

Chaillot Paper

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Seeing blue:
American visions of
the European Union

Esther Brimmer



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American visions of
the European Union

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The United States has been a constant, if at times ambivalent, supporter of European integration from the earliest days of the European Coal and Steel Community to the current European Union. After two world wars drew the United States into military action to defend liberal democracy in Europe, American leaders understood that the security of Europe was in the American interest. The foundation of that security would be a transatlantic alliance, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) providing a formal commitment that the US and its allies would defend each other if they were attacked. While the military alliance was the foundation, a deeper relationship needed to be built. By forging new economic, political and social links, Europeans could make war among Germany and its neighbours unthinkable. The vision was realised in Western Europe through the integration process that would lead to the European Union.

This *Chaillot Paper* will analyse American perspectives on the European Union, particularly as a global strategic actor. It will argue that while the US-EU relationship is less acrimonious than in 2003, there are still fundamental tensions in the relationship. While most of these are political, some are structural. The political ones can be solved by changes in policies and policy-making personnel; the structural ones cannot. These have to be addressed and managed, but are likely to continue to be a source of friction.

In the first decade of the twenty-first century, transatlantic relations have been seriously strained. The nadir was the dramatic disagreement over the invasion of Iraq in 2003. Yet that breach deepened a cleavage that had opened two years earlier with George W. Bush's rejection of the Kyoto climate change treaty and the International Criminal Court and his promulgation of an 'axis of evil.' His eagerness to pursue unilateral policies was bound to cause discord with European partners with a preference for using multilateral solutions when possible.

The paper contends that by early 2007, the transatlantic relationship had cooled down from the fever pitch three years earlier. Normal policy disagreements continued, but discord was not new. US-EU relations had experienced flare-ups over the decades. The early 2007 period represents a recovery from the two most recent episodes of acrimony: the creation of a defence role for the EU in the form of the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) and the 2003 rift over the war in Iraq. Each episode raised a fundamental question; respectively, to what extent will Europeans organise their defence through the EU and not NATO?, and is there a fundamental strategic transatlantic divergence over the use of force?

The paper will posit that ESDP does not pose an existential threat to NATO and that both the difficulties in coordinating the interests of the 27 EU Member States and the possibilities of new roles for NATO create a different outlook in 2007 than in 2000 or even 2003. Furthermore, the continuing violence in Iraq has forced the Bush Administration to reevaluate its policies in Iraq, which in any case, was a *sui generis* crisis not indicative of transatlantic responses to all situations in which force might be used. There are differences within the transatlantic community about the use of force, but they were neither caused – nor solved – by the Iraq war debate. By early 2007 the transatlantic tone had become more pragmatic, but the overall international system was more dangerous. The US and EU discussed options in less shrill tones, but were faced with deteriorating negotiations with a uranium-enriching Iran, a nuclear missile-testing North Korea, strife-torn Iraq and increasingly violent Afghanistan.

These recent transatlantic debates exemplify a more basic question about American views of the European Union and EU members' views of the United States, which have political and structural components. The political concerns centre on each side's willingness to accept the other's role in international affairs. The political issues concern different interpretations of interests among EU member states and in the US on any given issue of the day, whether questioning the nature of international terrorism, the next step to be taken in the Israel-Palestine peace process, or trade with the developing world. These are normal policy differences. On the structural side, the United States has accepted the presence of another liberal democratic entity in international affairs, but one that can appear to be a strange

agglomeration of both national and supranational elements. It is unlikely that the US will ever reach a final decision on the benefits of the EU. Instead, despite continuing support, some ambivalence will persist. Dealing with the EU is difficult for outsiders. US decision makers have to figure out when to work with the EU and when with national governments or a combination of the two. Meanwhile, the European Union has continually to evaluate the degree to which it will accept the fact that the United States is the only global superpower with worldwide interests. The European assessment is affected not only by US policies, but also by how European officials perceive the American political leaders of the day.

This *Chaillot Paper* argues that leaders can take steps to overcome policy divergences and mitigate the structural problems in the US-EU relationship. The paper begins by placing the current situation in context, examining the US views of the EU as a strategic actor including in terms of security, defence and the use of force and managing global issues and economic affairs; it then goes on to consider the EU in American politics, with reference to the 2006 congressional elections.

The paper takes an unconventional approach. Rather than examine each EU policy according to which entity administers it (the Commission or the Council), it selects topics according to their international impact or relative importance to the transatlantic relationship. Thus, the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP), ESDP-NATO relations and the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) are discussed early in the paper. CFSP topics were chosen for their relevance to transatlantic relations. Therefore, geographical and functional CFSP issues are both considered. Enlargement and the Neighbourhood Policy are also discussed even though these are not classic 'foreign policy' instruments; the conduct of these policies still affects transatlantic relations. The paper's analytical approach considers various programmes according to outsiders' perceptions of their impact, not according to their location in the EU's organisational chart.

As this author has often noted, the European Union is the most important organisation of which the US is not a member. The US has a vote in all the other organisations that have a significant impact on the US such as NATO, the United Nations, and the World Trade Organization. Americans have an abiding

interest in the EU, but it is unlikely to be a passionate engagement. American policymakers tend to have strong views about countries that are direct threats or are fundamentally confrontational, such as the Soviet Union and Cuba during the Cold War, Saddam's Iraq or South Africa during apartheid. These challengers inspire Americans to 'see red' in anger. In contrast, happily, the EU inspires neither hatred, nor fear, but amity tinged with ambivalence. Americans are cool, but comfortable, with the EU: in this case they 'see blue' in contentment.

American support for European integration

The United States encounters the European Union as a global actor in several fields, including security and defence, managing global issues, and international economic relations. Security lies at the core of European integration. The fundamental US approach has been constant for decades. Americans have tended to support European integration when it made Europe more capable of providing for its own security while complementing the Alliance, thereby relieving the US burden.

The pattern of US-EU relations was evident even in the early days of European integration. American leaders saw European economic and defence integration as part of the web of transatlantic institutions remaking post-World War II Europe. Important policy setbacks affected US views of the process. The failure of the European Defence Community created doubts in American leaders' minds about the ability of the European institutions to bear the weight of defence. These doubts are latent, but linger, and may be one of the root causes of more recent scepticism. After the failure of the European Defence Community (EDC), Americans no longer thought of the European institutions as formal defence mechanisms. Four decades later, when the EU began to develop defence mechanisms through ESDP, Americans were still sceptical. While the EDC's demise was not often cited, that failure meant that a generation of American analysts was educated to expect a neat dichotomy. NATO handled defence and the European institutions managed economic integration.

After significant debate in the immediate post-war period, the Truman Administration decided that a prosperous Europe would be a stable Europe. The infamous Morgenthau plan to deindustrialise Germany was rejected. By the late 1940s, the Truman Administration committed the United States to complementary tracks of European revitalisation, an American defence commitment through NATO, European defence cooperation through the ill-fated European Defence Community, and economic recovery

through the Marshall Plan. The Plan's requirement for European cooperation as a condition of aid spawned the Organization for European Economic Cooperation (OEEC). Visionary European leaders created their own indigenous form of cooperation beginning with the European Coal and Steel Community. These policies were separate, but inter-connected. They reinforced the notion that a peaceful future for Europe lay in cooperative integration, reversing a long history of confrontation.

From the beginning, Americans supported European integration because US officials believed that this process would bind together former enemies and prevent another war among western European countries. European unity and cooperation was important for sustained American interest in the early years and still underpins American support for European integration. Massive American support only seemed justified if Europeans converted it into stability. Reflecting in his memoirs on the events of 1952, the final year of the Truman Administration, then Secretary of State Dean Acheson observed:

A continuance of American interest and effort in Europe on the scale of the past six years depended upon the continuance in Europe of policies designed to create a community united politically and strong economically and militarily. Such a community we could and would support as a central point in our foreign policy.

However, if the European effort should fall apart, the whole basis of our supporting effort would disintegrate. That effort was worthwhile and necessary if it helped Europeans build a new and strong Europe. It would be quixotic to continue it if Europeans were giving up the struggle. If the European Defense Community went to pieces, I foresaw great difficulties for the new administration.¹

As Stanley R. Sloan writes, that new Republican Administration headed by Dwight D. Eisenhower and inaugurated in 1953 was also committed to the EDC, seeing it as a way to engage Germany in the defence of Europe. He cites President Eisenhower's observation, 'In hearings before the Congress, I have always had to face the question as to when we were going to get German help in defending Europe. It would be difficult to justify Congressional appropriations for Europe if there were no such prospect.'²

Despite bipartisan American support, EDC did go to pieces.

1. Dean Acheson, *Present at the Creation: My Years in the State Department* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1969), p. 708.

2. Dwight D. Eisenhower documented in *Foreign Relations of the United States*, quoted in Stanley R. Sloan, *NATO, the European Union, and the Atlantic Community: The Transatlantic Bargain Reconsidered* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2003), p. 31.

The defeat contributed to an enduring element in American views of European integration – scepticism. Thereafter, from the US point of view, primary territorial defence would be provided by NATO. European integration would contribute to security by reconfiguring intra-European relations, making war among former enemies unthinkable. Then, as now, American policy makers who supported European integration did so because they believed that European countries could accomplish beneficial actions together that they could not achieve alone. The result of working together could be to make policies more sustainable because they were supported by more than one European country. Concomitantly, American leaders tended to discount European effectiveness when discord and internal rivalries reemerged. Thus, for American policymakers the Alliance handled hard defence, while the EU (and its predecessors) addressed soft security. The French Assembly's 1954 defeat of the European Defence Community precluded a hard defence track within the Communities' framework. NATO's decision to integrate Germany as a member in 1955 focused strategic defence of the European front line in the Alliance, not the integration process.

In addition, Sloan points out that the failure of the EDC changed the nature of the European role at a time when the Eisenhower administration was advancing a 'New Look' for defence policy. The New Look in an era of less European defence cooperation encouraged a greater reliance on the American nuclear guarantee and set up a decades-long debate about burdensharing in the Alliance.³

American attitudes towards Europe in this period combined both hegemony and benevolence. In the immediate post-World War II period the US had unprecedented international power, which it chose to use to create a series of multilateral institutions from the United Nations, to the Bretton Woods institutions to NATO. These institutions would shape international order as the Cold War foreclosed initial hopes of a more cooperative system. However, the US was benevolent, not altruistic. It acted in the belief that the new multilateral institutions were good for the United States as well as for the world as a whole. As a global power, the US benefited from spreading international order and stability. In the period after the end of the Cold War, Americans would recalculate the balance between benevolence and hegemony in relation to various institutions, including the EU.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 39.

Underlying current transatlantic discussions is a debate about diverging strategic perceptions. During the Cold War, the western countries shared a common concern in defending the West against the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact. This shared view about the source of the threat helped give coherence to transatlantic institutions. However, it did not necessarily ensure common approaches to relations with Moscow, Beijing or international communism. Over the years there were numerous disputes on issues ranging from the course of Soviet oil pipelines to *Ostpolitik* to the basing of intermediate nuclear missiles. The demise of a leading overarching enemy has left many officials and analysts looking for a mission for NATO and the Atlantic Alliance. As US Secretary of Defence Robert Gates said at the 2007 Munich Security Conference, ‘the question that still confronts us today is how a partnership originally formed to defend fixed borders should adapt to an era of unconventional and global threats.’⁴

There are basic questions in play as Euro-Atlantic leaders search for new themes for the alliance. One of the most fundamental is whether the allies enjoy enough of a common strategic outlook to remain allies. The explanation is not simply a matter of Americans think ‘this way’ and Europeans think ‘that way.’ Instead there is a subtle mix of conundrums that leaders and publics on both side of the Atlantic face. Americans ask what is the nature and meaning of the current American dominance? Should the US try to reshape the world according to its own immediate interests and try to prevent the emergence of a peer competitor as many neo-conservatives have argued? Should it loosen the bonds of its multilateral commitments? Or should the US reinforce institutions that sustain American leadership, but which need the cooperation of others, while advocating universally applicable standards? Does the US want strong permanent allies to share burdens or flexible short-term partners to accomplish specific missions? Has the advent of large-scale international terrorism

4. Robert Gates, ‘Speech at the 43rd Munich Conference on Security Policy’, 12 February 2007. Available at http://www.security-conference.de/konferenzen/rede.php?menu_2007=&menu_konferenzen=&sprache=en&id=192&

fundamentally changed the nature of strategic analysis and the need for international rules?

The most fundamental difference is that the Bush Administration believes it is waging a war. President Bush opens the 2006 National Security Strategy with the stark statement ‘America is at war.’ The document continues: ‘this is a wartime national security strategy required by the grave challenge we face – the rise of terrorism fueled by an aggressive ideology of hatred and murder, fully revealed to the American people on September 11, 2001.’⁵

Critics of the Administration disagree with the wartime analogy, but accept the centrality of the problem. In an October 2006 speech, Democratic Senator Joseph Biden charged: ‘The Administration continues to conflate under one label – “the war on terrorism” – very disparate challenges from very different groups and countries and to use the same limited set of tools – military force and regime change – to fight them. We must refocus America on the most lethal threat: the possibility radical fundamentalists will acquire weapons of mass destruction and develop strategies for success in Iraq and Afghanistan.’⁶

Even if they do not fully accept the wartime image, American policymakers believe that they are facing a new mix of threats with non-state actors able to exact large-scale loss of life. Europe still plays an important role in this analysis; not as a territory to be saved from Soviet invasion, but as the home of some of the disaffected people who could become terrorists. In his 2007 Munich conference remarks, Secretary Gates reiterated the US view, noting:

But the challenge posed by violent extremism today is unlike anything the West has faced in many generations. In many ways it is grounded in a profound alienation from the foundations of the modern world – religious toleration, freedom of expression and equality for women.

As we have seen, many of these extremist networks are home-grown, and can take root in the restless and alienated immigrant populations of Europe.⁷

In contrast, Europeans ask different strategic questions such as do we want to be a global or a regional player? Do we want to have an international role as the EU, or as NATO, or as national governments linked by European institutions? To what extent do

5. George W. Bush, *The National Security Strategy of the United States of America*, Cover letter presenting the report to Congress dated 16 March 2006 (Washington, D.C.: March 2006).

6. Joseph R. Biden, Jr., ‘Biden Outlines Four Steps to Make America Safer’, 4 October 2006, Press Release, p.1. Available at <http://biden.senate.gov/newsroom/details.cfm?id=264407&>

7. Robert Gates, Munich Security Conference 2007, op. cit. in note 4.

Europeans have interests worthy of military commitments far from Europe itself? If the EU or Europeans become more assertive does that action necessarily have to be in competition with the US? Should NATO play a preeminent role in Euro-Atlantic deliberations? As German Chancellor Angela Merkel commented in 2006,

I think we have to take a decision: Do we want to give NATO a kind of primacy in transatlantic cooperation, meaning an attempt first being made by NATO to carry out the necessary political consultations and decide on the required measures – which doesn't mean everyone participating in everything all the time –, or do we want to relegate NATO to a secondary task? This is a decision which has to be taken. In my view we should decide that NATO has that primacy, and that other courses should not be explored until the Alliance fails to arrive at an agreement.⁸

European leaders talk about the challenge of terrorism, but most do not place anti-terrorism at the centre of their strategic analyses to the same degree as their American counterparts. Yet there are important differences among European countries. The views within Europe are just as diverse and divergent as those across the Atlantic. Nevertheless, the European Council was able to adopt the landmark European Security Strategy of 2003, which places European security in the context of 'a better world.' Significantly, it begins by raising global challenges including poverty and AIDS before delving into terrorism and weapons of mass destruction. Both the US and EU security strategies raise similar issues, but with different priority.

The transatlantic differences in outlook, whether simple or subtle, affect American views of the EU as a security actor. The US and the EU may be trying to accomplish different goals. The question is, are these goals compatible? The US still sees itself as a global power and expects its permanent allies to share – at least to some degree – its interest in international affairs on a global scale. Americans will tend to measure other powers by their ability to walk on the global stage. Europeans may be pursuing a different objective. For example, some Europeans may prefer to focus on nurturing a secure region in which deeper integration can flourish. These goals at times may be incompatible, but need not be in direct conflict. They can, however, underpin different policy choices. Which is more of a threat, global terrorism or climate

8. Angela Merkel, 'Germany's Foreign Policy in the Face of Global Challenges', speech at the Munich Conference on Security Policy, 4 February 4 2006. Available at http://www.securityconference.de/konferenzen/rede.php?id=170&menu_2007=&menu_konferenzen=&sprache=en&.

change? To the victims of floods and changing crop yields, these transnational environmental phenomena may be bigger threats than terrorist attacks in major cities. When evaluating American perceptions of the EU, we need to ask: are American criteria for a successful EU different from those of Europeans themselves? This paper suggests that the two sets of goals are congruent, but not identical.

The European Union as an international actor

The emergence of the EU as a foreign policy actor is an important element in US perceptions of the EU. The European Union has a complex structure for managing international relations. The Commissioner for External Relations is, of course, a member of the Commission as is the Commissioner for Development who manages significant foreign policy resources. The portfolios of other Commissioners, such as environment, trade, and enlargement, also include international issues. In addition, the High Representative for Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) supports the goals of the European Council. CFSP is the European Council's main diplomatic vehicle, with the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) providing a framework for actions with military and civilian assets including peacekeeping tasks. The Council, along with the Political and Security Committee, guides the ESDP, which remains largely intergovernmental.

There are many facets to the European Union's international presence. This chapter will address not only ESDP and CFSP, but also enlargement and the European Neighbourhood Policy. Developing a comprehensive understanding of Europe's engagement with the world around it requires an examination of all of these policies.

European Security and Defence Policy

The most important intersection between transatlantic and European security concerns is the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP). ESDP has occasioned the most transatlantic controversy and therefore will be addressed first. When the United Kingdom and France issued the St. Malo declaration in 1998, US policymakers reacted strongly. Although the Clinton Administration was largely pro-EU, any American foreign policy leader would need to be concerned about a policy that appeared to challenge NATO's

dominance in transatlantic security. Here was the UK, the US's closest military ally, signing up to a European 'defence' programme in which the US had no part. Then Secretary of State Madeleine Albright responded with the '3Ds' in a speech on 8 December. She warned against 'delinking' European and American defence, 'duplicating' work in NATO and the EU, and 'discriminating' against non-EU members. For the next several years, many official meetings and think tank conferences were devoted to grappling with the implications of ESDP for transatlantic relations.⁹

The lingering scepticism about Europeans' ability to cooperate mingled with fears that these countries would cooperate to exclude the US. On the one hand, after the end of the Cold War Americans were ready to let Europeans take the lead on their continent as Secretary of State Warren Christopher did at the beginning of the Balkans crisis. However, subsequently American leaders were acutely aware that the disaster in the former Yugoslavia could not be resolved until the United States became directly involved, resulting in the Dayton Accords in 1995. When Europe had to provide hard security on its own it could not. Europeans, especially in the UK and France, responded by rethinking how they were organised to promote security in Europe. With the election of the pro-European Tony Blair, London's leaders were eager to demonstrate their EU credentials in an area where the UK is crucial, military defence.¹⁰ The St. Malo agreement and the subsequent European Security and Defence Policy triggered deep questioning in Washington. These concerns peaked in 2000; the US's subsequently more balanced approach to ESDP is an example of the cooler climate in transatlantic affairs.

By 2006, the debate had cooled for several reasons:

- D *Overshadowed by events.* ESDP was intended to increase European capabilities to act in intrastate crises outside of Europe or other types of conflict similar to the Balkan wars of the 1990s. After September 11, different issues dominated the scene with transatlantic security debates overshadowed by questions of how to deal with Al-Qaeda, terrorist groups and other non-traditional actors who could inflict massive casualties directly on the home territory.
- D *Iraq.* The deeply acrimonious divisions over the war in Iraq cre-

9. For example, see Esther Brimmer (ed.), *The EU's Search for a Strategic Role: ESDP and Its Implications for Transatlantic Relations* (Washington, D.C.: Center for Transatlantic Relations, 2002).

10. Being outside the euro area and the Schengen zone, defence remains a key area for the UK's contribution to EU institutions.

ated greater distress than the policy discussions over ESDP. The transatlantic fire and ire burned around the question of Iraq policy, drawing heat away from the ESDP issue.

- ▶ *Greater need for post-conflict expertise.* As NATO is under strain in Afghanistan and the US-led forces remain bogged down in Iraq, even Bush Administration sceptics have a greater appreciation for the merits of the type of integrated, civilian post-conflict capacities included in ESDP Headline Goals.
- ▶ *Success in the Balkans.* Years of cooperation in the Balkans among the US, the EU, NATO, the UN and other actors has helped improve some Americans' perceptions of the EU.
- ▶ *Re-nationalisation of security and defence policy.* By mid-decade, European capitals were reasserting their roles in defence. In American eyes, the subtle balance between Brussels and Member State capitals had shifted again. The EU-3 (France, Germany, and the UK) took the lead on Iran policy, even though their negotiating team did include Javier Solana representing the EU. It was national defence ministries (not the EU Council) that pledged forces for Lebanon in 2006. National capitals become more evident when committing military forces in dangerous situations, even when undertaken in cooperation with multilateral organisations. Moreover, the failure of the EU constitutional treaty assuaged conservatives' fears of an EU monolith with foreign policy powers. For now, the US does not need to worry about an EU superpower emerging.

Although the ESDP controversy is less furious, transatlantic observers should recognise that, like roots under the winter frost, certain themes persist and will reemerge in the future. Citing then Secretary of Defense William S. Cohen, former US ambassador to NATO Robert Hunter categorises US concerns about ESDP into three areas: capabilities, transparency and non-competitiveness.¹¹ The concern with capabilities was that the EU's new defence demands would siphon resources away from national efforts to meet NATO requirements given that European defence budgets were flat or declining. Fostering transparency meant that all allies would be aware of key decisions; and the EU members were not working in another organisation in order to exclude certain non-

11. Robert E. Hunter, *The European Security and Defense Policy: NATO's Companion or Competitor?* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2002), p. 99, pp. 106-7.

EU NATO allies which might have different views (the US, Turkey). Non-competitiveness referred to the objective of not creating parallel structures in the EU to rival NATO's well-established planning process.

The capabilities issue still dominates transatlantic conversations. Americans of different political persuasions remain concerned that low defence spending by several European countries and competing social demands will continue to constrain defence expenditure. In this environment, increased spending on EU activities not only could decrease resources for NATO, but lead to wasteful inefficiencies. Lack of transparency in planning also creates inefficiencies and deepens divergences in EU and NATO threat perceptions. Overall, the perception of competition between EU and NATO persists with conservatives suspicious of the rise of a peer competitor and liberal internationalists wistful that institutional rivalries will undermine potentially positive Euro-Atlantic cooperation.

To these three, capabilities, transparency, and non-competitiveness, might be added two others: the range of operations (where is the EU willing to deploy under ESDP?) and the degree of danger. The question of range of EU operations has become more acute as the need for European forces outside Europe has grown. The fact that the Balkan wars occurred on the EU's doorstep influenced support for ESDP. European leaders who wanted greater European capacities for dealing with problems in Europe could agree with Europeans who recognised security threats to Europe beyond its shores or who wanted a greater EU contribution to international peace and security. The objectives of all three groups could be met by acting in the Balkans. If the terrain in question were far from Europe, the interests would be less clear. Not all EU Member States have the same investment in or share the same commitment to resolving conflicts in Africa or the Mediterranean as the former colonial powers.

The natural, long-standing American supporters of European integration have been liberal internationalists. This group values the rule of law in international affairs, believes that progress is possible in human endeavour, and welcomes voluntary forms of interstate cooperation. This group appreciates the historic contribution that the European institutions have made to securing a stable peace on the Continent. Numerous US-EU summit statements reflect this perspective, but the liberal internationalist approach

infused the 1995 New Transatlantic Agenda promulgated by the Clinton Administration and the European Commission. The document begins in ringing tones:

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.¹²

It continues,

We share a common strategic vision of Europe's future security. Together, we have charted a course for ensuring continuing peace in Europe into the next century. We are committed to the construction of a new European security architecture in which the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation, the European Union, the Western European Union, the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe and the Council of Europe have complementary and mutually reinforcing roles to play.¹³

While the classic liberal internationalists constitute the bulwark of US support for the EU, an interesting, but not often noted, American constituency for ESDP is the peace operations/global security community. This group is a subset of the internationalist camp, with a particular interest that makes them even more welcoming of EU action than many internationalists. Some American analysts of peace operations support ESDP as a net contribution to international peace and security. They want competent forces available to deal with intrastate and complex crises.

As Victoria Holt and Tobias C. Berkman observe in their analysis of peace operations in the Democratic Republic of Congo, 'the EU-authorized Operation Artemis, on the other hand, was prepared, willing and able to operate in a hostile environment, and quickly established security in its limited area of operations.'¹⁴ Peace operations analysts tend to be less concerned about whether transatlantic capacities are provided through the EU, or the EU

12. European Commission, External Relations, 'New Transatlantic Agenda', adopted by the US-EU Summit, Madrid, 3 December 1995. Available at http://ec.europa.eu/comm/external_relations/us/new_transatlantic_agenda/text.htm.

13. *Ibid.*

14. Victoria K. Holt and Tobias C. Berkman, *The Impossible Mandate? Military Preparedness, the responsibility to Protect and Modern Peace Operations* (Washington, D.C.: The Stimson Center, 2006), p. 157. Available at http://www.stimson.org/fopo/pdf/Chap_8-The_Impossible_Mandate-Holt_Berkman.pdf.

and NATO; they want practical support for UN and other multi-lateral peace operations. They are disappointed by the re-nationalisation of defence and security policy which has accompanied a greater scepticism about international deployments. This group is troubled by a general western disengagement from UN peacekeeping. They know that western militaries feel overstretched and western publics feel overwhelmed by the complexity of the problems encountered. For peacekeeping advocates, ESDP is a way to augment western capacities in support of international peacekeeping. Indeed, greater appreciation of the complexity of stabilisation operations may increase US acceptance of the EU. The experiences in Afghanistan and Iraq have made such stabilisation operations central issues for the mainstream American military. The peacekeeping community's long-standing interest in countries able to integrate civilian and military assets to resolve complex emergencies complements the US military's desire to work with capable partners. Improving stabilisation mechanisms could be an area of policy convergence in the transatlantic strategic community.

The degree of danger is an important factor in the perceptions of planners and publics alike, whether in stabilisation or other types of operations. The EU has taken on a variety of missions of increasing difficulty. At least fifteen operations have been conducted under the banner of ESDP in Europe, Africa and East Asia, well beyond what many observers would have predicted even a few years ago. The civil war in the Congo has raged for years with horrific loss of life. In 2006, the first presidential election in forty years offered the prospect of a path towards a more peaceful future. After significant debate in Member State capitals, the EU deployed EUFOR RD Congo in support of the UN mission, MONUC. Sending soldiers into dangerous missions is one of the most difficult decisions a leader can take. Therefore, it is not surprising that publics want their national leaders to be directly involved in such decisions. Quite rightly, people want leaders to be accountable for sending their family members into harm's way. Even if everyone agrees that the EU brings unique capabilities to addressing a crisis, national leaders will still need to be involved. Ironically, the more the EU deploys military assets in dangerous situations, the more it will need agreement from national capitals.

While American experts can appreciate the need for political debate before the deployments to Congo and Lebanon in 2006,

the spectacle left an image of European reluctance to act. There was a battlegroup on standby in early 2006, but this mechanism did not provide the main framework for EU action. Decisions still had to be made in capitals, making the battlegroup mechanism seem less useful. However, the battlegroups were declared fully operational in January 2007, which may reduce this perception.¹⁵

After the 33-day war between Israel and Hezbollah in the summer of 2006, the United Nations worked hard to field an enhanced peacekeeping operation. The Security Council adopted Resolution 1701. Yet, despite French leadership on the UN resolution, the French Ministry of Defence initially only pledged 200 out of the 15,000 troops authorised. Italy came forth with a larger force, after which Paris offered 2,000. EU Member States will account for 6,900 of the total.¹⁶ As of mid-November 2006, the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) had 9,700 troops from twenty countries including EU members Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Poland, Portugal, Luxembourg, Spain, Sweden, 2007 accession country Bulgaria, and Turkey.¹⁷ For many Americans, the success of the enhanced UNIFIL would reflect well on European contributions to international peace and security even though this is a UN, not an EU, mission. Europeans would be seen as taking on a difficult mission in an area where the US itself could not deploy troops for political reasons.

American supporters of an effective EU continue to look for promising avenues for cooperation. The European Gendamerie Force (EGF) may offer one such opportunity. The EU has already begun to specialise in filling the intersection between civilian and military assets in crisis management. The Civilian Headline Goal includes civil administration, civilian police and other administrative experts crucial to stabilising societies after conflict. Many intrastate conflicts deteriorate into stalemates of violence or insurgency rather than formal hostilities between soldiers. These crises are often humanitarian disasters where civilians are vulnerable and the fundamental laws of war are hard to apply and not respected by some combatants. Outsiders want to stop the killing, but an army or even a traditional peacekeeping force would not be effective. In such cases an international paramilitary police force could help restore order while domestic democratic institutions develop to deal with the problem. Many European countries have paramilitary police forces that have contributed to international

15. EU Council Secretariat, 'EU Battlegroups Factsheet', February 2007. Available at http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cmsUpload/Battlegroups_February_07-factsheet.pdf.

16. Delegation of the European Commission in Lebanon, 'The European Union response to the crisis in Lebanon', Press file, Updated 16 September 2006, p. 4. Available at <http://www.dellbn.cec.eu.int/en/humanaid/press16sep06.pdf>.

17. UN News Centre, 'Lebanon: Indonesian troops arrive to boost UN force numbers to almost 10,000', 16 November 2006. Available at [http://www.un.org/Depts/dpko/missions/unifil/facts.html](http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=20572&Cr=leban&Cr1=and United Nations, 'UNIFIL - Lebanon Facts & Figures', available at <a href=).

peace operations including Italy's Carabinieri, France's Gendarmerie, and Spain's Guardia Civil. In September 2004, the Dutch EU presidency said that along with the Netherlands, France, Italy, Portugal and Spain had agreed to create a European Gendarmerie Force, which is a separate initiative from ESDP's Headline Goals.

As US government analysts David T. Armitage, Jr., and Anne M. Moisan point out in a report published by the National Defense University, 'our European allies have substantial experience in the use of forces with the kind of training, organization, and equipment that is directly relevant for future law enforcement missions in S&R [stabilization and reconstruction] operations.'¹⁸ They comment that '...it would be unfortunate if Washington overlooked a unique and valuable European contribution in providing this intermediary support to postconflict stabilization...'¹⁹ Such practical suggestions offer a way forward for exploring how the EU, US and other actors can help in complex crises. Washington may be more ready to hear such suggestions than earlier in the decade when the first George W. Bush Administration was disdainful of augmenting assets for anything less than combat operations.

Despite the search for practical solutions on the working level, some more conservative political leaders are more critical of the European efforts. At a June 2005 conference US Senator Gordon Smith observed '...what amazes me though is the rush to create a new structure that will allow the EU to act militarily, even as European countries fail to meet their NATO obligations.' He went on to lament '...the worst thing that could happen would be to create on paper, but not in budgets and bullets, a defense that actually lived up to the security needs of Europeans.'²⁰

While transatlantic relations are currently relatively calm compared to recent years, there is the potential for future discord if change is not managed well. For now, sceptical Americans are less worried about the EU after the 2005 failure of the constitutional treaty. However, integration continues. The development of the European Defence Agency (EDA) needs careful consideration. The EDA's goals include not only 'better military capabilities' and 'better value for European taxpayers', but also 'stronger European defence industries.'²¹ To some Americans already distrustful of the EU, this could be another lightning rod attracting sharp criticism. Even those predisposed to support EU activities could come

18. David T. Armitage, and Anne M. Moisan, 'Constabulary Forces and Postconflict Transition: The Euro-Atlantic Dimension', *Strategic Forum*, no. 218, November 2005, National Defense University, p. 2. Available at <http://www.ndu.edu/inss>.

19. *Ibid.*, p. 1.

20. Gordon Smith Keynote Address, in 'Is the European Union in the Interest of the United States?', Heritage Special Report on a Conference Held 28 June 2005, SR-10 (Washington, D.C.: The Heritage Foundation, 12 September 2005), p. 4. Available at http://www.heritage.org/Research/Europe/upload/sr_10.pdf.

21. European Defence Agency, 'Why the European Defence Agency?'. Available at <http://www.eda.europa.eu/>.

to see it as a cover for protectionist military purchasing. However, creative diplomacy could help build an element of transatlantic cooperation into the EDA's evolving work. Indeed, in a November 2006 report the Center for Strategic and International Studies called for '...enhanced cooperation between NATO and the European Defence Agency; and a joint working group to examine the consequences and benefits of defense integration (i.e., pooling, specialization, or multinational procurement).'22

NATO-EU relations

From an American perspective, a discussion of the EU in the world will at some point touch on the question of relations between NATO and the EU. This is not solely a bureaucratic question, nor a manifestation of petty rivalries. Most American observers who think that Europeans can play a positive role in helping manage international peace and security think that there is enough work for both the EU and NATO. The more important cleavage is between those who think that Europeans can help and those who are dismissive of such a proposition. Those who think Europe is not a helpful international partner may be less vocal, but their doubts persist.

We can identify several categories:

1. Those who do not think continental Europeans are especially useful partners for the US in international affairs (some in this group have a different attitude regarding the UK).
2. Those who think Europeans can be helpful partners to the US, but want to work with them on security issues exclusively through NATO.
3. Those who think Europeans can be helpful partners to the US and want to work with them through the EU and NATO.

There is not a significant group of American observers that would want to work with Europeans exclusively through the EU. The US is a member of NATO, not the EU; therefore, it is not surprising that American 'Atlanticists' would want to work within a NATO framework for at least some issues. There was much heat generated when then German Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder said

22. Julianne Smith, principal author, 'Transforming NATO (...again): A Primer for the NATO Summit in Riga 2006', (Washington, D.C.: Center for Strategic and International Studies, November 2006), p. 66.

in 2005 that NATO ‘...is no longer the primary venue where transatlantic partners discuss and coordinate strategies.’²³ While he wanted to discuss challenges facing NATO and the importance of the EU, to many Americans it sounded as if he were downgrading the institution that formally binds the US to European security. In this sensitive area, European critics of NATO need to clarify whether they think the institution is outdated or if, more fundamentally, cooperation with the US is outdated too. Working on improving NATO-EU relations is not an alternative to supporting the EU. From an American perspective, resolving the NATO-EU impasse contributes to American engagement with the Union. Blocking cooperation between these institutions in effect forecloses one channel for transatlantic support of the EU. While NATO means working with several allies, not just the US, not working with NATO closes off a path for cooperation with Washington.

Spillover effects are an important factor in transatlantic perceptions of EU-NATO relations. The inability to create regular, practical, working level interactions between the two major Euro-Atlantic institutions reflects poorly on EU Member States creating the impression that political theology matters more than actions. NATO and EU officials have been quite creative in developing useful working relationships in the field when deployed together, as in the Balkans. Such measures can indicate areas for cooperation back in Brussels. For example, EU and NATO officials could meet together to help manage troop commitments and rotations now that the EU battlegroups were declared fully operational in January 2007.

The relationship between the battlegroups and the NATO Response Force (NRF) highlights the tensions between the two organisations as well as the potential security benefits of improved cooperation. Both initiatives were launched to respond to leaders’ interest in enhancing capacities to deal with modern conflicts. The 1999 Helsinki European Council called for greater EU capacity for rapid military reaction to unfolding security crises near or far from Europe. The idea of improving the EU’s ability to deploy military assets abroad was an important step in the EU’s commitment to address international security. Headline Goal 2010, promulgated in 2004, developed the battlegroup idea, which was then further elaborated by the EU Military Staff. The EU’s battlegroup planning scenarios include five situations: ‘con-

23. Gerhard Schroeder, ‘Speech on the 41st Munich Conference on Security Policy’, February 12, 2005. Available at http://www.securityconference.de/konferenzen/rede.php?menu_2005=&menu_konferenzen=&sprache=en&id=143&.

flict prevention, separation of parties by force, stabilisation, reconstruction and military advice to third countries, evacuation operations and assistance to humanitarian operations.²⁴ Each battlegroup contains about 1,500 people including a headquarters unit, sustainable for 30 days with the option of extension to 120 days. Although operational, even the EU admits that challenges remain. In its fact sheet, the Council secretariat noted, ‘significantly, the need for additional strategic lift capabilities is underlined by the Battlegroup Concept. Furthermore, the Battlegroup Concept emphasises the need for accelerated decision-making. Not only do the EU bodies need to be ready but the national decision-making processes need to be synchronized to meet the demanding times.’²⁵

Endorsed at the 2002 NATO Summit in Prague, the NATO Response Force idea was originally developed by the US National Defense University to find a way for the US and its European allies to fight together in high-end conflicts. After the 2001-2002 war in Afghanistan, Atlanticists in the US were concerned that the dramatic divergence in capabilities between the US and many of its allies would make it increasingly difficult to fight together as an alliance. The notion was to be able to field up to 25,000 troops on short notice. NATO’s Response Force was declared operational in November 2006. The NRF was intended to address high-end conflict and humanitarian relief, including ‘evacuations, disaster management, counterterrorism, and acting as “an initial entry force” for larger follow-on forces.’²⁶ Countries that participate in both the battlegroups and the NRF need to ensure that they do not have overlapping commitments. Some, but not all, member states have begun this process.²⁷

If EU-NATO cooperation were seamless, the battlegroups and the NRF could each be deployed in complementary ways, especially when dealing with humanitarian crises, where their missions more closely overlap. The Berlin Plus arrangements were supposed to solve the problem. Indeed, there have been some helpful measures. On the policy level the North Atlantic Council (NAC) and the Political Security Committee (PSC) do meet. In 2003, the EU-NATO Capability Group was formed, providing a channel for NATO to be informed of decisions under the European Capabilities Action Plan (ECAP).²⁸ In the field there have been practical steps. For example, the Deputy Supreme Allied Commander Europe also served as the European operations com-

24. Battlegroup factsheet, February 2007, p. 2.

25. *Ibid.*, p. 3.

26. North Atlantic Treaty Organization, ‘The NATO Response Force: At the Center of NATO Transformation’, Updated 18 December 2006. Available at <http://209.85.165.104/search?q=cache:QNYewQzPBRcj:www.nato.int/issues/nrf/index.html+nato+summit+rapid+reaction+force&hl=en&ct=clnk&cd=16&gl=us&ie=UTF-8>.

27. For example, The Netherlands has established a national mechanism to avoid duplicate assignments. See Michèle A. Flournoy and Julianne Smith, Lead Investigators, *European Defense Integration: Bridging the Gap Between Strategy and Capabilities* (Washington, D.C.: Center for Strategic and International Studies, October 2005), p. 69.

28. Burkhard Schmitt, ‘European Capabilities Action Plan’, (Paris: European Union Institute for Security Studies, September 2005), p. 5. Available at <http://www.iss.eu.org/esdp/06-bsecap.pdf>.

mander for EUFOR in Bosnia, realising an institutional link. As part of the 2003 planning for EU-NATO work in Bosnia, and confirmed subsequently, the deal was that the EU would station a permanent planning cell at NATO's Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe (SHAPE) and that NATO would place a liaison team with the EU Military Staff.²⁹

Despite efforts by many in NATO and the EU, the relationship remains strained. The two leading Euro-Atlantic institutions still do not work well together. As NATO Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer commented in January 2007, '...when one looks at how diverse and complex the challenges to our security have become today, it is astounding how narrow the bandwidth of cooperation between NATO and the Union has remained. Despite many attempts to bring the two institutions closer together, there is still a remarkable distance between them.'³⁰ He argued that EU-NATO relations need to transcend merely avoiding overlap to build active cooperation:

Today we are dealing with something quite different. It is a matter of binding both institutions together in such a way that the various instruments of both institutions can be used together and as effectively as possible. Why? Because it is becoming increasingly clear that the military and non-military dimensions of security must go hand in hand. Because it is becoming increasingly clear that there is no security without development, and no development without security. And because it is becoming increasingly clear that NATO and the EU have specific capabilities that can ultimately promote positive change in crisis regions but only by working together.³¹

Charged with guiding NATO into the future, he recognised that each institution needs the other. Accepting this point in national capitals and both Brussels-based organisations would be beneficial to both institutions. It could also overcome the perception that some Europeans discount greater cooperation with NATO because of a latent fear of excessive US influence. On the one hand, this disquiet could betray doubts about the ultimate utility or longevity of the new EU security institutions. On the other hand, this concern may be a manifestation of frustration at American dominance. Especially after Afghanistan and Iraq, some Europeans may feel that they do not have adequate political con-

29. 'Annex: European Union Military Staff (EUMS) Terms of Reference and Organisation', Para. 4, Council Decision of 2005/395/CFSP of 10 May 2005, Amending Decision 2001/80/CFSP on the Establishment of the Military Staff of the European Union, Official Journal of the European Union, L132/17, 26 May 2005. Available at http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/site/en/oj/2005/L_132/L_13220050526en00170024.pdf.

30. Jaap De Hoop Scheffer, 'NATO and the EU: Time for a New Chapter: Keynote Speech by NATO Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer', Berlin, 29 January 2007. Available at <http://www.nato.int/docu/speech/2007/s070129b.html>.

31. Ibid.

trol over the strategic choices within NATO. For them, building EU institutions may provide a haven.

Improving EU-NATO cooperation bolsters the EU in American eyes, creating positive spillover from a specific issue to the general transatlantic relationship. Spillover flows both ways however. Negative experiences can leave lingering ill will that seeps into other relationships. In this vein, the legacy of 2001-2002 Afghanistan policy is instructive. Afghanistan has become the major focal point of transatlantic cooperation in the wider world beyond Europe. Afghanistan is a key test for NATO's ability to provide security in a period of complex transition. The EU and its Member States is also deeply committed to change in that country. The EU has provided €3.7 billion in aid over the past five years. In 2006, the European Community and Member States pledged another €2.4 billion over several years.³² Yet Europeans remember that in late 2001 the US seemed intent on defeating the Taliban in Afghanistan without the assistance offered by European NATO allies. US Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld's assertion that 'the mission determines the coalition' damaged the spirit of transatlantic cooperation. By mid-2002, almost all NATO members were deployed in Afghanistan, but the resentment affected the tone of transatlantic discourse even before the deep division over Iraq a year later.

While much of the debate over EU-NATO relations focuses on actions beyond Europe, societal security may offer a way to address pressing security needs and improve relations between these two institutions. This is a relatively new area for both organisations, which means that there would be less bureaucratic baggage to carry. For the EU this is a productive area for direct cooperation with the US; for NATO it offers a way to refashion civilian security cooperation elements within the alliance. Fruitful areas for cooperation could include addressing response to catastrophic events whether manmade or natural.

Recent disasters have reminded governments that they need a mixture of civilian and military assets when responding to such events. After Hurricane Katrina, federal troops were needed to restore order, to give local authorities time to reestablish control as they had been displaced by floods. In Germany, Chancellor Angela Merkel called on the Bundeswehr to remove dead birds felled by avian flu from waterways in that country. Military channels can be useful conduits of supplies in support of civilian

32. European Council Secretariat, 'EU Engagement in Afghanistan', Factsheet, November 2006. Available at <http://www.consilium.europa.eu>.

response. As Anne Richard noted in her survey of international assistance to the US after Hurricane Katrina, preexisting connections were crucial for the rapid delivery of aid from outside the country.³³ NATO was one of the routes in which this type of information had already been exchanged. Knowing what equipment was available, common understandings of key terms and a degree of standardisation helped experts transfer what was needed. The lack of such understandings among civilian agencies, military planners and international actors was part of the web of factors in the post-Katrina chaos.

EU crisis planners in the Council and Commission could work more closely with NATO's Euro-Atlantic Disaster Response Coordination Center (EADRCC). In his 17 March 2006 speech at the graduation ceremonies of the European Security and Defence College, EU High Representative Javier Solana noted '...we have also worked hard on strengthening the EU's disaster response capacity. Of course ESDP should not aim to play a leading role in disaster response. But ESDP assets and structures can support civil protection and humanitarian aid efforts.'³⁴ The EADRCC coordinates disaster response among the forty-six members of NATO's Partnership for Peace. A useful option could be to exchange liaison officers between EADRCC and the EU Council secretariat with a view to improving communications and possibly developing joint exercises, and eventually closer planning. These types of practical measures not only would be a service to our publics, but would also boost the EU in American eyes.

Common Foreign and Security Policy

The various EU foreign policy structures represent different lines of authority and responsibility. The Commission is charged with taking a community-wide outlook; while the Council reflects the will of national governments. Still, Americans who support EU engagement on global issues tend to focus on *what* works rather than *who* does it. Thus, there is an interest in how the EU can help internationally, but not much emphasis on the theology of which components of the EU act. Whereas Europeans would highlight diplomatic initiatives as evidence of the existence of a Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), Americans would focus on the bilateral aspect. Still, the EU is a key player in many international

33. Anne C. Richard, *Role Reversal: Offers of Help from Other Countries in Response to Hurricane Katrina* (Washington, D.C.: Center for Transatlantic Relations, 2006).

34. Javier Solana, 'Speech by EU HR Javier Solana at the Graduation Ceremony ESDC High Level Training Course, Stockholm, 17 March 2006', p. 5. Available at http://www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/EN/discours/88870.pdf.

political issues whether globally on relations with China, or closer to home in the Balkans.

The Balkans

The post-Cold War period exploded in the Balkans. In the US, the 1995 Dayton Accord is widely seen as a successful resolution of the bloody Balkans wars. The agreement results from decisive American diplomacy which addressed a disaster that the Europeans could not solve by themselves. It was also an example of NATO's new role in peace operations, though it now looks like less of a stretch in light of subsequent deployments in Afghanistan. The December 2004 transfer of Operations in Bosnia-Herzegovina from NATO to the EU's Operation ALTHEA also fit Americans' perceptions. NATO is for hard security in relatively hostile environments; EU forces are for stabilisation operations in more permissive settings. However, stabilisation missions can be quite dangerous given that some 'post-conflict' situations are not really free of violence. Still, even Europeans now see Bosnia as relatively stable. Given that many European militaries are deployed in Afghanistan and some also in Iraq, Bosnia is a candidate for reductions in forces. Indeed, both the UK and Germany have said that they anticipate reducing the number of troops in Bosnia in 2007.

Kosovo

While the situation in Bosnia is seen as fairly stable, the future of Kosovo remains a difficult issue for Americans and Europeans. The basic tenets of the Dayton Accords still hold: the Balkans are in (not next to) Europe and entry into the EU is the future vocation for the region. However, the momentum has slowed. Kosovo poses the hardest questions. What will Kosovars do? What will Serbs do? What will the international community accept? Outside powers are represented in the Contact Group composed of France, Germany, Italy, Russia, the United Kingdom and the United States. Europeans can expect relatively less engagement in the Balkans from Americans in the coming years. While American policymakers are interested in any place where American troops are deployed, decision-makers largely agree that the Europeans should have a major role in the Balkans. Here is a place where the European Union and NATO have made a dramatic difference. Americans know that even Europeans who are reluctant to use EU assets in Africa or the Middle East accept that the future of the Balkans is a European issue.

Moreover, Americans feel overstretched and under pressure. As Elizabeth Pond notes:

The United States, overstretched militarily, facing an incipient civil war in Iraq, the disintegration of its dream of democratizing the Middle East, the prospect of open-ended pacification in Afghanistan, the nuclear defiance of Iran and North Korea, and oil at \$70 a barrel, wanted to accelerate the negotiations, declare at least one victory, and pull troops out of Kosovo, and the sooner the better. Or at least Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld did.³⁵

If Kosovo could be ‘handed off’ gracefully, that would be one less obligation for the American military, whose Defense Secretary never liked long-term nation-building nor appreciated its complexity. With the EU in the picture, the US could stand back and eventually stand down. In February 2006, Secretary Rumsfeld told the *Financial Times*: ‘We are all working together in Kosovo and the Balkans. Of course, we all went in together, and we will come out together...’ However, he also remarked ‘I am personally hoping that we can continue to reduce some of our forces there.’³⁶

Yet American forces in Kosovo should not be reduced without reference to the political context. While Iraq continues to dominate the US foreign policy agenda, analysts are increasingly concerned about Kosovo. Administration officials and congressional leaders, as well as think tank policy experts, are following the Balkan situation closely, but the public’s attention is focused on the Middle East. This is hardly unusual. Foreign policy issues tend to be the province of specialists unless they involve the deployment of large numbers of American troops or protecting the homeland from terrorism. To the public, the Balkans conflict had been solved, benefiting from the Dayton Accords and subsequent international engagement. The public believes that the process is working. While American opinion-shapers also think that the basic process in the Balkans is working, they are concerned that the remaining unsolved issue of Kosovo’s future status could undermine the regional progress made so far.

American diplomats stress minority rights within Kosovo. The US Special Representative for Kosovo Status Talks, veteran diplomat Ambassador Frank G. Wisner, noted to Voice of America: ‘Whatever the future will be in terms of final status, whether Kosovo will be independent or something else, Kosovo Serbs are

35. Elizabeth Pond, *Endgame in the Balkans: Regime Change, European Style* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution, 2006), p. 264.

36. Donald Rumsfeld quoted in Demetri Sevastopulo, ‘Rumsfeld wants to cut US presence in Kosovo’, *The Financial Times*, 3 February 2006, available at <http://www.ft.com/cms/s/8eed8bfe-9447-11da-82ea-0000779e2340.html>.

going to need the protections that will guarantee them their full rights.³⁷ Protecting minority rights would be crucial to efforts to ensure a place for Serbs in Kosovo.

American opinion-shapers are debating a range of options. The influential National Defense University (NDU) also sees the role of Serbs in Kosovo as important for the future of Kosovo overall. NDU identifies four options for northern Kosovo as explained by Hans Binnendijk: formal partition (excluded by the Contact Group), *de facto* partition, 'rapid reorientation' from Belgrade to Pristina, and an 'incubation zone' led by the international community.³⁸

The United States Institute of Peace special report on 'Kosovo: Ethnic Nationalism at its Territorial Worst' stresses that fifteen years of progress in the Balkans will be put at risk if 'talks on Kosovo's status lead to *de facto* ethnoterritorial separation, with Serbs governed on their own territory by Belgrade without reference to Pristina. Partition, or something approaching it, could trigger another wave of violence, mass displacement of civilians, and instability in multiethnic states of the region.' The report continues: 'If the status talks lead to ethnoterritorial separation in Kosovo, serious instability could affect southern Serbia (Presevo Valley), western Macedonia, and Bosnia.'³⁹ The United States Institute of Peace (USIP) concentrates on the status of Serbs within Kosovo, explaining that

The question of Kosovo's status is gradually boiling down to the question of the status of the Kosovo Serbs, and the degree of their integration into the rest of Kosovo. Or, to put it another way, the question of Kosovo's status is not whether it will be independent or not, but whether it will be sovereign and, if so, over what territory.

Kosovo already is independent in the sense that the Albanian-populated areas govern themselves, within limits imposed by the UN Security Council, independently of Belgrade. No one in Belgrade has put forth a plan to govern Albanians ... But if decentralization allows separate governance of the Serbs within Kosovo, without reference to Pristina, Kosovo will not be sovereign over the territory occupied by Serbs. It should be no surprise then that some in Belgrade and in West European capitals imagine that Kosovo can be given independence but not a seat at the UN, where all sovereign states rightfully sit.

37. Frank G. Wisner, interview with Maja Drucker, Voice of America Serbian Service, 23 June 2006, available at <http://www.state.gov/p/eur/rls/rm/68319.htm>.

38. Hans Binnendijk, 'Executive Summary' in Hans Binnendijk, Charles Barry, et al., 'Solutions for Northern Kosovo: Lessons Learned in Mistar, Eastern Slavonia and Brcko', Defense & Technology Paper 4, Center for Technology and National Security Policy (Washington, D.C.: National Defense University, August 2006), pp. v-vi.

39. Daniel Serwer and Yll Bajraktari, Summary, 'Kosovo: Ethnic Nationalism at Its Territorial Worst', United States Institute of Peace Special Report no. 172, August 2006.

This kind of ambiguous solution is a formula for failure and violence ... With talks on the future status of Kosovo already initiated, the implications of ethnoterritorial separation inside Kosovo need to be understood: calling it decentralization does not change the reality, and the reality of ethnoterritorial separation leads to instability and violence.⁴⁰

Even in the Balkans, where the transatlantic community has agreed on overall strategy in recent years, the spectre of Iraq darkens the prospects. The Iraq war taxes American resources, making many in the Defense Department eager to reduce deployments there. American decision-makers do not think that waiting longer will change the situation. Ambassador Wisner explained the need to decide by the end of 2006, asserting:

I believe that it should happen by the end of this year for everybody's best interests. I can assure you that the condition of negotiation will not change if it lasts another month or two or three months or six months or even another year. The positions are unlikely to be remarkably different. The Serbian side has one point of view, the Albanian another.

But what is held back is an acceptance of normal life ... until final status is settled everybody is in limbo ... So I'm going to argue, and I believe it very deeply, that getting the job done, settling final status by the end of the year, is in the interest of Albanian Kosovars, Serb Kosovars, and the entire region and the stability of the Balkans.⁴¹

American leaders of both parties have been eager to move the process along, but conscious of the complexities. After the 21 January 2007 Serbian parliamentary elections the leading democratic parties joined together to exclude the more nationalist party. The report by UN envoy and former Finnish President Martii Ahtisaari was delayed to avoid bolstering nationalist forces who would dislike its recommendations. The UN plan is based on self-governance, but includes many elements of sovereignty including a constitution and a flag. A difficult course lies ahead as the UN seeks to pave a path between Pristina, Belgrade, Brussels, Washington and Moscow.

Members of Congress have also been discussing options. On

40. *Ibid.*, 'Conclusion.'

41. Wisner, *op cit.* in note 37.

8 November 2005, the United States Senate Committee on Foreign Relations held a hearing on 'Kosovo: A Way Forward?'. Republican Committee Chairman Senator Richard G. Lugar observed that 'a peaceful and secure future for Kosovo lies in building democracy, respecting human rights, and fostering ethnic reconciliation. A successful conclusion to Kosovo's status is crucial to Balkan reintegration into Europe. Much work is to be done, however. ... Bridging this diplomatic distance will require compromise among parties and sustained commitment from the international community and the United States.'⁴² Ranking Minority Member (the senior Democrat on the Committee) Senator Joseph R. Biden commended the international community's investment, but argued 'these accomplishments should be recognised, but they cannot mask the reality that the current situation in the province is fundamentally unworkable. Kosovo's economy remains a hostage of the province's undefined legal status.'⁴³

Yet, the drive to resolve the Kosovo situation may derive more from resignation than enthusiasm. When arguing for Kosovo's independence, scholar Charles Kupchan asserts 'the case for independence, however, rests not on Kosovo's readiness, but the lack of realistic alternatives.'⁴⁴ Kupchan stakes out a more controversial position and is willing to consider partition of the territory whereby the area north of the Ibar River would go to Serbia while the rest became independent. Unlike Ambassador Wisner, Professor Kupchan asserts that '...Kosovo's situation is unique: its independence, and even its partition, is unlikely to trigger further unraveling in the Balkans.'⁴⁵ He also suggests giving Serbia additional incentives such as debt relief and a 'clear pathway to membership in NATO and the European Union.' By August 2006, the Republic of Serbia's external debt had reached 65% of its gross domestic product according to the International Monetary Fund.⁴⁶

National Interest editor Nikolas K. Gvosdev counters that the Kosovo situation is not unique. Granting independence to Kosovo could be expected to embolden separatists from Nagorno-Karabakh to Abkhazia to Taiwan, making veto-wielding permanent Security Council members Russia and China all the more wary of agreeing to independence for Kosovo in the first place.⁴⁷

Americans and Europeans may both want to resolve the Kosovo crisis, but a key 'carrot' is in European hands. The EU

42. Richard G. Lugar, 'Opening Statement for Hearing on "Kosovo: A Way Forward?"', 8 November 2005, available at <http://www.senate.gov/~foreign/hearings/2005/hr051108a.html>.

43. Joseph R. Biden, 'Opening Statement, Hearing on "Kosovo: A Way Forward? 2019"', 8 November 2005, available at <http://www.senate.gov/~foreign/hearings/2005/hr051108a.html>.

44. Charles A. Kupchan, 'Independence for Kosovo', *Foreign Affairs*, November/December 2005.

45. *Ibid.*

46. International Monetary Fund, 'IMF Board Concludes 2006 Article VI Consultation with Republic of Serbia', Public Information Notice, no. 06/120, 20 October 2006, available at <http://www.imf.org/external/np/sec/pn/2006/pn06120.htm>.

47. Nikolas K. Gvosdev, 'Kosovo and Its Discontents', *Foreign Affairs*, January/February 2006.

membership process follows a well-travelled, but strict course along the *acquis communautaire*.⁴⁸ Serbia may take a long time to meet the standards; meanwhile European publics' enlargement fatigue may harden from resistance to refusal. This issue of the connection between EU enlargement and transatlantic Balkans policy is likely to move back up the political agenda. Balkans enlargement issues were not discussed prominently in the 'period or reflection' after the 2005 defeat of the constitutional referenda in France and the Netherlands. Meanwhile analysts await the Security Council's action on the province's future.

Additionally, soon after the November 2006 congressional elections, American policymakers focused more attention on Kosovo for two reasons; first after the fever pitch of the election season it is possible to address issues that were not featured in the electoral cycle and, secondly, due to the optimistic, but stated, policy of resolving status by the end of calendar year 2006 (or early 2007). Ironically, if discussion stays in expert channels it is more likely that the US long-term commitment to the Balkans will be sustained. In these policy channels, including informed congressional committees, serious decision-makers can focus on crafting policy options and building a consensus around the next step. If the issue becomes politicised, that would mean that public fears over American overstretch have affected the foreign affairs, not just defence planning, facets of US policy. The Balkans issue has been largely separate from the Iraq debacle. However, as Secretary Rumsfeld's comments indicate, the issue of military resources links Balkan and Iraq policy. If the US seriously feels so taxed that it must reduce commitments in the Balkans further for political and operations reasons, then the shadow of Iraq will have reached the Adriatic. Then, American options would be even more constrained. Americans will not want to look like they are working against the rights of Muslims in Europe. As Senator Biden noted in 2005, 'Pristina is one of the few Muslim cities in the world where the United States is not only respected, but revered. If we get Kosovo right, Muslims around the world will be reminded of how the United States came to the aid of Kosovo's Muslim population and helped build a strong, independent, multi-ethnic democracy.'⁴⁹

Iran

Engaging Iran is one of the most important recent diplomatic initiatives launched by European countries. Experts on both sides of

48. The *acquis communautaire* is the ever growing body of EU rules that must be adopted by accession countries.

49. Joseph R. Biden, Jr., 'Opening Statement, Hearing on "Kosovo: A Way Forward?"', 8 November 2005, p.3. Available at <http://www.senate.gov/~foreign/testimony/2005/BidenStatement051108.pdf>.

the Atlantic agree that the spread of nuclear technology to Iran is fundamental security threat. They also understand that the US alone cannot address this issue as it has no diplomatic relations with Iran and both suffer from a quarter century of animosity. The EU-3 presented a useful vehicle for trying to restrain the Iranian programme. The Bush Administration was sceptical at first. Indeed their refusal to participate when the more moderate government of Mohammed Khatami-Ardakani was in power, before the election of the much more extreme nationalist conservative Mahmud Ahmadinejad, was a fundamental error that may have cost the West a chance to constrain the Iranian programme. The possibility was slim, but the negotiating dynamics would have been different with the Khatami regime.

In the past decade and half, American observers have shown a greater acceptance of a European role in the Broader Middle East. In the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, Americans have grown to accept changed circumstances and new players from Norway's role in the Oslo accords to the EU's support for the Palestinian Authority. European military engagement has reached a new level with the deployment to Lebanon. The deep transatlantic disagreement over Israeli policy in the 2006 war with Hezbollah emphasised an already profound split. Yet, American interest in European contributions to the Greater Middle East policy go beyond the Palestinian-Israeli issue.

The Bush Administration tried to garner European support for its efforts to build up its version of civilian democracy promotion in the region. In 2004, the Administration pushed for G-8 support for its Greater Middle East Initiative (GMEI). Already invested in their own Barcelona process, many EU members were wary of the GMEI. Yet the Forum for the Future has become a more acceptable undertaking. At the 2004 US-hosted G-8 meeting in Sea Island, the countries expanded it into the Broader Middle East and North Africa Initiative (BMENAI) and a complementary G-8 Plan of Support for Reform. Even though Europeans and Americans will continue to contend with several issues the Middle East, the trajectory of Iran's nuclear programme will remain a pressing and difficult challenge.

China

Perhaps the most controversial foreign policy idea the EU has presented recently was the notion of repealing the EU's arms embargo

on China. The United States strongly objected to the EU's move to end its arms embargo on China in favour of a new code of conduct. French President Jacques Chirac and German Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder advocated lifting the EU arms embargo to normalise relations with China and end a restriction that was imposed after the 1989 massacres in Tiananmen Square. Eventually even the UK said that it supported lifting the ban.⁵⁰

The US has a long-standing commitment to defend Taiwan, which faces a potential military threat from China. US leaders of both parties were deeply concerned that any advance weapons sold to China could someday be used against the US while it was defending Taiwan. The idea that the US's close allies in Europe would advance a policy that could strengthen a potential military adversary was alarming. The controversy instilled in many American minds the idea that some in the EU did not understand the implications of their policy for thousands of US troops and were ready to sacrifice responsibility for commercial gain. The European contention that their code of conduct would be an adequate safeguard was not seen as a credible assurance. Speaking in November 2005, US Assistant Secretary for Political-Military Affairs, John Hillen, stated:

President Bush and Secretary Rice have made clear to our EU friends at the highest possible level our strong opposition to the possible lifting of the EU embargo. So have other regional states, including Japan.

The United States strongly welcomes the efforts of the European Union to improve its Code of Conduct on Arms Transfers, whose normative criteria strongly resemble those of the US Conventional Arms Transfer policy. However, we do not believe that even a strengthened Code of Conduct is an adequate substitute for the EU's China arms embargo.

As we have pointed out in our discussions with our EU colleagues, the European Union's own public reports on arms transfers show that some EU Member States currently approve arms transfers to China under both the embargo and the Code. Indeed, EU data show that those Member States approve more licenses for China than they deny.

50. BBC News, 'EU China arms ban to be lifted', 12 January 2005. Available at http://209.85.165.104/search?q=cache:Zm61vpK1oscj:news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk_politics/4167693.stm+eu+china+arms+embargo&hl=en&ct=clnk&cd=1&gl=us&ie=UTF-8.

This does not provide us a strong feeling of confidence that the Code of Conduct alone without an embargo would be an effective guarantee that lifting the embargo would not result in a qualitative or quantitative increase in EU arms transfer to China, as the European Council said in December.

I want to leave our European friends in no doubt that if the EU lifts its embargo on China, this will raise a major obstacle to future US defense cooperation with Europe. In addition, there is no doubt as to the strength of Congressional feeling on this issue. I think we can count on it: should the EU lift its embargo, the US Congress will legislate.

This is of course not where we want to go. We want our defense cooperation with our European friends and allies to increase. I am encouraged by the US-EU strategic dialogue on East Asia, including China, and I hope it leads to an appreciation and respect for the various positions of the parties, especially those who have tens of thousands of service members carrying out the day-to-day tasks of security in that part of the world.⁵¹

Although the crisis passed when the EU did not lift its embargo, the issue lurks below transatlantic discussions of relations with China. Americans and Europeans see the rise of China as a major change in global affairs. As David Shambaugh notes, ‘... at the most basic level the United States and Europe have shared a desire to enhance China’s place at the global table and to enlarge its stake in the global system.’⁵² He goes on to explain that both the US and EU advocate for human rights in China; however, the US tends to focus on political rights, political prisoners and religious freedom, whereas Europeans tend to push workers’ rights, workplace safety, prison conditions and ending the death penalty.⁵³ The difference of emphasis is consistent with the US affinity for civil and political rights and the European emphasis on social and cultural ones.⁵⁴

The controversy demonstrates the dramatic differences in world views between some European leaders and those of both parties in the US. Europeans have largely focused on the economic threat, while Americans also look at the strategic aspects. Shambaugh explains that ‘the public discourse in the United States concerning China invariably refers to its rise and is dominated by

51. John Hillen, ‘Address to the 18th Annual Global Trade Controls Conference’, 3 November 2005. Available at <http://useu.usmission.gov/Article.asp?ID=C16152D7-BD86-41BB-B469-0CF3A9C11E3E>.

52. David Shambaugh, ‘The New Strategic Triangle: U.S. and European reactions to China’s Rise’, *The Washington Quarterly*, volume 28, no. 3, Summer 2005, pp. 7-25, p. 8.

53. *Ibid.*, p. 10.

54. For a fuller discussion of the differences see Esther Brimmer, ‘The United States, the European Union, and International Human Rights Issues’ (Washington, D.C.: Center for Transatlantic Relations, 2002).

analysis of China's increasing hard power and its effect on US national security interests in Asia.⁵⁵ In contrast, European policy tries to '... assist China in successfully managing these internal transitions and reforms.'⁵⁶ In Shambaugh's view, Europeans see China as a partner in addressing transnational threats such as immigration and contagious diseases. In sum, 'the United States invests its resources primarily to monitor the growth of China's hard power and to deter potentially aggressive behavior beyond its borders, whereas the EU is investing in initiatives inside of China to increase the country's soft power and facilitate its sustainable development.'⁵⁷

Even though the crisis has cooled, the resentments linger, especially on Capitol Hill. Democratic and Republican legislators were stunned and angered by the proposal. Significantly, the EU was damaged in the eyes of internationalists who otherwise support the EU. These legislators are also leading advocates for human rights, who think more, not less, pressure needs to be placed on China to conform to international standards. In addition, legislators know that American service people may someday have to defend Taiwan. This is particularly important for more 'hawkish' members who, at best, were sceptical of the EU's strategic essays. The notion that the EU could pursue an economic policy without addressing the strategic implications reinforced the notion that the Union was not a serious security actor.

Writing in 2005, Shambaugh predicted that

... the political symbolism of lifting the embargo will not go down well in Washington and is likely to trigger substantial acrimony and punitive measures by Congress against European companies. Symbols are sometimes more important than sabers; it is difficult to imagine a worse message than the one that lifting the embargo sends to the United States at a time when China is strengthening its military capabilities.

The situation could be even more acute in the 110th Congress that took office in January 2007. Democrats control the House of Representatives; many are unlikely to be predisposed to be positive towards China. First, they share the strategic concerns of other American decision-makers. Second, they tend to be more interested in international human rights and pressing China for internal change. New Speaker of the House, Nancy Pelosi, was an out-

55. Shambaugh, *op. cit.* in note 52, p. 14.

56. *Ibid.*, p. 15.

57. *Ibid.*, p. 15.

spoken critic of China's human rights record, leading the annual debate on whether to continue granting China most-favored-nation trade status in the post-Tiananmen Square period. Third, many Democratic members of Congress are from northern states that have seen manufacturing jobs move to China. They are unlikely to rise to defend softening policy towards China which they see as unfairly benefiting from globalisation. EU relations with China are fraught with dangers for renewed transatlantic discord.

Russia

Relations among the US, Russia, and the United States are complex. American analysts tend to track individual European countries' relations with Moscow more than the intricacies of the EU's common policy towards Russia. European policies towards Russia seem to be made in national capitals rather than Brussels. Indeed on issues of importance to Americans, human rights and energy, divisions among Europeans are readily apparent. Americans interested in human rights were critical of French President Jacques Chirac and the previous German Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder who seemed to downplay human rights abuses in Russia when meeting with Russian President Vladimir Putin. The discord between Germany and Poland over the Baltic Sea gas pipeline has also not gone unnoticed in Washington. National, not European, considerations predominate. If there really is supposed to be solidarity within the EU, why is Germany proceeding with a pipeline that appears to enable Russia to supply gas to Western Europe while shutting off the flow to Eastern Europe in a power play? Berlin does not intend to divide western interests, but Washington is aware that the view could look very different from Warsaw.

New Europe/Old Europe

The concern over energy issues and Russia touches on American perceptions of Western and Eastern Europe. One of the legacies of the Cold War is the correct perception that on some strategic issues Eastern European countries and the US are closer to each other than to some in Western Europe. Over the years this has manifested itself in many ways from mild discord to sharp disagreements. With his caustic comments about 'new Europe' and 'old Europe'

former US Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld expressed an abrasive version of this view, but also highlighted an invidious analysis of Euro-Atlantic relations. He voiced the assumption that the countries of Central and Eastern Europe would be inherently more supportive of US policy. After all, from the US point of view, the US had been strong defenders of their right to be free of Soviet dominance, stronger than some parts of 'old' Western Europe that were more concerned with maintaining relations with Moscow. Even after the end of the Cold War, Central and Eastern European countries looked to the US for defence as evinced by their desire to join NATO and their repeated calls that NATO focus on members' defence, not on expanding its international nation-building activities. Indeed, many countries such as Poland deployed troops to Afghanistan and Iraq to consolidate their link with the US. These countries do want to keep the US engaged in European security. However, there is a risk that some US policymakers will mistakenly assume that these countries will always support US policy. They will in fact play a multilevel game, at times agreeing with the US, at times with other European states, but always in the service of their national interests. Characterising them as pro-American 'new Europe' oversimplifies their outlook and can lead to misinterpretation of their motives. There will be another controversy sometime in the future; American policymakers must anticipate eventual discord to avoid disappointment and recriminations.

International organisations

International organisations provide another arena for US-EU relations. Working together, Americans and Europeans helped build the major post-World War II international institutions that remain pillars in international society. These institutions are inter-governmental – based on the agreement of states. Where does a *sui generis* supranational like the EU body fit? In one model of EU participation in international organisations, the EU itself takes the lead. In those areas where the Commission has competence, it represents all Member States. For example, the Commission, not individual Member States, acts in the World Trade Organization (WTO). In a second model, the EU and Member States both appear. For example, both the Commission and individual countries are members of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development

(OECD) and the Group of Eight (G-8). In the third model, EU Member States belong to the organisation, but try to act together. In this case, if European countries want to advance common policies they would try to coordinate policies in these settings.

For some Americans, the addition of the EU as a member in its own right is helpful, for others it is an ominous step. Speaking at a conference organised by the conservative Heritage Foundation, former US Assistant Secretary for International Organisations, Dr. Kim Holmes, observed:

Now, the last point I want to make is something I experienced when I was at the State Department and negotiating with the European Union officials. The European Union is increasingly arguing for dual competency in international organisations and is demanding more representation in the United Nations to reflect this view. We gave this a name – ‘additionality’ – to describe the effort by the EU to gain additional representation in the United Nations.

Citing the European Commission’s desire for a separate seat at an international disaster response conference, Dr. Holmes illustrated his point:

They did not just want to be an observer, which is what they had been before. The United States objected, saying this would be giving the same rights as individual member states and would unfairly give European member states, who were still, by the way, at the table, an additional seat; it would give them an unfair advantage by essentially giving them double representation.⁵⁸

This question of the EU in international organisations is not only an esoteric issue of existence; it is also a real challenge for American diplomacy. This author has often heard officials of both the Clinton and Bush Administrations lament the problem posed by the EU in this context. EU Member States are not willing to talk to non-EU states before a common EU position is found. Yet, these same states do not want to negotiate with non-EU members because they say they cannot alter an agreed common EU position. EU Member States need to understand the difficulty this approach poses for outside governments that want to work with the EU. Given the global reach of the US and the numerous venues

58. Kim Holmes, comments transcribed in ‘Is the European Union in the Interests of the United States?’, The Heritage Foundation, op cit. in note 20, pp. 56-57.

in which the US and EU appear, the US is affected by this problem more than any other country. This issue is particularly acute for American officials working in multilateral organisations. At that same conference Dr. Holmes explained:

You can't negotiate with the individual states ahead of time, because they're negotiating amongst themselves, or with the European Union trying to work out their decision. They just say: 'This is the EU competency, we can't talk to you about that until we get our position formed,' and then they get the position formed and it's locked in, they can't change it. So it's really a Catch-22 situation.⁵⁹

Although Dr. Holmes served in a Republican Administration, Democratic Administration officials would agree. Ironically, these are the very people who are probably more likely to be predisposed to support a role for the EU as an international actor. However, this negotiating dilemma can act as a disincentive for them when it comes to working with the EU. Rigid negotiating postures for procedural (not policy) reasons can erode confidence in the EU among certain American policy circles where there might otherwise be greater sympathy for the EU.

Enlargement

While this section of the paper discusses the EU's approach to several major foreign policy issues, it will also consider EU enlargement and neighbourhood policies, topics not usually considered 'foreign' policy by EU Member States. Enlargement and external affairs are managed by two different directorates within the Commission, yet these issues concern relations with non-EU states and have implications for international affairs. Hence, enlargement and neighbourhood issues will be topics to be discussed here.

Membership in the Union has been a fundamental issue from the beginning of the process of integration and deeply affects American perceptions of the European Union. A vignette from the early days of integration recalls Americans' long-standing interest in how the membership of the Union is composed. The original Six (Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Luxembourg, and the Netherlands), could have been the Seven, but the United Kingdom did not join. The initial omission of the European country with

59. *Ibid.*, p. 57.

which the US has the closest ties meant that Americans would have a bifurcated view of the project from the beginning: from the continent and from offshore. Moreover, the fact that a major European country was not part of the original group kept the notion of enlargement on the political agenda for decades, even if only as a latent hope.

From the beginning Americans were interested in which countries would join the Coal and Steel Community. French architects of integration consulted the US very early on. In an evocative passage in his memoirs, Dean Acheson describes a key meeting in Paris with Robert Schuman, 'In the formal reception room in the American Embassy residence on the day of my arrival, Schuman, through an interpreter, disclosed to Ambassador Bruce and me his Coal and Steel Plan for Western Europe, which he and Jean Monnet had been developing in such secrecy that they had not yet discussed it with the French Cabinet.'⁶⁰

Nowadays it is worth remembering how closely involved Americans were in the birth of 'Europe.' European integration was developed as part of the postwar recovery for Europe and in cooperation with American architects of that process. Secretary of State Acheson favoured UK membership, yet he saw first hand the cleavage between Britain and France at the founding of the community. In a sense the drama was a microcosm of American views of the European experiment, which can be envisioned as a pair of glasses. Through one lens Americans see a British view of Europe, through the other Americans see a French-led continental view. American analysis is best when it looks through glasses, not a monocle. Even at the beginning, the British were concerned that joining the European Coal and Steel Community would undermine their domestic social model. Ironically, in 1950 this was the dream of a socialist economy; by the 1980s it was the quest for a more liberal market under Margaret Thatcher. In either case, part of American leaders' perceptions of European integration was coloured by the issue of its effects on the British economy. In 1950, British Foreign Secretary Ernest Bevin was furious that Schuman had consulted Acheson before him. Secretary Acheson wrote about travelling to London after Paris: Bevin '... at once charged that Schuman and I had cooked up the whole plan, purposely keeping him in the dark, and that I had gone to Paris to put the finishing touches on it and get it publicly announced before he ever heard of it.'⁶¹ Beyond the difficulties of a diplomatic *ménage à trois*,

60. Dean Acheson, *Present at the Creation*, op. cit. in note 1, p. 382.

61. Acheson, *Present at the Creation*, op. cit. in note 1, p. 385.

there were political problems too. Acheson reflected on Bevin's dilemma: 'If it [the UK] joined a freely competitive system in the basic commodities of coal and steel, how could it isolate and manage the rest of the British economy as a welfare state? If it did not join, how could Britain retain her basic markets on the Continent?'⁶² In Acheson's view 'the issue was the sovereign right of the Labour Government to pursue democratic socialism. Important but secondary was the national policy of special ties with the Commonwealth and the United States.'⁶³

The UK wanted to talk about the nature of the ECSC before agreeing; France wanted the UK to agree to participate first. In May 1950, the United Kingdom decided not to join the European Coal and Steel Community. Acheson wrote a verdict with which most of his successors as Secretary of State would agree: 'Some decisions are crucial. This decision of May 1950 was one. It was not the last clear chance for Britain to enter Europe, but it was the first wrong choice – as wrong as General de Gaulle's tragic rejection of the penitent in 1963.'⁶⁴

Who is inside affects outside perceptions of the Union. This can be seen in the US views of an earlier enlargement – the eventual acceptance of the United Kingdom. The UK did not choose to join at the beginning, nor did France make it easier for its ally but historic rival. French President Charles De Gaulle's 1963 veto of the UK's application for admission deepened the chasm across the Channel and the Atlantic. The issue of British entry would recur until 1973 when the 'sceptered isle' did finally join. Britain's entry changed the nature of the Communities and American perceptions. Initially, Americans, Commonwealth countries, British dependencies and others focused on the economic impact of UK entry. However, there was a long-term strategic consequence too. In American eyes the EU could never be taken seriously as a strategic actor without the UK. Commanding airlift and sealift, Britain and France have the two European militaries that can project military power internationally on their own. Any serious European military engagement needs to have one or both involved. Thus, while the entry of the UK caused international economic pain to some outside the Communities, and increased political discord within them, it was a fundamental element in reviving the strategic component of European integration two decades later.

For most American observers, British entry into the Communities was beneficial in the longer term. The UK brought a more

62. *Ibid.*, p. 385.

63. *Ibid.*, p. 387.

64. *Ibid.*

pragmatic, liberal economic tradition, respect for individual initiative and a healthy scepticism about the state that balanced more statist continental traditions. However, the UK also became a conduit for anti-EU sentiment in the US that was channelled through British conservatives' euroscepticism. After all, most of the European analysis of the EU available in English is written in the UK. Moreover, *The Economist* and other widely read British publications propound a eurosceptical line.

This strategic view of EU membership permeates American attitudes to current enlargement issues. The most difficult is Turkey, but many analysts argue that it fits the pattern. As Henri J. Barkey and Anne-Marie Le Gloannec note, 'the EU's enlargement to Turkey is in keeping with the past tradition of the EU. First by including Turkey the European Union may well play the same stabilizing role it has played in the past by accepting new democracies as members, i.e. countries which had hardly come out of their fascist and communist pasts.'⁶⁵

Turkey first applied for membership in 1963. The Turkey-EU customs union came into force in 1995. Turkey became a candidate country in 1999, with the EU opening accession negotiations in October 2005. Although recognising that the US is not a member, successive American administrations have supported Turkish membership in the European Union. American officials tread a fine line when discussing the issue but can make their views known. For example in 2002, then Undersecretary of State for Political Affairs, Marc Grossman, who also was also a former US ambassador to Turkey, commented: 'we are in the position, of course, not being members of the European Union but supporters of strong European defense and ESDI [NATO's European Security and Defense Initiative] and ESDP, and of course allies of Turkey and NATO. Our position is that we hope that the European Union and Turkey can work this out.'⁶⁶

Yet the American analytical community is becoming increasingly concerned that Turkey may not be admitted to the EU because current EU members and Turkey will both lose faith in the accession process. Philip Gordon and Omer Taspinar voice this disquiet: 'a majority of Turks still want to see their country firmly anchored in the West, but because of what they perceive as European double standards and the United States' neglect of Turkish national security interest, their patience is wearing thin.'⁶⁷ Several EU Member States are clearly reticent or even hostile towards Turk-

65. Henri J. Barkey and Anne-Marie Le Gloannec, 'The Strategic Implications of Turkey's Integration into the European Union', in Esther Brimmer and Stefan Fröhlich (eds.), *The Strategic Implications of EU Enlargement* (Washington, D.C.: Center for Transatlantic Relations, 2005), pp. 127-150, p. 141.

66. Marc Grossman, 'US, Turkey Agree NATO Needs New Capabilities', Press Availability with Marc Grossman, Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs and Ministry of Foreign Affairs Under Secretary Ambassador Ugur Ziyal, at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ankara, Turkey, 16 April 2002. Available at <http://www.state.gov/p/us/rm/9619.htm>.

67. Philip Gordon and Omer Taspinar, 'Turkey on the Brink', *The Washington Quarterly*, vol. 29, no. 3, Summer 2006, pp. 57-90, p. 57.

ish accession. France and Austria have both stipulated that they will hold public referenda on future accession candidates, opening the way for fearful publics to block the accession of Turkey.⁶⁸ Many Turks doubt their country will be admitted; meanwhile, Turkish nationalists dislike the supplicant position of the candidacy. The German Marshall Fund's 2006 Transatlantic Trends poll notes that in Turkey positive views of Turkish EU membership declined to 54% in 2006 from 73% in 2004; while negative views increased from 9% to 22%.⁶⁹ As Gordon and Taspinar comment, the decline in Turkish support for Turkish accession occurs as that country experiences sour relations with both the United States and Europe. Moreover, concern spans the political spectrum. Helle Dale of the conservative Heritage Foundation observes,

At the meeting between the Muslim and Christian worlds, Turkey has a pivotal role to play, and it is very much to the long-term advantage of Europe and the United States to anchor this populous, Western-oriented, Muslim country in our economic and political systems. As a NATO ally, Turkey remains strategically vital, though it is obviously not to be taken for granted as the Bush administration found in the run-up to the Iraq War. A Turkey cut adrift, disaffected by the rejection of Europeans, and bordering the Middle East and the unstable Caucasus region, is not a happy prospect.⁷⁰

The Turkish accession issue could have an important effect on US views of the European Union. Americans across the political spectrum support Turkish accession. Yet the possibility may be receding. Rejection of Turkey, or more likely, attenuation of the process into meaninglessness, would cause many Americans to question the strategic value of the EU. Its historic mission is to build stability across historic divides. If it fails to do so with Turkey, it would fail to help bridge an important global strategic gap in the early twenty-first century, that between the West and Muslim-majority states. Such a scenario could also lead to increased tensions between Muslims and non-Muslims living in Europe. Suspension of negotiations of certain chapters in December 2006 reinforced US concerns, which were shared by some EU Member States. Fundamentally, will the festering issue of Turkish-Greek-Cypriot relations undermine the EU's engagement with Ankara? Will technical issues such as port access derail negotia-

68. Interestingly, France's referendum applies to all candidates after Croatia; while Austria would only have a referendum in the case of Turkish accession, underlining the point that their objection is to Turkish membership, not enlargement in general.

69. The German Marshall Fund of the United States, *Transatlantic Trends: Key Findings 2006* (Washington, D.C., 2006), p. 19. Available at: www.transatlantictrends.org.

70. Helle Dale, 'At the Crossroads', The Heritage Foundation and *The Washington Times*, 5 October 2005, Available at <http://www.heritage.org/Press/Commentary/ed100605b.cfm>.

tions permanently? Most American observers would see this as a tragic setback. Indeed, the spectre of the missed opportunity in 2004 haunts the situation. Greek Cypriot rejection of the UN-brokered deal will have long-term consequences.

Americans see admission of Turkey as a historic step forward for the EU, which long ago superseded the old model of a tight core. Arguably, the path to a diverse union was set in 1973 with admission of the UK and reinforced with the arrival of the Nordics in 1995; but many did not realise this until later. The EU now includes several models of European experience: the continental northern European, continental southern European, the British/Irish and the Nordic. Ancient rivals and enemies have been enfolded into the *sui generis* union. Could the EU span the historic divide between the Hapsburg and Ottoman empires? Could the twenty-first century see a beginning of a new story?

Americans often talk about admission of Turkey as enhancing a positive relationship between Islam and the West. However, to many Arab Muslims, Turkey represents a separate tradition. Still, overcoming the Christendom-Ottoman divide would be a great contribution to international relations. In a 2006 Council on Foreign Relations Special Report, Steven A. Cook and Elizabeth Sherwood-Randall state,

The growing schism between the West and the Islamic world is one of the primary challenges confronting American foreign and defense policymakers. As a consequence, the relationship between the United States and Turkey – a Western-oriented democratizing Muslim country – is strategically more important than ever. Turkey has the potential to be an invaluable player as Washington endeavors to chart an effective course in its relations with the Muslim world.⁷¹

While recognising that Turkey's multiple identities – Islamic, European and nationalist – will, at times, produce policies that differ from those of the US, Cook and Sherwood-Randall stress, '... under no circumstances would a collapse of the effort to secure Turkey's membership in the European Union serve the interest of the United States or Turkey.' They argue that 'a goal of US policy with its principal European partners should be to develop a plan for anchoring Turkey in the West through the EU and strong bilateral ties.'⁷²

71. Steven A. Cook and Elizabeth Sherwood-Randall, 'Generating Momentum for a New Era in US-Turkey Relations', Council on Foreign Relations Special Report, CSR no. 15, June 2006, p.3. Available at <http://www.cfr.org/content/publications/attachments/TurkeyCSR.pdf>.

72. *Ibid.*, p. 27.

American experts and officials understand that admitting Turkey requires major change in that country, which is one of the reasons for that support. The EU provides a proven vehicle for peaceful democratic reform. They also recognise the dramatic economic impact that admitting a large, relatively poorer country would have. However, they tend to believe that these deficiencies can be remedied with adjustment funds and phase-in mechanisms. There are already many sub-groups within the European Union experience. Not all countries participate in the euro or Schengen agreement. There is already a multi-speed EU with opt-outs and opt-ins to suit Member States' needs. With a Union composed of different socio-economic models ranging from southern continental to Nordic, adding another does not seem such a large departure, especially since the Turkey that will be qualified to join will have had to implement major changes.

Ironically, the US supports a measure which could make the EU stronger in certain areas. An EU containing Turkey could eventually become a more important international actor. *If* it could agree on a foreign policy initiative, its diverse membership would give it greater legitimacy to advance its positions on international issues. Yet, the huge budgetary demands of admitting such a poor country could constrain EU funding for development and other international programmes.

Admitting Turkey does raise several challenges. What many American observers suspect, however, is that Europeans do not want to admit Turkey on cultural or religious grounds. This is less comprehensible to Americans who see that Europe is already multi-ethnic and culturally diverse. Although Europe regarded itself as 'Christendom', at no point were all Europeans Christian in the past; and they certainly are not now. The more tolerant version of the American approach urges Europeans to embrace diversity, Muslim communities within Europe and Muslim Turkey. The more abrasive version wonders whether Americans will be more vulnerable to anti-western assaults if Europeans reject Turkish membership. The tone may be different, but many US opinion-shapers share the view that the EU's action on Turkey will affect the US.

While negotiations appear to be proceeding, the issue will be on the 'back-burner' of transatlantic relations. However, any issue could move it to the front, such as Turkish-Cypriot tensions or changes in the accession schedule. Poor relations among Turkey,

Greece and Cyprus have engulfed the negotiation process. As of late 2006, Turkey had not opened its ports to Cypriot craft; charging that the EU had not met an agreement to end economic constraints of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (which is only recognised by Turkey), a move which would be unpopular with Greek Cypriots who comprise the EU Member State of Cyprus. In December 2006, the European foreign ministers agreed with the Commission's recommendation to suspend negotiations on eight of the thirty-five accession chapters, pushing Turkish accession farther off into the future. Furthermore, the EU would not admit Turkey until it has addressed the tricky task of resolving its internal organisation after the failure to ratify the constitution in 2005.⁷³ The new emphasis on 'absorption capacity' implies that the EU cannot adapt to another major enlargement soon.

If Turkey is the most difficult accession issue, the Western Balkans has been seen as an easier case. Once the US and Europeans agreed that the Balkans would follow a European 'vocation', then the only question (other than Kosovo) seemed to be to help the states qualify to negotiate in the coming years. Indeed, Slovenia has already joined the EU. Croatia is moving towards the process as well. However, enlargement fatigue could retard their entry. Some American observers wonder if the post-constitutional malaise will delay the process and discourage the Balkan states. After 1995, the transatlantic community agreed on the basic tenets of Balkan policy. The situation was deemed stable enough that in 2007 the British and others began reducing their military deployments in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Careful management of troop drawdowns will be necessary to avoid leaving instability and kindling transatlantic disputes. However, discord is not likely on the overall Balkans policy, but on the secondary effects of other policies. Countries are drawing down their numbers in the Balkans because they are overstretched in Iraq or Afghanistan, which they see as the result of Bush Administration policies.

On the horizon lies the issue of Ukraine's membership in Euro-Atlantic institutions. Buoyed by the Orange Revolution, some Americans talked about Ukraine eventually joining NATO and the EU. Views within Europe on Ukraine vary as much as or more than views across the Atlantic. Notably, for some Europeans admitting Ukraine would be easier than accepting Turkey because the former is a Christian country widely viewed as intrinsically European. To some American observers admitting Turkey makes

73. Finland's EU Presidency, 'EU Foreign Ministers Agree to Partial Freeze of Turkey's Membership Talks', 11 December 2006. Available at http://www.ue2006.fi/news_and_documents/front_page_news/vko50/en_GB/1165497100527/.

more sense because it has long been a NATO ally; whereas Ukraine has a substantial Russian-speaking minority and borders Russia (though EU and NATO member Baltic States also have such a border). In April 2005, NATO began an 'Intensified Dialogue' with Ukraine about its relationship with NATO. At an April 2006 ministerial meeting, Ukrainian Foreign Minister Borys Tarasyuk told his NATO counterparts that 'Ukraine's strategy towards joining NATO is irreversible.'⁷⁴ Although Ukraine's leaders may want to join western institutions, Ukraine's formal relations with the European Union are shaped by the European Neighbourhood Policy, not an accession agreement.

The neighbourhood

Europe's management of its neighbourhood is another key factor in American perceptions of the European Union. The European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) is designed explicitly to create closer links with countries in Eastern Europe and North Africa while implicitly inducing reform without the incentive of eventual membership. The neighbourhood policy tries to address a fundamental problem. How can the Union spread stability to countries that affect its well-being, but which will not become members? The ENP attempts to craft a new deal between the EU and each of its near neighbours whether across a land border or across the Mediterranean. It is not yet clear that this bargain will work.

Ukraine poses an interesting problem. The EU includes Ukraine in the ENP, a policy designed for non-candidate countries. However, some Europeans would like Ukraine to accede to the Union at some point in the future. The ENP is not supposed to be an anteroom to accession, but if Ukraine makes the leap from 'neighbour' to 'candidate', the switch would belie all the vehement denials that there might be a link between the ENP and EU accession. However, American leaders are cautious about how soon Ukraine could be ready to join NATO and realise that EU membership would be even more complicated. While the Baltic States and Poland would be more supportive, many current Member States would resist taking on a large, poor country bordering Russia. Given American strategic interests in relations with Russia, and domestic political attention of the Ukrainian-American community, EU relations with this large neighbour will remain on the

74. Borys Tarasyuk quoted by Deutsche Welle, 'Troubled Ukraine Eyes NATO Green Light', Available at <http://www.dw-world.de/dw/article/0,2144,1983608,00.html>.

transatlantic agenda; although it is less sensitive than the Turkey issue which raises questions of religion and culture as well as economics and strategy.

Americans are very concerned about European relations with the Islamic world, not only in the Middle East, but also in North Africa. The Neighbourhood Policy is supposed to be tailored to each partner, complementing the more general Barcelona Process. American scepticism about the torpor of the Barcelona Process may shade views of the effectiveness of the ENP in North Africa. Specialist in the Maghreb think that the ENP is meant for Eastern Europe; whereas experts in Eastern Europe think the programme is meant for the southern Mediterranean countries. The ENP is crafted to be tailor-made, but feels 'one-size-fits-all.'

Societal security

Americans' interest in the EU's relations with North Africa derives from security concerns. American observers wonder whether the EU can spread stability to help combat anti-western feeling in this region and contribute to the fight against terrorism. The EU can play a new role in security, but on a new plane, 'homeland' or 'societal' security. This is an evolution from the basic question, what type of security should the EU provide? From the 1950s to the 1980s the EU's security role was subsumed within its economic one. The functionalist paradigm posits that forging economic ties would promote security. Although the term was *not* used by policy-makers at the time, during the Cold War Americans wanted the EU to provide societal security to complement the territorial security provided by NATO.

The concept of societal security focuses on safeguarding people and the links that make modern communities work.⁷⁵ At its most basic, societal security is grounded on respecting basic human rights to life and liberty. In this sense it includes freedom from torture, arbitrary arrest and other direct threats to physical well-being of individual people. In a practical sense this would mean supporting the rule of law, fair police and judicial systems. It also means protecting the population with robust public health and disaster relief measures. Furthermore it means protecting physical assets such as communications lines and transportation systems. Yet it also encompasses intangible elements such as trust

75. For a fuller discussion of various interpretations of societal security, see 'From Territorial Security to Societal Security: Implications for Transatlantic Relations' in Esther Brimmer (ed.), *Transforming Homeland Security: US and European Approaches* (Washington, D.C.: Center for Transatlantic Relations, 2006) and Bengt Sundelius, 'From National Total Defense to Embedded Social Security', in Daniel Hamilton, Bengt Sundelius and Jesper Grönvall (eds.), *Protecting the Homeland: European Approaches to Total Defense and Societal Security and their Implications for the United States* (Washington, D.C.: Center for Transatlantic Relations, 2005).

that enable a community to function. Providing physical security but undermining trust defeats the goal of societal security.

The European Union has a remarkable record in providing an effective form of societal security. The EU's enlargement process spreads stability and embeds societal security. By requiring that its members and aspirants comply with certain standards of liberal democracy and market economics, the EU laid the foundation stones of societal security in the membership process. These have been enshrined in the Copenhagen criteria, the conditions for being eligible to open accession talks with the EU.⁷⁶

During much of the Cold War, what Americans needed the EU to do was to maintain the slow, deliberate process of knitting together European countries. While NATO stretched the American nuclear umbrella over its alliance partners to protect their territories from attack, the European Communities were helping create prosperity to preclude the social and economic corrosion that could make European societies susceptible to the communist message. After the end of the Cold War, the EU provided a coherent way for Central and Eastern European countries to transform away from communism to market-based liberal democracy.

Thus, the EU's security role was a passive one focused on current and potential members. Now Americans want the EU to provide a different type of security. American policymakers still want the EU to continue its historic role of spreading stability, including to Turkey and the Balkans. However, Americans also want to know if the EU can play a larger security role beyond spreading stability in its region. It is no longer enough just to spread stability in the European arena.

The end of the Cold War concluded a phase of inter-state rivalry of global proportions, bringing peace in Europe, but lifting constraints on many local conflicts. With only one remaining superpower, there was less need or interest in constraining or putting pressure on client states. The spread of small arms and advanced networks of arms sales provisioning all sides while demagogues peddled their own version of hate caused many local conflicts to spiral into mass violence in the 1990s. From Bosnia to Rwanda, the world saw millions of people killed in a variety of internecine conflicts. Many western policymakers were slow to react to this rising tide of violence. Most leaders were accustomed to worrying about military threats from hostile states, not the horror of internal violence.

76. The accession criteria agreed at a 1993 European Council meeting in Copenhagen include democracy and rule of law, market economy and ability to withstand competition, and acceptance of the *acquis communautaire* and the goal of monetary union. See the Treaty on European Union and the Europa Glossary available at http://209.85.165.104/search?q=cache:lxA55sK0zsj:europa.eu/scadplus/glossary/accession_criteria_copenhagen_en.htm+eu+%22copenhagen+criteria%22&hl=en&ct=clnk&cd=2&gl=us&ie=UTF-8.

Ironically, the terrorist attacks in New York, London, and Madrid highlight the need to revive the notion of societal security. Societal security today should mean enacting robust all-hazards measures for dealing with catastrophes caused by terrorism or natural disaster. These capacities should build on the strengths of Euro-Atlantic institutions. There is scope for both NATO and the European Union to contribute to transatlantic societal security. However, many Europeans want the EU to be more active in defence as well as in the realm of societal security. How to project European defence policy beyond NATO is one of the most controversial elements of American perspectives on the European Union.

US support for the basic EU mission of spreading stability underpins American attitudes towards further enlargement of the Union. The EU embodies a powerful combination: reconciliation and stability based on prosperity. For Americans the question is, will the EU continue its historic mission? This question is central to American attitudes towards enlargement, neighbourhood policy, and transatlantic 'homeland' or societal security.

The US, the EU and managing global challenges

The end of the Cold War posed at least two security questions for the EU: would it continue to play its historic role of reconciling former enemies and would it help manage the post-Cold War disorder in its region and beyond? For four decades the European institutions had spread stability through its dynamic, but structured, accession process. In this way, Greece, Portugal and Spain all deepened their democracies after discarding dictatorships. One of the EU's historic decisions was to accept countries of Central and Eastern Europe as candidates, thereby giving them an incentive and roadmap for democratisation and closer ties with Western Europe. The admission of eight countries from this region in 2004 demonstrated that the EU had again accomplished its distinctive form of reconciliation. The EU provided a framework for deepening democracy in these countries. The accession criteria helped them order their policy priorities in the years after the end of the Cold War. Inevitably, democratic transitions are hard. The prospect of joining the EU kept their reform processes on track. Americans strongly supported the latest round of enlargement to include the new Member States. US policymakers of both parties largely welcomed this manifestation of the EU's classic role.

The question of managing global issues raises more difficult policy choices challenging the EU and its Member States to engage in international affairs well outside Europe. During the Cold War, European defence was at the centre of the most important strategic questions. Like touching a geological fault line, cold warriors could stand in the Fulda Gap and feel the reality of the global superpower cleavage. With the end of that cold conflict, and the reunification across the Iron Curtain, with the exception of the Balkans, Europe seemed to have retired from its frontline strategic status. Yet, internal conflicts raged engulfing failed states and killing millions in the 1990s. What role would the EU play in preventing or healing these festering conflicts? Will the EU be a partner in global affairs, or just in the sphere of regional concerns? Do

Europeans think that meeting these challenges is in its strategic interest, and if so, does it want to work with the US on these issues? The answer to these questions is fundamental to US views on the EU. As leading democracies and major aid donors, the US and EU could work together to advance key global issues from promoting democracy to respecting human rights to supporting sustainable development.

Democracy

The most sensitive current international human rights issue is how to promote democracy internationally. Ironically, both the US and EU have been in the business of promoting democracy for decades, well before the post-September 11 debates about democracy in the Middle East. The EU's enlargement process is a path to democracy. Accession helped solidify democracy in Greece, Portugal, Spain and the post-communist Central and Eastern Europe. From advocating plebiscites after the First World War to the Marshall Plan after the Second World War to the Cold War, some form of democracy promotion has been in the American foreign policy lexicon for nearly a century. Yet, there are several long-standing debates within the democracy community. One is should outsiders support political parties or civil society? The EU tends to do the former, while the US does the latter. As Jeffrey Kopstein notes, the different approaches are a legacy from different interpretations of the transitions in Central and Eastern Europe. He asserts that 'the U.S. interpretation of 1989 is one of civil society opting for democratic government, overthrowing dictators, and rolling back the state to make room for a market economy.'⁷⁷ In contrast, '... from Europe's perspective, the revolutions of 1989 in the neighbouring states were only the beginning of the story. What kind of regimes would replace the decayed Communist dictatorships remained, for most West Europeans, a wide open question in the autumn of 1989.'⁷⁸

Official American aid has tended to bolster democratic dissidents in repressive regimes and then political processes to solidify change once it occurs. Americans are proud that they supported change in Central and Eastern Europe; and people in this region are conscious of this long-standing interest especially among American conservatives. In contrast, during the Cold War some Europeans advocated accommodating communist regimes as a

77. Jeffrey Kopstein, 'The Transatlantic Divide over Democracy Promotion', *The Washington Quarterly*, vol. 29, no. 2, Spring 2006, pp. 85-98, p. 86.

78. *Ibid.*, p. 87.

way to deal with their repressive neighbours. In 1989, as Kopstein notes, Western Europeans ‘viewed the revolutions with more than a touch of scepticism, something East Europeans noted at the time.’⁷⁹ Critics charge that American policy often uses elections to measure political change. European assistance has tended to be directed towards helping states reform and build the structures of a sustainable society. Both forms of support are needed, but the underlying difference of emphasis can lead to tensions among western donors.

Another debate within the democracy community is the degree to which security concerns should be taken into consideration. US assistance has always had a strategic element. The expansion of US foreign aid in the 1960s was sold politically not only as beneficial in itself, but also as a tool for supporting partners in the Cold War. Indeed, after the end of the Cold War, development advocates had more trouble convincing budget-conscious legislators of the need for aid. Aid levels dropped. Even when comparing assistance from western countries to the Russian Federation we see that the US did support aid with strategic significance such as the Nunn-Lugar programme to deal with nuclear weapons, while the EU aid tended to focus on social transitions.⁸⁰ Americans and Europeans both value democracy and see its spread as beneficial. In the American policy discourse the democratic peace argument has had greater prominence. Policymakers have often made the case that democracies do not fight each other. Even though scholars debate the merit of the argument, it has helped underpin political support for international democracy programmes.

Another subtle transatlantic policy difference is the question of whether to support the poorest countries or the best performers? One argument is that aid should go to the poorest countries as they are in dire need. Another argument is that aid should be allocated to those who have good governance structures in place and are able to make best use of the funds. These are often less poor, but still developing countries. The Bush Administration’s Millennium Challenge Account manifests this principle. In his 2002 announcement of the programme, President George W. Bush said that the Millennium Challenge Account will ‘reward nations that root out corruption, respect human rights, and adhere to the rule of law ... invest in better health care, better schools and broader immunization ... [and] have more open markets and sustainable budget policies, nations where people can start and operate a

79. *Ibid.*, p. 87.

80. See Esther Brimmer, ‘Redefining European Security? Insights from United States, European Union, and German Assistance to the Russian Federation 1991-2000’ (Washington, D.C.: American Institute for Contemporary German Studies, 2002).

small business without running the gauntlets of bureaucracy and bribery.⁸¹

In addition to these policy differences, there is also a natural, and probably beneficial, rivalry between the US and EU. Both are donors in the same regions such as the Mediterranean and Africa. If it is not too extreme, having a variety of approaches among the US, the EU and its Member States can lead to better policies. What donors need to avoid is imposing contradictory requirements on aid recipients.

On top of these existing policy differences on democracy promotion, comes the controversy over Iraq and policy in the Greater Middle East. As the German Marshall Fund's 2006 *Transatlantic Trends* points out, in the view of the US public democracy promotion is associated with policy in Iraq.⁸² Unfortunately, years of constructive work around the world is now tarred with the same brush as a deeply unpopular war in Iraq, which was not initially waged to advance democracy. As long-time experts on democracy issues pointed out to officials and the media alike, democracy cannot be advanced by military means alone. Ultimately, the indigenous community has to want to build its own version of democracy at home.

In the immediate period, Europeans and Americans need to be careful not to reduce their advocacy for democracy because of the problem of Iraq. Western democracies have a special responsibility in this area, which they should not forsake. European critics of American policy need to clarify whether they dislike all democracy promotion or just US Iraq policy pursued under the name of democracy.

Human rights

Disagreement over international human rights issues also affects US perceptions of the European Union.⁸³ The US, the EU and its Member States are leading proponents of liberal democratic values, but, at times, disagree on how to advance their goals. The fundamental bases are different analyses of the relative importance of certain types of rights and divergent views of sovereignty. In their domestic and international policies, the European Union countries place greater emphasis on economic, social and cultural rights than does the United States, which stresses civil and political

81. George W. Bush, 'The Millennium Challenge Account', March 2002. Available at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/infocus/developingnations/millennium.html>.

82. The German Marshall Fund of the United States, *Transatlantic Trends: Key Findings 2006*, p. 14. Available at www.transatlantic-trends.org.

83. See Esther Brimmer, 'The US, the European Union and International Human Rights Issues', (Washington, D.C.: Center for Transatlantic Relations, 2002).

rights. At home European countries have national health care and generous social welfare programmes (although there are significant differences in tax rates and the nature of benefits). Internationally European countries are willing to support economic rights. These differences were often evident in the old UN Human Rights Commission and are likely to persist in the new UN Human Rights Council. All too often the diplomatic effect of the philosophical divergence is western democracies fighting each other on human rights issues rather than focusing on actual human rights abusers. Again, years of these battles can undermine support for the EU among internationalist Americans.

Subtle differences in transatlantic interpretations of sovereignty can surface in debates on international human rights policies. One of the most important innovations in international human rights policies is the notion of 'the duty to protect.' By the late 1990s, humanitarians and human rights advocates had convinced many political leaders that sovereignty did not give governments the right to abuse their citizens. If governments grossly violated human rights by killing their own people, the international community had a responsibility to intervene. After genocide in Rwanda and 'ethnic cleansing' in the Balkans, many leaders were ready to accept this analysis.

The international human rights regime is premised on the notion that there are principles that transcend sovereignty. Through decades of courageous civil rights action at home and human rights advocacy abroad Americans have sought to champion policy with the highest ideals. Yet Americans who support human rights may do so for different reasons. Some see domestic civil rights as part of universal human rights; others see civil rights as deriving from the US Constitution and not pertaining beyond national borders. The latter group tends to be sceptical of international human rights efforts given the fact that for centuries human rights were better respected in the US than other countries. For this group international efforts could actually undermine rights already recognised in the US. For them, sovereignty protects human rights from the assaults of illiberal outsiders who want to devolve civil and political norms to a standard, but lower, level. This is exacerbated by the perception that international advocates also want to develop economic and cultural rights to a higher and oppressive level ignoring national or regional differences. This group of American observers is sceptical of interna-

tional and European efforts to erode sovereignty. They fear that such new norms may camouflage insidious efforts to impose global values on the US.

In contrast, the EU could be seen as a challenge to the American understandings of sovereignty. EU Member States have voluntarily relinquished sovereignty to an unprecedented degree incomprehensible to many outside the EU. It represents a different model of social organisation. Most American analysts are not alarmed by this model as they see it as *sui generis* and not likely to be repeated elsewhere.⁸⁴ However, some conservative Americans see a more sinister effect. Conservative icon Judge Robert Bork lamented ‘...a general trend towards the internationalization of law’ and perceived that ‘...we’re getting into an area – it’s slow – but we’re getting into an area of judicially imposed multilateralism and dominance in foreign policy of other non-US institutions.’⁸⁵ Dr. Holmes complemented the Judge’s remarks elucidating the different view of sovereignty:

... this phrase *pooled sovereignty*, in that nation states surrender some of their national sovereignty to the pool of the European Union. Now, it’s this uniqueness that often puts the EU at odds with the United States, which takes a more traditional view of international laws being agreements made among nation states. The EU is moving in the direction of acquiring new legal rights that are normally associated with sovereign states. The United States is not ready to recognise this approach; the US has no similar experience or tradition of surrendering sovereignty to any supreme organisation.⁸⁶

Significantly, expressing the alarm of conservative American analysts, Dr. Holmes concludes, ‘the EU members see this model not only as appropriate for them, but as a model for other nations, including the developing world, and also, of course, for the United States.’⁸⁷ As globalisation continues, decision-makers will face further challenges to their conceptions of sovereignty and limits on the range of actions open to capitals. The latent discord over conceptions of sovereignty could make Americans and EU Members see only their differences and miss their common challenges of providing for their people’s well-being amid changing global conditions. These questions of sovereignty and the nature of rights emerge when debating UN and other resolutions on the

84. Indeed, some Americans wish elements of the EU could be reproduced in other regions. Its ability to reconcile historic enemies is admirable.

85. Robert Bork, Comments in Panel on ‘European Courts Establishing Precedent in the US Supreme Court’, Heritage Special Report on a Conference Held 28 June 2005, op. cit. in note 20, p. 54.

86. Kim Holmes, Comments in Panel on ‘European Courts Establishing Precedent in the US Supreme Court’, The Heritage Foundation, op cit in note 20, p. 55.

87. Ibid.

right to food or housing. At times the US and European countries have voted differently on fundamental rights in the UN system. These divergences help explain why European countries, but not the US, have signed the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

Development

The differences in approach to international human rights issues can also be found in approaches to development. The EU, its Member States and the US are major donors to development programmes worldwide. However, they tend to fund somewhat different programmes. Not surprisingly, both provided economic aid to Central and Eastern European countries to help them make the transition from communism to capitalism after the end of the Cold War. US aid included military assistance that helped new NATO members transform their militaries and meet their new commitments. The EU aid concentrated on accession countries and, later, new members. The US and the EU also provide funding in many of the same developing countries.

However, western donors find that their resources are being diverted to post-conflict reconstruction. Working in this critical area improves American views of the EU. American experts are well aware that the EU is a significant donor and the global funding appeals cannot succeed without a major European component. Americans are also ready to accept an important role for Europeans in the field of post-conflict development, although they are critical of the EU's very long spendout rates which can mean that aid does not arrive until years after it was pledged. During his tenure as Commissioner for External Relations, Chris Patten endeavoured to shorten this time period. In general, development policy is seen as an area of cooperation. Policymakers may disagree on particular development issues, but, in contrast to security issues, there is little American resistance to an EU role.

Environment

The European Union and its Member States have taken a leadership role on climate change and international environment issues.

There was a marked divergence in US and EU policies in the early part of this decade with the inauguration of the Bush Administration. One of its first acts was to repudiate the Kyoto treaty. By 2006, the political dynamics had changed. Even the Administration acknowledged that some action needed to be taken, but disputed what steps to take and how much to restrict the private sector. Within the US, even though they were headed by governors of the president's political party, California and New York have both initiated efforts to address climate change on a state level. Climate change, which had been a bitterly contested issue in the early 2000s, may be an area of transatlantic *rapprochement* by the end of the decade. A way forward would be to find practical ways in which the European experience can inform home-grown American reform efforts.

The European Union and American politics

Changes in the Bush Administration policies 2001-2006

When the Bush Administration came to power in January 2001, it encountered a very different European Union from the one many of its leadership knew when they had left power in early 1993. Not only had the Treaty on European Union changed the name of the entity, the EU had resumed its search for a strategic role which had been subsumed under other policies since the failure of the EDC more than four decades before. Senior political leaders often see the EU through an economic lens, as demonstrated by the fact that US ambassadors to the EU tend to be knowledgeable business people. The current US ambassador Boyden Grey and his predecessor, Rockwell Schnabel, knew the EU well even before coming to office; but were selected for their expertise on American economic connections with the EU.

The Administration has gone through four phases: (1) largely ignoring the EU's political-strategic aspects on arrival in power in 2001; (2) heralding anti-terrorism law enforcement cooperation beginning in 2002; (3) engaging the EU through a charm offensive in 2005, and (4) focusing on pragmatic political actions rather than elevated themes after the failure of the constitutional treaty in May 2005. When many in the Bush team had last been in office, the European Communities had been largely seen as an economic entity by most American observers. Many of the Americans most informed about the EU could be found in the business community. At the beginning of its first term, Administration officials were intent on solving the extant economic disputes, but did not conceive of the European institutions as actors in the management of international issues beyond the economic arena.

After the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, the Administration turned to the EU in a surprising area, law enforcement cooperation. In its quest to craft international mechanisms to constrain terrorists, limit their access to financing, capture sus-

pects and prevent future attacks, the Administration found that the European Union offered a way to adopt measures that applied to many countries at once. Also, as Anne C. Richard explained, European countries (and Britain and France in particular) are in all the key organisations for combating terrorism financing from the G-8 Financial Action Task Force (FATF), to the Security Council, to the European Council. To leverage these institutions, the US has to work with European countries. The supranational element of the European Commission provides added benefit. If the EU adopts a measure, Member States are obliged to implement it. Thus, obtaining EU support can mean establishing a norm that covers then fifteen (and now twenty-seven) members. The United States deepened its law enforcement cooperation with the EU in the years after 2001.

The degree of cooperation is new, but comprehensible. According to the German Marshall Fund's *Transatlantic Trends* and other surveys, Europeans and Americans both list terrorism as a leading strategic threat.⁸⁸ The 2003 European Security Strategy (ESS) and the 2002 and 2006 National Security Strategies all list similar threats, with terrorism a leading concern. The quiet, practical, behind-the-scenes nature of law enforcement cooperation suited the transatlantic relationship, whose day-to-day machinery is run by dedicated professionals far from the antagonistic glare of high politics. Thus, interior ministries contribute to transatlantic cooperation along with the expected agencies: foreign and finance ministries. When transatlantic relations were especially strained in 2003, both sides were relieved to be able to point to an area of cooperation.

At the beginning of George W. Bush's second term in office, his Administration wanted to demonstrate that it had a new approach to international affairs. Although Iraq war policy was led by the Defense Department, the State Department could still stake out its bureaucratic identity with diplomatic initiatives. Moreover, the Europeanists were back in charge at the State Department. Both the new Secretary of State, Condoleezza Rice and Deputy Secretary Robert Zoellick knew Europe well and had worked closely with European allies as the end of the Cold War, which occurred during the period of the elder Bush's term of office.⁸⁹ Secretary Rice was trained as a Soviet specialist; furthermore, having served as the United States Trade Representative, Deputy Secretary Zoellick had worked with the EU. Like other US

88. *Transatlantic Trends: Key Findings 2006*, op cit. in note 80.

89. George H. W. Bush, father of George W. Bush, was President of the United States from 20 January 1989 to 20 January 1993.

officials, Mr. Zoellick had a deep understanding of transatlantic economic issues which he expanded into a broader understanding of the EU as an international actor. Career Foreign Service officer and NATO ambassador Nicholas Burns took the number three slot of Under Secretary for Political Affairs. Thus, the top team in the State Department was predisposed to work with Europeans. They understood that transatlantic relations had reached their nadir for recent times in 2003. Reconnecting with Europeans would demonstrate the new Administration's fresh approach.

Also, the EU of early 2005 was in a period of ascendancy. Officials and the public alike had taken part in a conversation across Europe on the future of the Union. In a remarkable example of democratic dialogue using modern Internet technology as well as meetings, conferences and other fora, Europeans had debated issues that informed the European Convention. The idea of a constitutional convention resonated with Americans whose own constitutional convention in 1787 had created the Constitution of the United States, the basic document of the American republic. American newspapers across the country covered the European convention relatively extensively given that it was an internal EU issue. With ratifications of the constitutional treaty proceeding in late 2004-early 2005, the EU looked set to ascend to a new level of integration.

The prospect of greater integration on foreign policy issues was largely welcomed by internationalist Americans, but feared by conservatives. Not surprisingly, one of the most thoughtful observers was United States Supreme Court Justice Stephen G. Breyer. The Oxford-educated jurist had an interest in comparative legal trends and a subtle knowledge of European affairs. Writing in late 2004 after analysing how the European constitution addressed basic questions of legal organisation, he concluded:

... the proposed European Constitution takes an important further step in the direction of European integration – an integration of democratic institutions and free economies that mid-Twentieth Century statesmen believed necessary to achieve peace. Has history not proved them right? We outsiders, I believe, may point to problems and suggest modifications, but we must also hope for the success of the enterprise.⁹⁰

While American legal theorists were intrigued by the judicial concepts, and diplomats interested in its contribution to EU

90. Stephen G. Breyer, 'Competing Models in the Proposed Constitution', in Esther Brimmer, (ed.), *The EU Constitutional Treaty: A Guide for Americans* (Washington, D.C.: Center for Transatlantic Relations, 2004), pp. 37-44, p. 44.

diplomatic capabilities, conservatives were more cautious and caustic. Even in American contexts, the voices of British conservatives were loud in this regard. British-born *New Republic* editor Andrew Sullivan warned in June 2003: ‘...with the unveiling of a new federalist constitution for a “United States of Europe” in June, the anti-American trend will be subtly but profoundly institutionalized. It’s past time that Americans wake up and see this new threat for what it is.’⁹¹

With the EU on the eve of a new era, prospects for US-EU partnership looked bright. Experience had given the Administration a heightened appreciation of the EU as a donor and partner in crisis management from the Balkans to Afghanistan. Even the political leadership which had been less familiar with the EU on arriving in office was more aware of the EU’s contribution in post-conflict reconstruction, which was more valued by 2004-2005 than perhaps it was in 2001.

George W. Bush became the first president to visit the EU as well as NATO during a trip to Brussels. Speaking in the Concert Noble in Brussels, on 21 February 2005, he intoned: ‘America supports Europe’s democratic unity for the same reason we support the spread of democracy in the Middle East – because freedom leads to peace. And America supports a strong Europe because we need a strong partner in the hard work of advancing freedom in the world.’ His statement was met with applause.⁹²

At his press conference after meeting with European Union Heads of State and Government, he outlined his remarks to the European leaders:

In my talk to the leaders in the room, I started by saying this: there should be no doubting your mind that my government and the United States wants the European project to succeed. It’s in our interests that Europe be strong. It’s in our interests that the European Union work out whatever differences there are and become a continued, viable, strong partner. It’s in our interests for commercial reasons; we trade a lot. And I talked about the need to continue trade and to work out our disputes in a sensible way.

It’s in our interests because the values that caused the European Union to exist in the first place – the values of human rights and human dignity and freedom – are the same values we share. And we have an opportunity to work together to spread those values.⁹³

91. Andrew Sullivan, ‘The Euro Menace: The Threat of European Integration’, *The New Republic*, 16 June 2003, pp. 22-26, p. 22.

92. George W. Bush, ‘US President Bush Discusses American and European Alliance’, 21 February 2005. Available at www.eurunion.org/news/press/2005/2005buchspeechleadersmeeting.htm.

93. George W. Bush, ‘Transcript of the press conference following the meeting of European Union Heads of State and Government and the President of the USA, George W. Bush’, Brussels, 22 February 2005. Available at http://europa.eu/press_room/presspacks/us20050222/transcript.pdf.

His trip was preceded by Secretary Rice's European tour heralding a new phase in transatlantic relations. Given the particular strains in the US-French relationship, she made a highly publicised trip to Paris. In her address at Sciences Po she stated: 'I am here in Europe so that we can talk about how America and Europe can use the power of our partnership to advance our ideals worldwide. President Bush will continue this conversation when he arrives in Europe on February 21st. He is determined to strengthen transatlantic ties.'⁹⁴

The charm offensive softened the previously shrill tone of transatlantic discourse and led to an important policy change. After the trip, the Bush Administration shifted policy on Iran and became more supportive of the EU-3's diplomatic initiative with Teheran. This was a crucial change on a very important strategic issue, the Iranian nuclear challenge, but it may have come too late. The US was more willing to support EU diplomatic leadership with Iran, but time for compromise was short. Hardline President Mahmud Ahmadinejad took office in Teheran in August 2005.

This charm offensive represented a concerted effort to reconnect US and European political agendas and recover the sense of shared purpose. However, the Administration did not change its policies on key sensitive issues such as Iraq, climate change or Guantanamo until a year later. The policy debate in Washington only began to change with the election of Democratic majorities in the House and Senate in November 2006.

Moreover, the failure of two public referenda on the European constitutional treaty had an impact on American views of the EU. Hopes for having a more capable partner were dashed. Americans who hoped for an EU better organised for international action were disappointed. Americans who were generally sceptical of the EU had their suspicions confirmed; the EU could not 'get-it-together' when it counted. Seen from outside, the 'period of reflection' was a period of withdrawal and uncertainty. Just when the US was reaching out to the EU, the EU turned inward. American frustrations recalled the disillusionment of fifty years earlier, when the EDC failed. The EU could continue to work with the US on important issues from post-conflict reconstruction to transatlantic regulatory policies, but developing a shared strategic vision looked less likely after May 2005. Political change and revitalisation would be needed on both sides of the Atlantic.

94. Condoleezza Rice, 'Remarks at the Institut d'Etudes Politiques de Paris - Sciences Po', Paris, 8 February 2005. Available at <http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2005/41973.htm>.

Issues to watch will be how the Administration reacts when the EU re-asserts the political-military facet of its identity. Events to watch include not just reactions now that the battlegroups were declared operational in early 2007, but if they are used as the framework to overcome the current overstretch and to deploy European military assets in a real crisis. Another could be greater procurement under the EDA, or a breakdown of accession talks with Turkey.

Economic leadership

A large part of the American perception of the EU is based on international economic issues. The Commission has competence to represent the Member States in fora such as the World Trade Organization, making the EU a formidable institution. The debates over trade in bananas or genetically-modified food grab headlines and have shaped public attitudes, but missed the deeper connections. Too often the media and the public may think that such disputes define the relationship, seeing the other side as an opponent threatening economic stability with unreasonable demands. However, these trade disputes accounts for less than 2% of the value of the transatlantic economy which is really based on foreign direct investment – US and European companies investing in each other's countries and creating jobs.⁹⁵

US firms that operate internationally know the EU well. If they do business in Member States, they will encounter EU regulators. Their experiences shape the perception of the EU in the business community, which can be quite independent of political considerations. Even amid the transatlantic tensions in 2003 transatlantic foreign direct investment rose significantly, creating more jobs.⁹⁶

The rise and fall of the euro can also affect American views of the EU. The value of the currency reflects traders' views of the prospects for the economic zone where that money circulates. Even though exporters lament a strong currency that makes their products more expensive internationally, political leaders sometimes tout currency value as a mark of political prowess. Indeed, in February 2005 when the EU seemed to be ascending and the president launched his charm offensive, the value of the euro reached an average of \$1.3013, peaking that year at an average of \$1.3185 in March.⁹⁷ This contrasts to the average value of the euro in January

95. Daniel S. Hamilton, and Joseph P. Quinlan, *The Transatlantic Economy 2005: Annual Survey of Jobs, Trade and Investment between the United States and Europe* (Washington, D.C.: Center for Transatlantic Relations, 2005).

96. *Ibid.*, p. 5.

97. 'Monthly Average Graph (American Dollar, Euro) 2005'. Available at <http://www.x-rates.com/USD/EUR/hist2005.html>.

2003 which was \$1.062. When the Bush Administration was inaugurated in January 2001, the twenty-one day average of the euro was \$0.9376 and never went above \$0.9205 that year. Explaining currency values is an esoteric art, but from the political perspective, it may have been easier to ignore the EU's international role when the euro was weak. The relationship between the dollar and the euro affects trade, investment and politics, and, in turn, is affected by them. There is a lingering question about the extent to which the euro might displace the dollar as a reserve or international currency, which would affect the US's economic health. Yet, American investors in Europe benefit greatly from the Single Market and single currency, making some in the US business community strong supporters of the euro.

2006 Congressional elections

The Democratic Party's success in the congressional elections held on 7 November 2006 changed the political dynamic in Washington. The 110th Congress began in January 2007 with Democrats in control of both the House of Representatives and the Senate. The impact of the change will be clearer with time, but certain themes may be discerned:

- ▶ The US will undertake a major reassessment of policy in Iraq. American troops are likely to be at least partly (probably substantially) out of Iraq by the November 2008 presidential election.
- ▶ Control means the power to set the agenda. Democrats will hold hearings investigating the use of the billions of taxpayer dollars spent by commercial contractors that failed to rebuild Iraqi infrastructure after the war. The revelations are likely to make the Iraq war even more unpopular with the American public.
- ▶ Democrats will want to address festering global problems including climate change policy and respect for international human rights. The Senate refused to ratify John Bolton as US ambassador to the United Nations, who had been serving without confirmation on a technical 'recess appointment.' Instead, the Administration nominated US envoy to Baghdad Zalmay Khalilzad.

- Congress will continue to have strong interests in key regional issues. New Speaker of the House of Representatives Nancy Pelosi is a long-time critic of human rights in China. Moreover, many Congressional leaders have been interested in the Balkans since the 1990s.

In the American system of checks and balances, the executive branch (the Administration) is in charge of diplomacy, but the legislative branch (Congress) controls taxation and spending. Unlike parliamentary systems, the US has divided government. This institutional division is reinforced by political separation. Thus, in 2007 and 2008, one party (the Republicans) will be in charge of the executive and another (the Democrats) will run the legislature. With Congress able to exercise its responsibility to oversee the executive branch, the Administration will have less leeway for extreme action.

For example, despite the Administration's unwillingness to remove the military card from its hand, it is extremely unlikely that the US would use military force in Iran. The US military is seriously strained by the deployments in Iraq and Afghanistan and the Administration is politically constrained. The voters have made it very clear that they do not want deeper military engagement in the Middle East. Neither the Congress nor the public want the US to take actions that would make US troops deployed in the region even more vulnerable. In addition to the arrival of the new Congress, the confirmation of Robert Gates seems to have ushered in an Administration official more open to hearing a new message.

Writing in 2004, a prominent independent task force co-chaired by former National Security Advisor Zbigniew Brzezinski and Robert Gates concluded:

Dialogue between the United States and Iran need not await absolute harmony between the two governments. Throughout history, the United States has maintained cordial and constructive relations with regimes whose policies and philosophies have differed significantly from its own, including above all, its relationship with the Soviet Union. ...

... any significant expansion in the US relationship with Teheran must incorporate unimpeachable progress toward a satisfactory

resolution of key US concerns. Political and economic relations with Iran cannot be normalized unless and until the Iranian government demonstrates a commitment to abandoning its nuclear weapons programs and its support for terrorist groups. However, these demands should not constitute preconditions for dialogue.⁹⁸

Attitudes can evolve over time. Mr. Gates may develop a different outlook while serving as Secretary of Defense; still, he is on the record advocating a new approach to US policy in Iran. He may retain this receptivity to policy change as he settles into office.

Congress is likely to press for action, which offers the EU an opportunity to engage the US on a range of practical topics including enhancing regulatory cooperation and environmental protection. There could be a mutually beneficial confluence of cycles. In 2007 there have been some shifts in US policy on climate change. Meanwhile, efforts to resolve EU constitutional issues in the 2007-2008 period bracketed by the German and French presidencies could restart the European policy engine, replacing the period of reflection with the period of action.

2008 Presidential elections

In the coming years, foreign policy will play a larger role than usual in American politics and in the 2008 presidential election campaign which, in effect, has already begun. According to the US Constitution, the Senate has certain powers over foreign policy including ratifying treaties and approving nominations for ambassadorial posts. With several Senators wanting good publicity to bolster their presidential bids, the Senate could be more visible on a range of foreign policy issues. The major Democratic candidates are all familiar with or interested in European affairs. Senator Biden chairs the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and is a former chairman of its subcommittee on European affairs. Senator Barack Obama is the new chairman of the Europe subcommittee. Senator Hillary Clinton has extensive international experience. All three represent states which are home to major corporations, respectively Delaware (whose tax laws encourage companies to locate there), Illinois and New York. Former Senator John Edwards has expressed deep concerns about globalisation,

98. Zbigniew Brzezinski and Robert Gates, Co-Chairs and Suzanne Maloney, Project Director, *Iran: Time for a New Approach*, Report of an Independent Task Force (New York: Council on Foreign Relations, 2004), p. 41.

but is more concerned with outsourcing to low-wage countries than high-end competition from Europe. Republican candidate Senator John McCain of Arizona, is also well versed in transatlantic issues and international affairs generally. They travel to Europe and engage European leaders.⁹⁹

Relations with Europe are unlikely to be a major issue in the presidential campaign. The major international affairs campaign topics are likely to include Iraq, Afghanistan, anti-terrorism, America's role in the world, domestic affects of globalisation, and perhaps climate change. Still, there are transatlantic dimensions to some of these topics.

99. For example, both Senators Edwards and McCain delivered speeches in Belgium at the 2006 Brussels Forum sponsored by the German Marshall Fund of the United States and other entities.

Whoever is elected president in 2008, the United States is likely to maintain its supportive, yet ambivalent, approach to the European Union. Despite various tensions, the transatlantic link remains a fundamental tenet of international affairs for the US and for European countries. US-EU relations and NATO affairs remain pillars of this relationship (along with the G-8, OSCE and other institutions). Examining US perceptions of the EU helps explain the health of the US-EU dimension.

The transatlantic investment climate remains good, while security issues are less inflammatory, but still sensitive. Perennial problems persist, with EU-NATO relations being the most important area in need of improvement. New areas for potential cooperation include transatlantic societal security which will engage national governments, NATO and the EU.

Disagreements over regional strategy could bedevil the relationship. The Middle East, from the Israel/Palestinian conflict, to Lebanon, to Iraq and Afghanistan will stay high on the transatlantic agenda. There has been important cooperation, such as on UN Security Council Resolution 1559. However, genuinely hard cases such as dealing with Iran's nuclear ambitions will make for real policy differences. Varying views of relations with Russia affect policy options for working with Moscow on Iran, Kosovo, and energy security, to raise just three key issues. Europeans disagree with each other about these topics and with Americans (who also have their own internal debates). Meanwhile even though collegial analytical discussions of how to engage China are increasing, the arms embargo issue is likely resurface at some point.

These latter issues recall the point posited in the introduction to this paper. Some transatlantic tensions are structural, others political. Transatlantic relations with Russia and China have significant structural elements. Europeans share a continent and history with Russia, making many of them less wary of close ties with Moscow. Russia was part of the European system, to some degree,

for centuries. Despite the demise of the Soviet Union, there is still a transatlantic debate about the strategic implications of European energy dependence on Russian supplies. Somewhat similarly, the United States is a Pacific power with more complex relations with China than European states or the EU. The China arms embargo debate touches a structural point that will have to be managed, rather than solved. Americans will have a persistent, and consistent, concern with strategic, high-technology trade with China that will be of less interest to Europeans. These structural elements endure over time. In contrast, political issues, such as climate change strategies, can be altered with policy or personnel changes.

Sensitive issues such as strategic outlook or views on the use of force combine structural and political elements making them especially vexing to address. On the one hand, the dramatic difference in military might between the US and its allies is a persistent structural phenomenon, which affects Americans' opinions on the efficacy of force. On the other hand, different US Administrations will have different views on the relative desirability of using force alone or in concert with others through the UN, NATO or in 'coalitions of the willing.' The possibility of policy change makes debate likely. If change is possible, then it is worth making the case for it. Countries do change policies even towards the use of military assets. For example, Germany debated the issue of using military force and then deployed its forces with the EU operation in Congo. The US has even discussed participating in an ESDP mission in Kosovo. Both ideas were not in the realm of political discourse in the 1990s.

Overall, the structural tensions have declined in recent years. Americans are generally more accepting of a stronger role for the EU in international affairs than during the ESDP controversies of 2000 or the Iraq debates of 2003. Yet the EU's internal constitutional challenges and the enlargement fatigue phenomenon may make it less able to cooperate with the US. Still, Americans are 'seeing blue': the EU not only has a place, but enjoys a less controversial, more constructive position in the US worldview than in recent years.


Abbreviations

AIDS	Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
BMENAI	Broader Middle East and North Africa Initiative
CFSP	Common Foreign and Security Policy
EADRCC	Euro-Atlantic Disaster Response Coordination Centre
ECAP	European Capabilities Action Plan
ECSC	European Coal and Steel Community
EDA	European Defence Agency
EDC	European Defence Community
EGF	European Gendarmerie Force
ENP	European Neighbourhood Policy
ESDI	European Security and Defence Initiative
ESDP	European Security and Defence Policy
ESS	European Security Strategy
FATF	Financial Action Task Force
GMEI	Greater Middle East Initiative
NAC	North Atlantic Council
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
NDU	National Defense University
NRF	NATO Response Force
OEEC	Organization for European Economic Cooperation
PSC	Political and Security Committee
SHAPE	Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe
UN	United Nations
UNIFIL	United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon
USIP	United States Institute of Peace

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For six decades the United States has supported European integration, yet many Americans have an ambivalent attitude towards the European Union. American views of the EU influence transatlantic relations and shape options available to policymakers. Some Americans see the EU as the culmination of historic efforts to ensure peace, stability and democracy on the continent, while others consider the Union an elaborate scheme to create a rival to US hegemony. Still others dismiss the EU as irrelevant. While the US-EU relationship is less acrimonious than in 2003, there are still tensions in the relationship. Most of these are political, but some are structural. The political ones can be solved by changes in policies and policy-making personnel; the structural ones cannot. These have to be addressed and managed. The political issues concern different interpretations of interests among EU members and in the US. These are normal policy differences. On the structural side, there are differences in political institutions, economic strength and energy dependence. In the light of political and structural issues, how do Americans view the European Union and what effect do these perceptions have on transatlantic politics?

This *Chaillot Paper* explores American perspectives on the EU, particularly as a global strategic actor. Americans' views of the EU do not simply run along party political lines; instead there is a complex range of opinion. This volume identifies and analyses different schools of thought. Building on this framework, the paper considers American views on themes ranging from the European Security and Defence Policy to European diplomatic engagement with China, Russia, and Iran, cooperation on global issues, and relations between the EU and NATO. The paper also considers transatlantic relations in the context of American electoral politics.

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