
Beyond terrorism and privacy: A transatlantic agenda for global security?

EU Institute for Security Studies Roundtable,
16 September 2011, Brussels

Summary of the discussion

The purpose of this roundtable was to reflect upon broadly-defined Euro-Atlantic security cooperation including the fight against terrorism, the rule of law, respect for fundamental freedoms, good governance, etc. What strategic direction should such cooperation take? What are the major challenges that need to be addressed? In a shifting global environment, is the transatlantic security partnership still indispensable? And how have new security challenges impacted on our societies?

The discussion confirmed that the transatlantic security agenda is indeed broad and goes substantially beyond privacy and terrorism *problematique*. While many areas in the already ongoing security cooperation between the US and the EU have been identified (transportation security, information exchange, cybersecurity, radicalisation, and addressing internal security concerns through external action), there was also agreement on the obstacles to further advancing EU-US security cooperation, in particular where too much attention is paid to 'little differences' and internal challenges related to the EU's policymaking process (i.e. the need to coordinate between 27 member states and agencies and the involvement of numerous actors at the European Union level).

The panellists also suggested a number of concrete steps that need to be taken to ensure that EU-US security cooperation contributes to achieving each partner's individual security objectives, but also to more comprehensive security and justice in other parts of the world.

The following objectives emerged from the discussion:

- **The need to define a 'transatlantic solidarity clause':** Cecilia Malmström, Commissioner for Home Affairs, underlined that an attack on Boston would be interpreted as an attack on Brussels or London. It is clear, however, that this 'transatlantic solidarity clause' needs to be defined in a more precise way and better put into practice.
- **The need to better connect parts of the transatlantic security network:** Amb. William Kennard from the U.S. Mission to the European Union drawing from his experience at the Federal Communications Commission compared the transatlantic security architecture to a network and underlined that like in a computer network, security actors in Europe and in the US need to be better connected. Patryk Pawlak from the EU Institute for Security Studies continued with this analogy and stressed that it is not only about hardware but also about software and the language in which parts of the network communicate. He has underlined that differences in vocabulary are one of the principle causes of misunderstanding at the transatlantic level.

- **The need to define transatlantic ambitions:** The EU Counterterrorism Coordinator, Gilles de Kerchove, suggested that the EU and the US need an ambitious overarching project that would further advance transatlantic security cooperation. He suggested that a joint assessment of asymmetric threats facing both partners over the next ten years could be one possibility.
- **The need to distribute responsibilities:** Jamie Shea, NATO Deputy Assistant Secretary for Emerging Threats, observed that the challenges are numerous and diverse and that there is plentiful work for the EU, US and NATO to do. In that vein, he insisted that nobody should insist on doing everything. He also indicated some future challenges that the transatlantic community will need to face, in particular with the uncertain outcome of the revolutions in the Arab world and so-called 'hybrids', i.e. terrorists armed with nuclear weapons, etc.

Echoes of 9/11

Alongside the discussion taking place at the roundtable, the US Mission to the European Union organised a small exhibition entitled "*9/11 Echoes from Andorra to Zanzibar*", which was a small selection of the many thousands of cards, artwork, letters of condolence and other items sent to US diplomatic missions from people around the world to express their sentiments of solidarity and peace in the days following September 11, 2001. The exhibits are on loan from the US Diplomacy Center in Washington D.C.