship may be headed as the 21st Century begins:

“We, the United States of America and the European Union, affirm our conviction that the ties which bind our people are as strong today as they have been for the past half century. For over fifty years, the transatlantic partnership has been the leading force for peace and prosperity for ourselves and for the world. Together, we helped transform adversaries into allies and dictatorships into democracies. Together, we built institutions and patterns of cooperation that ensured our security and economic strength. These are epic achievements.

Today we face new challenges at home and abroad. To meet them, we must further strengthen and adapt the partnership that has served us so well. Domestic challenges are not an excuse to turn inward; we can learn from each other’s experiences and build new transatlantic bridges. We must first of all seize the opportunity presented by Europe’s historic transformation to consolidate democracy and free-market economies throughout the continent.”¹¹

Developing the Transatlantic Agenda is a response to the desire to strengthen the relationship between the United States and the European Union in order to enhance and maintain world stability. The Transatlantic Agenda is based on a Framework for Action with four major goals:

1) “Promoting peace and stability, democracy and development around the world. Together, we will work for an increasingly stable and prosperous Europe; foster democracy and economic reform in Central and Eastern Europe as well as in Russia, Ukraine and other new independent states; secure peace in the Middle East; advance human rights; promote non-proliferation and cooperate on development and humanitarian assistance.

2) Responding to global challenges. To-

gether, we will fight international crime, drug-trafficking and terrorism; address the needs of refugees and displaced persons; protect the environment and combat disease.

3) Contributing to the expansion of world trade and closer economic relations. Together, we will strengthen the multilateral trading system and take concrete, practical steps to promote closer economic relations between us.

4) Building bridges across the Atlantic. Together, we will work with our business people, scientists, educators and others to improve communication and to ensure that future generations remain as committed as we are to developing a full and equal partnership.”¹²

The future activities of the United States and the European Union in implementing the Transatlantic Agenda will be guided by the Joint EU-US Action Plan.¹³ This joint action plan, which sets activities that will be undertaken to accomplish the four major goals, will be coordinated by a group of senior level officials.¹⁴ The senior level group will make reports and assessments of progress and necessary adjustments will occur at “biannual EU-US summits.”¹⁵

Most Recent Accomplishments

The most recent EU-US Summit was held in London, England on May 18, 1998. At the summit, progress was reported on coordinating foreign policy to address problems and issues in the Republika Srpska, Bosnia, and the Ukraine. In addition to condemning India for its recent nuclear testing, a new high-level EU-US coordination mechanism on the Middle East Peace Process has been established. In working closely on human rights issues in Geneva, the United States and the European Union have both taken steps in regards to pressuring Burma on both democratic principles and human rights. Through coordination of the actions of the European Commission and USAID programs, problems in Central and South America, North Korea and Bangladesh have been jointly addressed. Many coordinated actions have taken place on global problems concerning international law enforcement and environmental problems. The bilateral trade and economic relationship has been en-

hanced, while cooperating on multilateral trade issues, including activities related to the World Trade Organization and preparing for the 50th Anniversary of GATT. Lastly, it was reported that many activities, including parliamentary visits to and establishment of internships between the U.S. Congress and the European Parliament,¹⁶ on cross-cultural political and regulatory activities had taken place.

The Immediate Future

At the May 18 Summit, the senior level working group set new priorities for the next six months. Those priorities are as follows:

I. Promoting Peace, Stability, Democracy and Development

Work together in the Former Yugoslavia, particularly Kosovo, Bosnia, and throughout the Western Balkans. Implement our programme of cooperation in Ukraine. Continue to work closely together on Cyprus and Turkey. Pursue with all parties concerned, in the first place the Russian Federation, our joint agenda for nuclear waste management in Northwest Russia, and report on progress by the Spring 1999 EU/US Summit. Increase coordination on other nuclear safety issues. Put into practice the consultative mechanism set up to ensure better coordination of our efforts on the Middle East Peace Process. Continue to cooperate on Iran, particularly on issues of shared concern. Examine the possibility for cooperation on technical assistance to develop the rule of law in China.

Continue to work together and with African partners to promote human rights, good governance and conflict prevention. Continue active consultations on UN reform and finances. Use our High Level Assistance Consultations in October to reinforce our cooperation on economic, development and humanitarian issues.

Assess ways of further enhancing our demining cooperation in specific areas such as mine action institutions and capacity building in afflicted countries, the development of appropriate technology and information exchange on mine-exporting countries. Work for the successful completion of the Biological Weapons Convention Protocol by the end of 1998. Further enhance

our cooperation on non-proliferation and export controls. Consider scope for a joint EU/US code of conduct on arms exports. Consolidate cooperation in KEDO, together with Japan and the Republic of Korea, to ensure the continued viability of the organisation and success in meeting its objectives, thus promoting stability in Northeast Asia and strengthening global non-proliferation efforts. Continue cooperation to advance our goals on human rights and democracy in countries which are of mutual concern.

II. Responding to Global Challenges

Continue to work closely together on counter-terrorism, exchanging information (eg on terrorism fundraising), raising awareness of new threats, and encouraging universal adherence to all 11 international conventions. Explore extending cooperation on drug issues in other regions such as Central Asia and Latin America, including the Andes.

Maintain close cooperation between US law enforcement agencies and the EU Multidisciplinary Group on Organised Crime. In the light of our evaluation, consider whether to expand to other countries our initiative to discourage trafficking in women. Review the possibilities for cooperation on stolen vehicles.

Following signing of the charters inaugurating the Regional Environmental Centres (RECs) in Moldova, Georgia, Russia and Ukraine, ensure they become quickly operational and consider supporting the establishment of a Central Asia. Continue our dialogue on environmental issues, including on the Biosafety Protocol and the follow-up to the Kyoto Protocol. Work to resolve outstanding issues before the November climate change meeting in Buenos Aires. Plan for a Transatlantic Chemicals Conference. Focus the work of the Task Force on Communicable Diseases on surveillance of certain priority diseases, in particular foodborne diseases, and the problem of antimicrobial resistance, as well as on training exchanges, field investigations, and the exchange of information on outbreaks of diseases.

III. Expanding World Trade and Closer Economic Relations

Follow up on our recent discussions on how to take forward our shared trade goals. Continue

to implement our joint statement on electronic commerce, giving priority to the urgent issues of data privacy and domain name allocation. Continue to enhance our dialogue on regulatory issues, including those relating to biotechnology. Implement the MRA and seek early signature of the new annexes on veterinary biologics and fasteners. Identify ways of further deepening our cooperation on Intellectual Property Rights with respect to both bilateral and multilateral issues. Building on our ongoing bilateral consultations, explore ways to cooperate in a mutually acceptable framework to develop a global navigation satellite system. Support the various projects of the Transatlantic Small Business Initiative, in particular the EU/US Partnering Meeting in Chicago which will bring together 400 small and medium-sized enterprises. Continue our exchange on macro-economic issues as the EU approaches the third phase of the Economic and Monetary Union (EMU).

Within multilateral fora, reaffirm the importance we attach to our efforts in the OECD to achieve a comprehensive multilateral framework for investment with high standards of liberalisation and investment protection that has effective dispute settlement procedures and is open to non-member countries. Pursue the current work programme on investment in the WTO. Once that programme has been completed, seek the support of all our partners for next steps towards the creation of investment rules in the WTO. Continue work on accession of new members. Pursue our common efforts in the WTO to conclude the negotiations, already well advanced, on expansion in the coverage of the Information Technology Agreement (ITA II). Work to implement the outcome of the May WTO Ministerial.

IV. Building Bridges

Under our Science and Technology Cooperation Agreement, encourage the launch of collaborative projects. Cooperate to ensure a successful, broad-based Vienna Conference on People-to-People Links in October. Implement our projects in Ukraine on civic education, municipal and public administration, transparency, and parliamentary exchange. Seek progress on the establishment of the Transatlantic NGO Dialogue on

development, economic, and humanitarian assistance. Support the July visit by Supreme Court Justices to the European institutions.

Contribute to a successful TABD Conference in November and take its recommendations into account in our future work. Actively support the Consumer Dialogue following its launch this summer. Support the work of the Transatlantic Labour Dialogue. Hold a seminar on work organisation in Brussels in June, a conference on disability in the workplace in Madrid in October. Fully support the partnerships established at the Akron forum. Support the follow-up to the successful February symposium on Codes of Conduct and International Labour Standards.¹⁷

Conclusion

Through cooperation and coordinated action, which should be enhanced by the Transatlantic Agenda, the United States and the European Union are poised to have dramatic impact on global politics, economics and trade. A coordinated multilateral foreign policy between these two government entities has the greatest opportunity for success in the next few years. This is due in large part to the economic difficulties most of the Asian economies are experiencing. Even though several of the European Union countries are experiencing some economic difficulties while they struggle to meet the requirements for the unified currency the Euro, as a combined economy they are poised for tremendous growth. The European Union is beginning to rival, and in the next two decades is likely to surpass, the economic and trading power of the United States. The influence on the policy and actions of multilateral international organizations (i.e. U.N., WTO, WHO, etc.) that these two powers could exert through coordinated actions could very well result in redefined institutions. The positive implications of a successful and prosperous relationship between the United States and the European Union, as facilitated through the Transatlantic Agenda, hold great possibilities for creating a new global political and economic order that will transform the world in the early 21st Century.

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