



Center for Strategic & International Studies
Washington, DC

A Global Dimension for a Renewed Transatlantic Partnership

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Committee on Foreign Affairs, Human Rights, Common Security and Defense Policy and The
Committee on Industry, External Trade, Research and Energy

European Parliament
Room PHS 1A2
Brussels, Belgium

Tuesday, February 19, 2002

[Prepared Remarks]

Introduction

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee, I want to thank you for the invitation to appear before you today. It is an honor to discuss with you the state of transatlantic relations, including their prospects for renewal and their potential for gaining the global dimension unveiled dramatically since September 11.

Before starting my remarks, however, let me compliment you, Mr. Chairman, and your colleagues for your leadership in holding this joint hearing at this crucial time—a time that will be viewed and reviewed by historians as a defining moment for Europe and its relations with the United States.

The End Game

The European Union (EU) matters, and most Americans now appreciate the reality of the Union even if they do not always understand the process behind it. Indeed, moving in an increasingly integrated space—peaceful, affluent, democratic, and de-ideologized—the states of Europe have entered an ambitious end game: widen in order to deepen, deepen in order to widen, and reform in order to do both. This means that how well NATO is renewed over the next several years will depend largely on how effectively a new Europe emerges while the EU completes its agenda.

In testimony prepared for the International Relations Committee of the US House of Representatives in April 2001, I discussed at some length the terms of that agenda and its implications for the United States. This is not the time to return to this discussion. Let me reassert, however, that there is little on that agenda that is not of considerable relevance to US interests. The United States, Mr. Chairman, is not a European power, but its presence within the EU is such as to qualify it as a power in Europe. Ties between the United States and the EU must, therefore, be reinforced. The goal is not merely to present each other with agreed common positions, from the EU to the US and vice versa, but to engage actively in the relevant levels of consultation before these positions are formulated. In short, a vital dimension of the agenda for a renewed transatlantic partnership has to do with the structure of US-EU relations.

Over the past few weeks, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) has been questioned. Announcements of its alleged marginalization and impending demise have been heard many times before, and this moment of gloom, too, will pass. As Lord Robertson recently stated, "NATO is not an optional extra.... It is the fundamental guarantor of Euro-Atlantic stability and security, and the essential platform for defense cooperation and coalition operations." Mr. Chairman, as it was during the Cold War and so it is now: on both sides of the Atlantic, NATO matters because it remains each of its members' security institution of choice. A cooperative transatlantic partnership also requires a cohesive NATO and closer institutional relations between NATO and the EU.

NATO and the EU are the two parallel tracks without which the transatlantic relationship cannot operate effectively. Because neither was designed as a full service institution, each is made stronger by the other. NATO does not command the wide array of non-military tools available to the EU, but the EU does not command enough of the decisive military capabilities available to NATO. To remain content with this condition, however, will ultimately weaken both institutions. *Pour refaire l'OTAN il faut faire l'Europe*, meaning that the military dimension of the latter is a vital dimension of the renewal of the former.

As is the case with the EU agenda, the events of September 11 should not hijack the NATO agenda, and they may have had in fact a constructive impact on both. For example, the dual big bang enlargement of NATO and the EU has become more likely, while collateral damages on EU and especially NATO relations with Russia have become less likely and relations between Washington and Moscow have reached levels of cooperation that had not been seen since 1945. Enlarging NATO and the EU in ways that permit the convergence of European membership in both institutions, as was in fact the trend from the Rome Treaties to the signing of the Single European Act, will facilitate better EU-NATO relations.

How far enlargement will extend is finite, however. Ill-defined limits will leave institutional "orphans" in eastern and Southeastern Europe: these must be "adopted" if the emerging Euro-Atlantic space is to escape new perils imported from its regional suburbs. As to Russia, it is a regional "stakeholder" that is too near to ignore, too big to integrate, too fragile to rattle, too sensitive to offend, and too nuclear to oppose. Yet, the events of September 11 present the United States and the states of Europe with an unexpected opportunity to recast Euro-Atlantic relations with Moscow-short, however, of membership in either institution.

In short, Mr. Chairman, the condition of NATO like that of the EU is best understood retroactively: in 2002 relative to 20, 50, 80 or 100 years ago. So considered, it is cause for satisfaction. Standing ahead is not a new vision but the completion of a vision that was started after the dehumanizing European wars waged during the first half of the twentieth century: an increasingly more united and progressively stronger Europe that permits a better balance and more cohesion within the Atlantic Alliance. Now, past the Cold War, even less than before, in the aftermath of both world wars, even a power without peers cannot be a nation without allies.

The Wars of 911

For much of the twentieth century, Americans who waged Europe's wars were urged to understand the history of the people they were defeating no less than that of the people they were assisting. Now, entering the twenty-first century, as Europeans help respond to a war launched against America, it is just as important for them to understand American history. For it is only in the context of this history that even our like-minded allies in Europe will be able to grasp fully the depth and durability of the emotions caused by the attacks of September 11, 2001.

These events will dominate the nation's collective memory for generations to come-and they will condition US policies for many years. As some, in Europe and elsewhere, now debate rhetorical issues-including the admittedly ill-advised use words like "crusade" and "axis"-they seem to be forgetting their own emotional reactions to the sight of such horrors on US soil. These, they are beginning to say, are the ways of history. To think otherwise is dismissed as "simplistic." For

those who have lived these tragedies all too often, that may well be true. But that is not the American way-distant from war and invulnerable to attack.

The events of 9-11, however, are not merely about the assault on America's history after the desecration of its territorial virginity. They also threaten a broader experiment started after 1945 and designed to end the evils of history not only for America but also in Europe and everywhere else. To that extent, September 11 was also an assault on the very idea of Europe-that is, the challenge to war issued after the horrors of the previous world conflicts. Losing this global battle against terror would be to accept the new normalcy of an anarchy that would leave all countries at the mercy of the nihilistic actions of the most extremist organizations at home and abroad.

More than an act of terrorism, the attack of September 11 pointed to an entirely different kind of military conflict. Wars are expected to originate in organized entities whose assets (territorial and otherwise) offer plausible targets for effective deterrence or, should deterrence fail, punishing retaliation designed to shorten the conflict and minimize damages. But this new kind of war is being launched by a world where the state does not exist against the world where it does-by the suicidal have-nothing of the slums determined to inflict maximum casualties on the have-it-all of Western democracies. This new kind of war is waged in the name of practices that prevailed at the close of the first millenium, around, say, the year 911-without limits, and even without weapons and for no identifiable earthly goal. Faced with this kind of enemy, it is not enough to deter and retaliate-it is imperative to deny and to preempt.

As these new wars are waged-the Wars of 911-they provide the opportunity for reinforced ties between the United States and the states of Europe. Immediately after September 11, Europe's response to the pain of America and its citizens was spontaneous and heartfelt-in countless ways and in innumerable venues. This is not just a matter of false sentimentalism. Whatever transatlantic discord there may be at any given moment, and there was plenty at the time, the states of Europe and the United States now form a community of values that is renewed when these values are deemed to be at risk. Whether a community of action can be sustained on behalf of these values remains to be seen: this is the conclusive test-a sort of finality debate for the Euro-Atlantic partnership. Passing that test will require bold leadership on both sides of the Atlantic. But pass it, we must. Failure is not an option.

That test, however, extends beyond winning the war, wherever and however it is waged. It also has to do, Mr. Chairman, with our collective ability to "restore peace and stability"-as stated by NATO's Article 5-in vast parts of the world where our democratic messages have been found to be lacking, irrelevant, or even destructive of established values. Lest the threats of terror be allowed to haunt us all indefinitely, the war cannot, therefore, be limited only to its military dimensions. However necessary and even indispensable the use of force is, it cannot be conclusive. The goal is not merely to defeat the enemy in war but to defeat war itself, as was done convincingly in Europe during the decade that followed World War II.

In short, even as the wars of 911 are fought, there can and will be no reconciliation without rehabilitation and reconstruction of the failed states. These states are the unintended legacies of the Cold War and many of the wars that preceded it. Some of their failure is territorial, some is political, some is economic, some is societal, and some is simply beyond words and hence, beyond definition. But none can be ignored if the unconditional defeat of the enemy does not carry with it a credible absolution for the prevailing powers. More than an issue of elementary justice, this is also an issue of fundamental self-interest-or, as Prime Minister Tony Blair put it recently, "a down payment for a better future."

Going it Alone and Going it Together

First things must come first, however. The threat raised by the attacks of September 11 was well understood in Europe. As French President Jacques Chirac put it, "This time, it was New York; next time, it could be Paris, Berlin or London." President Chirac was right then, and the risk has hardly faded now. There could still be a next time, especially in Europe where targets that express each nation's identity are easy to penetrate and may even be easy to hit. In other words,

Europe's solidarity with an act of war against the United States was not only a result of the values we share but also the expression of interests we have in common.

America's surprise at Europe's spontaneous support is itself surprising. If not from the like-minded allies in Europe, where from? Going it alone was hardly viewed as the preferred option. In fact, the initial reliance on a "coalition of coalitions" reflected the US will for a multilateral response that would remain sensitive to the limits of each ally's capabilities. The war was not a NATO war because it was not a war designed for NATO but for its members, and not only for NATO countries but for countries everywhere. Each subset of the grand coalition was to include countries that were not only willing but also capable, and, given the nature of the war, not only countries that were both willing and capable but also necessary. Thus, capabilities would not stand in the way of the coalition, and the coalition would not stand in the way of the mission.

Europe's concerns over America's unilateralism are therefore puzzling. "Capabilities, capabilities, capabilities," repeats Lord Robertson. US leadership was asserted as a matter of fact: given the circumstances, if not America's leadership, whose? Admittedly, the language used during the intervening months has escalated beyond what may be necessary or even desirable. However just it may be, a war that cannot define its aims more narrowly will prove to be difficult to conclude decisively. But questions raised about the new rhetoric would be more credible if they did not echo the *déjà dit* of a past that is simply not compatible with the *jamaïs vu* of September 11.

The lesson that should have been learned on both sides of the Atlantic a long time ago—that America and Europe cannot isolate themselves from the world, and least of all from each other. Forget the exaggerated allegations of America's unilateralist vocation and Europe's appeasing temptations. These are theological dead ends. U.S. interests in Europe, and Europe's interests in America, are too significant to permit any meaningful disengagement that would leave them to the sole good will of others. Granted that doing nothing is not an option, the goal is not to do everything together but to make sure that together we do everything.

On January 29, 2002, President Bush's evocation of an "axis of evil" was maligned in Europe and the United States too—like, it should be noted, President Reagan's denunciation of the "evil empire" that stood in Moscow at the time. Whether the phrase was either appropriate or necessary can be argued. While seemingly adding little to the enemy's apprehensions, it contributed plenty to the allies' concerns, already aroused by a tone of urgency that had not been heard since President Truman's Message to Congress in the spring of 1947—a message, remember, that was also cause for concern at the time.

But more significant is whether the ideas these words were designed to convey are justified. The attacks of September 11 profoundly modified the mathematics of risk-taking, especially in the context of available weapons of mass destruction (WMD). On both sides of the Atlantic, risks that might have been deemed acceptable earlier can no longer be tolerated. For Iraq, this means an aggressive inspection regime coupled with so-called smart sanctions and increased support for the Iraqi opposition—pending more lethal action aimed at replacing the regime in place should these prove to be needed. For Iran (and other WMD-gobblers like North Korea), this means active measures to obstruct weapons transfer to and from these countries, as well as explicit retributions to counter Iran's support of terrorist groups in and beyond the Middle East. Everywhere, this means that groups can no longer define their identity in terms of the hatred they preach and the suicidal missions they sponsor. While it is intellectually true that terrorism is divisible, it has become practically evident that terror is indivisible.

In sum, going it alone when you must is part of going it together when you can. If the United States were to allow the coalition to define the mission, it might be unable to act. Given the circumstances of September 11, this is not an option. Hopefully, however, allowing the mission to define the coalition will not leave the United States alone or with allies that it would rather do without. For America, the next worse thing to doing nothing is doing something with countries that do not share the values that are the stuff of the transatlantic partnership—and indeed, more than a transatlantic partnership, a Euro-Atlantic community.