

# Unilateral America, Lightweight Europe?

## Managing divergence in transatlantic foreign policy

Steven Everts

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## 1. Introduction

The election of George W. Bush as the new US President has caused uneasiness in Europe, both at the level of individual states and that of the European Union (EU). Bush has assembled an impressive team to work on foreign policy, including Colin Powell as the new Secretary of State, Condoleezza Rice as the new National Security Advisor, Donald Rumsfeld as Defense Secretary and Robert Zoellick as the new US Trade Representative. All these people are committed internationalists with long experience and a good knowledge of Europe. But many European policy-makers suspect that the Bush team – largely shaped during the Cold War era and with a different ideological bent from the Clinton administration – will have a different world outlook that could strain transatlantic relations. And that in turn could harm the ability of Europeans and Americans to tackle global problems together.

When Europeans debate foreign policy, they tend to focus on “challenges”, whereas Americans look at “threats”. European concerns are challenges such as ethnic conflict, migration, organised crime, poverty and environmental degradation. Americans, particularly conservatives such as Bush and his team, tend to debate foreign threats such as the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, terrorism and “rogue states”. Buzzwords in the European debate are “global governance”, “projecting stability” and “managing globalisation.” By contrast, American stock phrases are “burden-sharing”, “American national interests” and “US leadership.”

The transition from Bill Clinton to George W. Bush is likely to accentuate these differences. Politically, ideologically and even culturally, Clinton and his advisors were natural allies of the political elites in Europe. But the power brokers in the new Bush administration are all “ram-rod straight American conservatives” as Gerard Baker has put it,<sup>1</sup> and likely to take a harder line on many issues. Despite the soothing rhetoric of continuing close transatlantic co-operation, some of Bush’s stated foreign policy intentions – on National Missile Defense (NMD), US troop deployment or global warming – are seen as problematic in Europe. Many hope that, with the passage of time, some of Bush’s plans will be modified so that they become more acceptable. But no one can be sure.

The sometimes anxious discussions about what a Bush administration means for Europe thus go beyond a simple adjustment to a change of personnel in Washington. Whatever the validity of these concerns, it is worth exploring whether politicians on either side of the Atlantic are really guided by divergent priorities – and if so, how these differences can be overcome.

### **Taking stock: the state of play in US-European relations**

Europe and America are often described as each other’s strategic partners. It is easy to see why. In a turbulent world both sides benefit from having partners with a broadly similar outlook to maintain a stable global order. Better yet are partners with diplomatic, economic and military clout, capable of pursuing common objectives. This is, in essence, the rationale for the transatlantic alliance and for maintaining it after the end of the Cold War.

The transatlantic relationship is widely and rightly seen as the bedrock of global governance, defined as the efforts by governments, international organisations, non-governmental organisations and others to manage the global system. The underpinnings of US-European relations are strong. There is an impressive history, going back at least 60 years, of successful co-operation on which to build. Moreover, that co-operative legacy is itself based on the solid foundation of shared interests and common values. Support for political pluralism, open markets and the rule of law is strongest in Europe and the US. The two sides also agree that – most of the time – interests cannot be separated from values, and hence that defending values in itself serves their

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<sup>1</sup> *Financial Times*, 25 January 2001

interests.

This community of values and interests explains why Europeans and Americans can often agree on what constitutes acceptable behaviour in the international arena. For example, spurred on by public opinion, governments on both sides stress the importance of respecting civil rights and liberties. Accordingly, gross human rights violations inside a country are seen as a legitimate matter of concern. In contrast, other countries such as China, Russia or Indonesia are keen to emphasise the territorial integrity of existing states, telling outsiders not to interfere in their internal affairs.

Another way of illustrating the vitality and closeness of the transatlantic partnership is to compare it to other relationships. While by no means without ambivalence and friction, America's relations with France – arguably the worst bilateral relationship it has with any European country – are probably still better than America's best relations with an Asian country, namely Japan. What is beyond dispute is that the European countries, both individually and collectively in the EU, come as close to being a like-minded and helpful ally as the US is ever going to get. Equally, the US is by far the closest and most important partner for the Europeans.

### **Foreign policy divergences**

Yet there has been a noticeable sense of drift when it comes to co-operation on foreign policy, particularly regarding issues outside the European arena. The start of this gradual divergence can be traced back to the end of the Cold War in 1989, but it seems to have accelerated since the mid-1990s. These divergences rarely lead to alarmist newspaper headlines and major diplomatic rows. They often simmer in the background. But their cumulative effect is significant and corrosive.

The Europeans have often been concerned, annoyed and sometimes dismayed by American behaviour in a number of areas in recent years:

- The long-drawn out US refusal to pay its UN dues of more than \$1.65bn, which impaired the organisation's capacity to act. Even though an agreement on this issue was reached in December 2000 – with European governments and multimillionaire Ted Turner compensating for the cut in US contributions – the overall US attitude towards the UN leaves much to be desired, as far as the Europeans are concerned.
- America's ever-dwindling foreign aid budgets have led to dramatic cuts in US support for global efforts at debt relief and multilateral development projects. These cuts are especially disturbing at a time of record federal surpluses, vast increases in defence spending and insistent assertions of the superiority of the US economic model.
- America's confrontational policies towards "rogue states" (such as Iraq, Iran and North Korea) have produced sterile conflicts with weak and peripheral states. According to many in Europe, US strategy has at best been ineffective, and at worst perpetuated the problems it was meant to solve.
- Many Europeans reckon that (what they perceive as) the pro-Israeli bias in US Middle East strategy has hindered, not helped, the efforts to achieve a balanced peace agreement acceptable to all parties. Long-running transatlantic divergences have once again moved to the fore at a time of rising levels of violence in the occupied territories and with the peace process in an impasse.

- The diminished but still existing propensity, especially on the part of Congress, to use unilateral economic sanctions. These measures are particularly objectionable if they include extra-territorial provisions which are illegal under the rules of the World Trade Organisation (WTO).
- America's refusal to sign or ratify a host of important treaties and legal conventions, including the Land-Mine Treaty, the Kyoto protocol on global warming, the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT), and the Treaty establishing the International Criminal Court (ICC).
- America's determination to press ahead with a National Missile Defense system, even though this may mean withdrawing from the Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty. Most Europeans consider NMD a probably unworkable but certainly destabilising answer to a largely imaginary threat.

While not all Europeans are equally concerned about all these issues, it is clear that it is not just the French government and public that have serious reservations about some trends in US foreign policy. In London there is also an active discussion of the implications of "US unilateralism". To this charge, many American officials and analysts answer that neither the US public nor its policy-makers have any desire for an isolationist foreign policy. But this assertion, while justified in itself, misses the point. Nobody in Europe in a position of responsibility is expecting the US to become isolationist. Rather, the worry is that the US is increasingly engaging with the world on its own terms.

US policy-makers have their own set of frustrations. They are concerned, annoyed and sometimes dismayed at some European actions – or, more often, the perceived lack thereof:

- The EU countries' distinctly under-whelming military capabilities, as evidenced during the Kosovo air campaign and their continued reluctance to agree to a more equitable "burden-sharing" in the defence field. Worse, many European countries refuse to increase their military spending at a time when their leaders are eagerly setting up new military institutions that might harm NATO.
- Europe's endemic inability to overcome its diplomatic incoherence and turn the EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) into something credible and meaningful.
- The EU's inexcusable foot-dragging on enlargement. Americans strongly support enlargement, which they see as a major contribution to European stability.
- The persistent European tendency to go soft (as Americans see it) on unsavoury, anti-western regimes such as Iran, Iraq, Libya or Cuba, by letting commercial interests override strategic considerations.
- A frequent indulgence in provincialism, on display for instance during the Asian financial crisis of 1998 or in the EU's current reluctance to think about security problems in the Persian Gulf or in North East Asia.
- The sanctimonious grandstanding from Europeans on topics that the US deems unsuitable for transatlantic dialogue, such as the death penalty.

As in the European case, not all Americans are equally agitated about all these issues. But there is frustration and irritation – and not just among Republicans in Congress – about the behav-

ious and attitude of the European allies and the EU. Since the Europeans are unwilling or unable to “share the burden” – the preferred American choice of words – of upholding global order and stability, the US has no option but to fulfil the role of “solitary superpower”, and still be criticised for it.

Put together, these foreign policy divergences amount to quite a list. Once again, it is important to view them in the context of the close and constructive relations that Europe and America continue to enjoy across a variety of policy areas. But it is no use denying that these differences appear to have increased in importance.

This paper will look at some important changes in US foreign policy that have taken place during the last decade. It will deliberately *not* focus on the classic or latest “hot” issues on the transatlantic agenda such as burden-sharing, European defence policy, trade disputes or NMD. While clearly important, these issues receive adequate attention in policy circles, the media and the broader transatlantic community.<sup>2</sup> The point of this paper is rather to probe deeper and assess whether the US and Europe are drifting apart in their fundamental outlook on the international system.

By focusing on how Europeans look at some trends in America, the paper is, inevitably, one-sided. (Many similar papers have been published on how Americans view comparable trends in Europe’s foreign policy.) But one of the key arguments advanced here is that many American practitioners and analysts are also concerned about certain shifts in US attitudes in recent years.

Equally important are the policy prescriptions on how these divergences can be managed, or at least how their harmful effects can be minimised. It would be misleading to suggest that Europe and America are heading for a political divorce. But if the transatlantic partnership is to endure and thrive, leaders, officials and outsiders will need to tackle these disagreements head on.

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<sup>2</sup> On ESDP see for instance Gilles Andréani, Christoph Bertram and Charles Grant, *Europe’s Military Revolution*, CER, March 2001

## 2. A new climate of opinion in Washington

With a new administration taking office, the contrast with the Clinton administration's pro-European outlook, especially in its second term, is becoming clear. Many Europeans appreciated working with Clinton. As Chris Patten, the EU Commissioner for External Relations, said at the EU-US summit in December 2000: "Europe will miss Bill Clinton. He has been a good friend to this continent. From Kosovo to Belfast, millions of people have cause to be thankful for the contribution he has made." Many European policy-makers remember the close cooperation on NATO enlargement, which helped to preserve America's commitment to European security. And despite some early reservations, the Clinton administration – in contrast to many Republicans in Congress and elsewhere – expressed strong, albeit conditional, support for Europe's efforts to boost its military capabilities through the nascent European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP).

On the economic front, the verdict is positive too. Transatlantic trade and investment flows have grown exponentially during the 1990s, making EU-US economic relations by far the world's deepest and broadest. It was at Clinton's insistence that the US-EU dialogue was upgraded, leading to the New Transatlantic Agenda and the Transatlantic Economic Partnership. Partly as a result of these agreements, US-European relations gained a full EU dimension – in addition to the NATO link and close bilateral ties. The Clinton administration was also positive about Economic and Monetary Union (EMU).

Clinton has therefore left office with the overall transatlantic relationship in a fairly healthy state. But how will US-European relations evolve in the coming years? In particular, will some of the trends in US foreign policy that have proved problematic for Europe in recent years continue, or even worsen under a Bush administration? While the ties that bind Europe and America close together are resilient, there are real question-marks hanging over the relationship.

Three factors have shaped a new climate of opinion in Washington: the rise of Congress in US foreign policy making; the weakening US commitment to multilateral regimes; and the trend towards spending more money on defence but less on non-military instruments of diplomacy. It is worth analysing each of these three elements in greater detail.

### **The increased importance of Congress in US foreign policy-making**

Congress has in the last decade increased its influence over the conduct of American foreign policy. While the US President is often described as the world's most powerful person, he is actually heavily dependent on co-operation with the legislature. As the maxim states, the President proposes, but Congress disposes. Through its control of the federal budget, the capacity to block major appointments and a powerful system of hearings, Congress has managed to exert a significant and growing influence over the direction of US foreign policy.

The ideological orientation and broader outlook of Congress have thus become increasingly important. More often than not, Congress has used its growing stature to push US foreign policy in a more confrontational, unilateral direction. While global governance and the management of interdependence have become buzzwords in Europe and Asia, many in Congress instead emphasise the need to protect US sovereignty. Their attitude is one of marked scepticism towards the pursuit of multilateral solutions to global problems.

Take the vexed question of American non-payment of UN dues, an issue that has frustrated and angered many US allies. The main drive behind the US refusal to pay its UN contributions

came from Congress, in particular Jesse Helms, the Republican Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. In fact, Helms has led strong and concerted campaigns against numerous foreign policy initiatives that were important to the Europeans. And he is likely to continue doing so in the future. For instance, after President Clinton's last-minute signing of the treaty establishing the ICC in December 2000, he declared: "I will make reversing this decision and protecting America's fighting men and women from the jurisdiction of this international kangaroo court my single highest priority in the new Congress."

"The man is a real problem for us" said a senior European diplomat in Washington of Helms. But in truth, the problem runs deeper. Helms is merely a more obdurate representative of a whole school of thought. Commenting on the dominant mood in Congress on a broad range of international issues, Thomas Friedman has written wryly that "there is a hard core of Republicans whose motto on foreign policy could be summed up as 'stupid and proud of it.' This is the crowd who favor everything from non-payment of UN dues to further cuts in foreign aid to outright isolationism."<sup>3</sup>

While there is a lot to this sentiment, Friedman – and many in Europe with him – is actually wrong to blame this unilateral Congressional tendency exclusively on the Republicans. While Republicans have fought hard to cut foreign affairs funding and have often resisted the principles of multilateral global governance (more on this below), many Democrats have frustrated Clinton's attempts to get fast-track authority for international trade agreements. Therefore Congressmen and women in both parties have foreign policy inclinations that are problematic for Europe.

Like other parliaments, Congress can use purely legislative action to press its points. It often does so in direct conflict with the executive branch. For instance, Congress passed the Helms-Burton and D'Amato Acts, against explicit pleas from the White House not to do so in the form they were presented. These laws contain extra-territorial provisions that punish European companies for trading activities with Cuba, Iran and Libya, which under international law are perfectly legal. Understandably, they caused a huge uproar worldwide. The EU threatened to challenge the laws in the WTO. Knowing that the laws are against WTO rules and that the US would lose, American negotiators brokered an agreement with the Europeans in 1998. This uneasy compromise means that the President uses his authority to waive application of the sanctions every year. But the laws remain on the statute books and many Republicans in Congress are pressing for the removal of the presidential waiver authority.

From a European point of view the problem is twofold. First, it is the unilateral mood in Congress as such. But second and equally important is the growing divide in foreign policy outlook between the White House and Capitol Hill. Too often in recent years, the administration has failed to engage the difficult members of Congress early on and in a sustained way. Too often it has refused to spend political energy and capital to overcome Congressional unilateralism or obstructionism. The end result has been a rise in the unease in European circles about the direction and reliability of US policy.

The oft-repeated refusal of Congress to endorse commitments made by the White House – by denying money or by refusing to ratify various international agreements – has stretched US credibility internationally and left the Clinton administration red-faced on many occasions. The high point of Congressional unilateralism was the rejection of the CTBT in late 1999. It was shot down by the Senate, despite the fact that a treaty ending nuclear testing would have locked in American superiority (because other countries could not develop their nuclear programmes), despite having been initiated and largely shaped by American negotiators, and despite all European governments strongly urging the Senate to ratify it.

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<sup>3</sup> *International Herald Tribune*, 8 August 2000

The cavalier manner in which Congress debated and voted on the CTBT unnerved many in Europe and created a lot of mistrust. Michael Stürmer wrote: “This is not about a single decision, but about a trend: replacing engagement in international organisations with careless great-power-politics.”<sup>4</sup> Even *The Economist*, hardly the voice of the anti-American left in Europe, wrote a harsh but poignant leader: “If America refuses multilateral engagements, it may be blissfully free; but it will also be alone. It will be a leader with no one to lead, in a world made unstable by its very isolation. This is sovereignty all right. But a superpower should be bigger and wiser than that.”<sup>5</sup>

Both Europeans and other non-Americans were assured at that time that party politics – and a virulent anti-Clinton sentiment among Republicans in particular – was a major factor behind the rejection. This was doubtless true but surely not the whole explanation. In any event, the picture of the Senate playing party political games with such a high-profile foreign policy question is not really reassuring.

Crucially, many *inside* the US were also dismayed and worried about the broader implications of Congressional sentiment. William Pfaff was scathing of what he called the “gut isolationism” highlighted by the CTBT debacle: “It tends to be chauvinist, nationalist, unilateralist, untrusting of foreigners and paranoid. It wants the US to go its own way but also to have its own way. It wants to build US missile defense, would bring US troops home from the Balkans and Western Europe, and it would defend American interests with sanctions, trade boycotts, political bullying and, when necessary, Tomahawk missiles.”<sup>6</sup>

Because it felt that the Senate had given exactly the wrong signal about America’s place in the world, the Clinton administration went on the counter-offensive with Sandy Berger, Clinton’s national security advisor, pointing out that “The new isolationists are convinced that treaties – pretty much all treaties – are a threat to our sovereignty and continued superiority.”<sup>7</sup> He rightly emphasised that the alternative to a rule-based global system is a world with no rules, no verification and no constraints at all.

In sum, it is often Congress – not the White House – that produces the elements in US foreign policy that non-Americans find most objectionable. As a result, the Europeans, both at the member-state and the EU level, need to step up their efforts to enhance the representation of their views and interests on Capitol Hill. In concrete terms, this means greater and more concerted attempts to explain European viewpoints to influential Congressmen and women and, particularly, those Senators who focus on foreign affairs.

The Europeans should also stress to their counterparts in the executive branch that they expect them to ensure that commitments entered into will be upheld. Americans who urge Europeans to take on their domestic opinion and parliamentary opposition for the greater good of Atlantic cohesion – for instance over defence spending, reform of welfare systems or genetically-modified organisms (GMOs) – should realise that this type of political engagement is needed on both sides of the Atlantic.

### **A weakening commitment to multilateral regimes**

The second – and closely related – trend in US foreign policy that causes concern in European capitals is a perceived reduction in the US commitment to pursue its objectives through international organisations and multilateral fora. Even leading figures in the United Kingdom, Europe’s most pro-American government, express their worries about this trend. The careful construction of a rule-based international system is the avowed goal of many European governments and of the EU’s CFSP. But America is displaying increasing wariness and resistance.

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<sup>4</sup> Die Welt, 23 Oct 1999

<sup>5</sup> The Economist, 22 October 1999

<sup>6</sup> International Herald Tribune, 19 October 1999

<sup>7</sup> Samuel Berger, ‘American Power: Hegemony, Isolationism or Engagement’, Speech to the Council on Foreign Relations, October 1999

It is important to underline that European preferences are not merely the product of their own, successful, experience of multilateral governance (the EU is, in essence, all about subjecting inter-state relations to the rule of law). But Europe's support for multilateral regimes is actually the consequence of a deeper conviction that most of the world's problems – ranging from economic instability to environmental degradation to security threats – can almost always be solved only through robust multilateral efforts.

Thus, multilateral governance is not preferred because the Europeans are “weak”, and even less as a way to curb American global predominance. After all, when a broad measure of international power is used, to include trade, aid and other “soft” power tools, Europe is quite strong. Also, most Europeans are not terribly exercised by America's exceptional strength *per se* since this strength, if carefully deployed, could be an enormous force for good.

But Europeans simply do not believe that unilateral action by any single state is effective. Most problems on the global agenda are too complex and too persistent for one country to solve alone. The Europeans are also unconvinced by the US argument that there are too many states (like Iraq and North Korea) that cheat on their international obligations. First, they point out that the vast majority of states do respect international law most of the time. Secondly, bad behaviour by some states is no reason to stop upholding the norm. After all, nobody suggests that homicide laws should be repealed just because some people commit murder (and some even get away with it).

The “black-list” of American positions and decisions that have caused European disappointment is well known. They include America's broader attitude to the UN and its functional organisations. Many Europeans are also dismayed at the way in which the UN has been politicised, and they too worry about the lack of effectiveness of many of its programmes. But they also know that the UN is only as strong as its member-states want it to be. Without exception, European governments are convinced of the need for UN involvement to tackle many pressing global problems. As a result, they are deeply committed to UN reform. By contrast, the US attitude to the UN is often close to disdain while the sincerity of its attitude towards UN reform is subject to doubt. Curiously, even the IMF – an organisation in which American influence is exceptionally great – has become unpopular in some US circles. The Meltzer Commission, which advised Congress in March 2000 on measures to reform the IMF and the World Bank, proposed to sharply limit IMF action to short-term emergency lending only. George Shultz, the dean of Republican Treasury secretaries, has proposed to abolish the IMF altogether.

The weakening US commitment to global governance has been most vividly demonstrated by its attitude to various international treaties. In recent years the US has not signed, or the US Senate has refused to ratify several important agreements:

- The Land Mine Treaty. In 1997, following a groundswell of public concern over the effects of anti-personnel mines in civil wars in Africa, Asia and elsewhere, a treaty was signed that banned their use. Alone among its allies, but together with Russia and China, the US refused to sign.
- The Kyoto Protocol on global warming. Not only has the Senate refused to ratify the Protocol, but the hard-line US negotiating stance during the follow-up conference in The Hague in October 2000 has been widely seen as the main reason for the failure to reach an agreement. Worse yet, on the campaign trail Bush said that he questioned the scientific evidence for the international consensus that global warming is happening, and that urgent action to stem its consequences is called for.

- The Treaty establishing the International Criminal Court. In 1998, 180 countries, including the US, supported in principle the creation of such a court. But in the end, and despite major concessions offered by the other negotiating countries to allay US concerns, the US delegation was one of the seven countries not to sign the final treaty. The other countries were Israel, Libya, Iraq, China, Qatar and Sudan. In December 2000, President Clinton at long last signed the Treaty. But because the administration prevaricated so long and had not lobbied in its last two years on behalf of the treaty, the chances of ratification are nil.
- The Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. The October 1999 vote on the CTBT was in many respects the showcase of a wider problem. It highlighted not only Congressional unilateralism, but also a deeply held US suspicion of international treaties and of the value of putting legal constraints on the behaviour of states. Gilles Andréani has rightly linked the CTBT vote to a broader trend:

“In reviewing American non-proliferation policy throughout the 1990s, one finds convincing signs of a gradual shift from consensus building to punitive and defensive options: presentations of the proliferation threat as unamenable to deterrence or political persuasion; a growing appetite for military options to counter proliferation once it has occurred; and a distinct scepticism of treaty-based arms control and especially of verification. All of these developments have encouraged a psychological bias whereby the US implicitly leans towards addressing the issue on its own terms, rather than through co-operative endeavours.”<sup>8</sup>

In short, the CTBT reflected “a US mindset of the late 1990s which increasingly tends to emphasise military, technical and unilateral solutions to international problems, possibly at the expense of co-operative and political ones.” Andréani is right. Over the past few years, the mood has changed in Washington. The unilateralists are in the ascendancy. They may not yet be the dominant force in shaping US foreign policy. But the combined effect of seemingly unconnected actions and decisions is clear.

### **Needed: a real debate on global governance**

Most attention in transatlantic debates is focused on “hard” security issues (such as NMD, ESDP and policy on the Balkans) and on trade and other economic topics (beef, bananas, Foreign Sales Corporation tax, data protection, WTO negotiations and so on). There is both close co-operation and conflict in these areas. But politicians and officials less frequently discuss issues related to “global governance”, meaning the management of the global system as such. This is unfortunate since transatlantic divergences over the way in which global governance should be shaped could easily become the biggest fundamental disagreement between Europe and America in the next ten years.

One reason for the non-debate is that the Europeans are very aware that they are in no position to compel the US into accepting multilateral solutions. They also know that there is little chance of American attitudes on this subject changing rapidly. And, surprising though it may sound, a lot of Europeans are still reluctant to raise an issue which they know the Americans dislike discussing. According to this group, it is better to avoid open disagreements. Or, if one does decide to quarrel with the Americans, the issue should be linked to direct, tangible European interests (for instance ESDP or European exports).

But the long-term corrosive effects of disagreements over how to manage the global system

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<sup>8</sup> Gilles Andréani, ‘The Disarray of US Non-Proliferation Policy’, *Survival*, 41, 4, Winter 1999-2000

should not be underestimated. If the Europeans and Americans no longer see eye-to-eye on these fundamental questions, co-operation on “first order” security and economic questions will, eventually, be hampered. And at that point the basis of the broader transatlantic relationship could be called into question.

Another reason for the weakness of the transatlantic dialogue on “global order” issues is that there is no forum for consultations immediately available. Discussions are taking place in a wide variety of organisations, such as NATO, the EU-US dialogue, the UN, the WTO, the IMF and World Bank, and the G-7, to name but a few. But these debates are disjointed and they have, so far, failed to produce a convergence of broader outlook or foreign policy doctrines. Hence a more concerted effort at a real transatlantic dialogue about global order issues is needed.

In this debate the Europeans should show a degree of tolerance for the different “strategic culture” of Washington. With the self-image of being by far the most powerful country in the world it comes natural to the Washington elite to think in terms of what the US should do, rather than what a coalition of like-minded partners can do. At the same time, however, Europeans should constantly emphasise the benefits to the US of staying within multilateral structures. EU leaders can use at least three arguments:

- Multilateral efforts are almost always needed to ensure policy success. This is true for debt relief, the fight against organised crime, and efforts to promote democratic reform in Russia. Co-operative measures are also essential to curb the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.
- To enlist European support for various US objectives, Americans must pay serious attention to European preoccupations (of which global governance is an important one).
- The US will also need a strong and effective rule-based international system once its exceptional pre-eminence has started to wane – as it will.

To give impetus and focus to this much-needed transatlantic debate, a High Level Working Group, composed of leading officials from both sides, could prepare a Declaration of Principles. The point of the Declaration would be to list the standards, for instance on the importance of a rule-based international system and of reducing unilateral actions to an absolute minimum, that should guide both sides in their foreign policies. After a broader discussion, involving parliamentarians, foreign policy specialists and others, this Declaration should then be officially proclaimed at the EU-US summit in December 2001. The Declaration would not be legally binding, but it would have a huge political significance.

### **Ever less money for diplomacy, ever more for defence**

The third trend that leaves Europeans scratching their heads is the American willingness to let the sums available for diplomacy and preventive action dwindle year-on-year while spending ever more money on defence. A country’s budget, like that of a company or an individual, reflects its priorities. Even America’s strongest supporters in Europe are concerned about the growing gap between the financial resources for “soft security” (a wide-ranging category including civil reconstruction, mine-clearing, technical assistance, police and judicial training, and debt relief) and the money spent on “hard security” (such as military salaries and hardware).

Some figures can illustrate the changes to US funding priorities. The percentage of the US federal budget devoted to international affairs excluding defense spending – the so-called 150 Account – has been declining for decades. “In the 1960s, the 150 Account made up 4 per cent of the federal budget; in the 1970s, it averaged about 2 per cent; during the first half of the

1990s, it went down to 1 per cent.”<sup>9</sup> The development and humanitarian aid budget has been hit particularly hard. The US government spends just \$10.4 billion a year – a meagre 0.11 per cent of GDP – on development aid, compared with an OECD average of 0.3 per cent of GDP. On a per capita basis, each American thus contributes \$29 per year to development aid, compared with \$70 in the other OECD countries (admittedly, private and corporate charitable donations are important in the US, but even if these are included the gap in development aid spending with the Europeans remains enormous).

Other non-military spending has been cut as well. Congress has made severe cuts in the funding for multilateral development banks (around 40 per cent, or \$700 million, since 1995); it has reduced the funding for nuclear non-proliferation efforts including the Safeguard programme in the former Soviet Union; and it has slashed family planning programmes by attaching anti-abortion clauses. Even funding for the IMF has been difficult to get through Congress. The *Washington Post* has lamented this stinginess and warned of the consequences: “If Congress prevents the US and the IMF from playing their part in debt relief, it may deter the whole world from doing so. That sort of action encourages even sympathetic allies to regard the world’s biggest superpower as the world’s biggest rogue state.”<sup>10</sup>

For years, successive administrations have battled with Congress to get adequate financial resources for the non-military side of US foreign policy. But many Congressmen are wary. As the House Majority Leader, Republican Tom Delay, said in 1999: “It is wrong to rob the Social Security surplus to underwrite the national debt of Nepal.”

The last Foreign Operations Bill, passed in July 2000 by the House and Senate, confirmed this trend. The total funds authorised, \$20 billion, were 40 per cent below what America spent on non-military security programmes in 1984, and \$2 billion below what the administration had requested. And while Congress slashed a host of development aid and other soft security programmes, it added \$5 billion extra defence spending, on top of the \$300 billion already allocated, for projects that even the Pentagon had said it did not need.

Meanwhile, the gap in defence spending between the US and all other countries is widening year-on-year. While both Republicans and Democrats stress that America should not be the world’s policeman, they vote for ever more sums to be spent on the military, leading to what might be called a “defence overkill.”<sup>11</sup> In 1999, the US had a defence budget seven times greater than Japan, seven and a half times greater than France and the UK, and more than nine times greater than Germany. All these countries are US allies. The US defence budget was more than five times greater than the most generous estimates of the Russian defence budget, and more than seven and a half times greater than that of China.<sup>12</sup> Such is the overwhelming nature of US military supremacy that the country spends more than the next nine countries *combined*. The US is locked into an arms race with itself. And the new Bush administration will probably increase US defence spending yet further – after it has conducted a review of US defence needs.

Not only Europeans, but many Americans have signalled their unhappiness with this state of affairs. Ellen Frost of the Institute for International Economics has sharply criticised the fact that “Over time, US foreign aid has shrunk to pitiful proportions.”<sup>13</sup> Regarding the cuts in the State Department’s budget, she added: “The Department’s troubles reflect widespread Congressional contempt for diplomacy and the so-called ‘pin-striped-cookie-pushers’ who practice it. Its budget is grossly inadequate; what few increments that have dribbled into it are devoted to enhancing the physical security of embassies.”

<sup>9</sup> Richard Gardner, ‘The One Percent Solution. Shirking the Cost of World Leadership’, *Foreign Affairs*, July-August 2000

<sup>10</sup> *Washington Post*, 8 November 1999

<sup>11</sup> Julian Lindley-French, ‘Leading Alone or Acting Together? The transatlantic security agenda for the next US presidency’, WEU Institute for Security Studies, Paris, September 2000

<sup>12</sup> *The Military Balance 1999-2000*, Oxford University Press

<sup>13</sup> Ellen Frost, ‘The Transatlantic Relationship: A View from Washington’, Discussion Paper for the Conference on EU-US Relations, University of Georgia, April 2000

White House representatives have often condemned and sometimes ridiculed the stinginess and short-sightedness of some members of Congress. Sandy Berger, for instance, has berated the attitude of Congress to authorise “billions for defense but hardly a penny for prevention.” He agreed that the financial priorities bespeak a deeper foreign policy agenda. “Many on Capitol Hill would have us rely solely on our military to protect our security. They believe in a survivalist foreign policy – build a fortified fence around America, and retreat behind it. And if other nations complain that we’re abdicating our responsibilities – or if they start abdicating their own – let them, because we’re stronger and richer than they are.”<sup>14</sup>

Four additional elements make this growing imbalance more disappointing and problematic from a European perspective. First, there is a broad consensus among Europe’s foreign policy experts that the biggest challenge facing the western world is how to deal with the disorder of “failed states”, whether they are in Europe, the Caucasus, Africa or elsewhere. It is clear that the ensuing political, economic and security problems can only be dealt with by using a variety of tools and a mixture of national and multinational efforts. Few analysts believe that limiting these to hard security tools will suffice to maintaining peace and restoring order. Having a well-equipped army is useful if one wants to repel an Iraqi-style attack on Kuwait or wage a Kosovo-type air campaign. But without also using other foreign policy means, it will be of little help in dealing with the instability in the Balkans, let alone in Africa.

Secondly, while Europe has in the past overplayed the virtues of being a civil power, it is – at long last – trying to remedy this imbalance through its efforts to construct a real ESDP. At the Helsinki summit of 1999, EU leaders pledged their commitment to set up a Rapid Reaction Force of 60,000 troops and to be able to sustain that deployment for one year. Not only are EU countries engaged in a serious exercise to enhance their power-projection capabilities, but eight EU countries have also increased their defence budgets for 2001.<sup>15</sup> Thus, while the Europeans are trying to ensure that their foreign policies can draw upon a full range of tools, the same cannot be said of the US.

Thirdly, there is a risk that this imbalance in financial priorities is exacerbating transatlantic divergences in world outlook. It is no surprise that the American preference for military spending is linked to particular ideas on what are the greatest security threats. Highest on America’s list are problems – such as ballistic missile proliferation – that seem most amenable to military and technological solutions. The same applies to the Europeans. They are most worried about organised crime, migration and environmental devastation, issues that have a greater chance of being solved by political engagement and huge sums of money. The caricature of both sides is reminiscent of the saying “if the only instrument you have is a hammer, all your problems start looking like a nail.”

Finally, the vast increases in defence spending are linked to an ever-greater reluctance to deploy ground forces, particularly for Kosovo-style peacekeeping-plus-reconstruction operations. George Bush, Condoleezza Rice and Colin Powell have all argued that the US should become more selective in troop deployments because America is not the world’s emergency phone number “911.” The implication is that the US should focus on “full spectrum warfighting” while “lesser tasks” such as peacekeeping and reconstruction will be left to the Europeans and others. But as Flora Lewis has pointed out: “There is a peculiar contradiction in the argument that overwhelming strength is essential but that American forces should not be used to pacify trouble spots around the world unless American national interests (which are not defined) are clearly involved. A policy of spend but don’t send may serve some sectional interests, but it doesn’t address the nation’s needs in a troubled world.”<sup>16</sup>

For all these reasons both sides of the Atlantic should ensure that adequate funding exists for the full range of tools that states can draw on to support their foreign policy. Accordingly, it

<sup>14</sup> Berger, op. cit.

<sup>15</sup> See Andréani, Bertram and Grant, op. cit.

<sup>16</sup> *International Herald Tribune*, 15 September 2000

would be helpful both for Atlantic unity *per se* and for the Alliance's ability to tackle global problems if the US redressed the imbalance in funding priorities. Simply put: more money has to go to soft security in the US (just as Europe has to do more on hard security).

Unfortunately, Bush is unlikely to reverse this trend of more money for hard security but less for diplomacy. Statements made on the campaign trail indicated that Bush is deeply suspicious of spending on debt relief, poverty reduction, the fight against infectious diseases, or other new issues on the global agenda. Instead, he and his advisors emphasised that they would like to see US foreign policy redirected towards defending US "strategic interests". As a candidate Bush said that Africa "does not fit into our national strategic interests." The Republicans have for some years now complained about a presumed decline in readiness levels and morale of the US military forces.

Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld has indicated that he will fight for a substantial increase in the Pentagon's budget. But such a further rise in defence spending is not what America needs right now. The best hope, from a European perspective, is the appointment of Colin Powell as Secretary of State. Perhaps because of his military background, Powell could use his considerable standing in Washington to reverse the decline in funds for diplomacy, multilateral efforts and other soft security tools. Powell has stated his intentions not just to reinvigorate the demoralised State Department and stem the decline in its influence, but also to achieve a significant rise in its budget. EU member-states and the Union's officials should strongly support this effort to redress the imbalance between hard and soft security spending.

The irony is of course that of all countries in the world, the US – because of the powerful attraction that it represents as a political idea and model – is arguably best placed to deploy "soft power." But because of a warped sense of financial priorities, this potential is heavily under-used.

### **Evaluation: where does this leave Europe?**

It is clear that a new climate of opinion has emerged in Washington and that humility is not its hallmark, despite George W. Bush's assertions to the contrary. The loudest voices of this school can be found in Congress – although its influence is not restricted to Capitol Hill. "Unilateralist" is the best term to describe this group. When thinking about foreign policy, their emphasis is on maintaining US superiority and sovereignty. They are sceptical of multilateral fora, legal conventions and international norms. They strongly prefer spending on defence to any other type of international spending. They also tend to cast the international debate in an adversarial way. And they are often scornful of the contributions that other countries, including the European allies, make to the maintenance of global order and stability.

The end result is not isolationism but unilateralism. Both Europeans and Americans are worried. Peter Spiro, an American professor of law, has written about a new school of thought in America which "holds that the US can pick and choose the international conventions and laws that serve its purpose and reject those that do not. Call it internationalism *à la carte*."<sup>17</sup> Chris Patten has also lamented America's "neuralgic hostility to any external authority over its own affairs."<sup>18</sup>

Two final points need to be made. First, it is true that quarrelling among European and Americans is nothing new. They have been doing it for decades. Nonetheless, the Alliance has endured and thrived. But this counter-argument fails to acknowledge that the current divergences are different in kind, if not in number. Unlike during the Cold War, when the Europeans argued – sometimes fiercely – with the Americans over nuclear strategy or how tough to be on the Soviet Union, today both sides are quarrelling over the importance of rules and norms

<sup>17</sup> Peter J. Spiro, 'The New Sovereignists: American Exceptionalism and Its False Prophets', *Foreign Affairs*, November-December, 2000

<sup>18</sup> Speech to the Institut Français des Relations Internationales, Paris, June 2000

when it comes to managing the international system.

The context of these conflicts has also changed. Put simply, the disappearance of the Soviet threat means that the need to overcome or manage transatlantic disputes has lessened too. Accordingly, greater conscious and systematic efforts are needed by politicians and officials on both sides of the Atlantic to stick together and work out practical ways to bridge these differences.

Second, Europeans should approach this topic from a positive and constructive angle. Simply complaining about US unilateralism and emphasising European virtuousness may have the short-lived effect of making Europeans feel good about themselves. But it is unlikely to shift American thinking or modify US behaviour. Instead, it is likely to sour EU-US relations, and that in turn will have a negative effect on the ability of Europeans and Americans to tackle global problems together.

Therefore, the best solution for European Atlanticists is to ensure that Europe's own performance in foreign and security policy improves. As Chris Patten wrote in June 2000 in a leaked memo: "The US is prone to unilateralism – and that tendency will be reinforced if Europe is not seen to do more for itself." Moreover, the Europeans need to support the multilateralists in America – of which there are still a large number. To assure that the multilateralists succeed in their battle with the unilateralists, the Europeans need to devise a careful strategy highlighting both the costs of US detachment and the benefits of acting multilaterally.

Looking at the costs, one of the many arguments that the Europeans should use is that by its self-exclusion, the US has lost the opportunity to shape the nature and functioning of various global regimes. And since the US often does accept and live up to the requirements of certain treaties, it might as well formally accede to them, but thus also gain the benefits of verification. For instance, in the case of the CTBT, the Clinton administration and also President Bush have decided to adhere to a moratorium on nuclear testing. But because of the unilateral nature of this decision, it does not bind others – morally or legally.

The Europeans also need to convey to the Americans the benefits, to Washington, of staying within multilateral frameworks. In particular, the Europeans need to stress that America can look forward to an increase in the effectiveness of its policies if it pursues them with the active support of the European allies. And enlisting that support is in turn dependent on curbing America's unilateralist inclinations.

In fact, quite a number of Washington insiders are aware that a trade-off exists between the pursuit of policies unilaterally and their chances of success. As Sandy Berger has pointed out:

"We must remember there is a difference between power and authority. Power is the ability to compel by force and sanctions; there are times we must do so, but as a final not a first resort. Authority is the ability to lead, and we depend on it for virtually everything we try to achieve. Our authority is built on very different qualities than our power: on the attractiveness of our values, on the force of our example, on the credibility of our commitments and our willingness to work with and stand by others."<sup>19</sup>

The task ahead for Europeans is to convince the Americans why they should – for their own good – learn to rely more on authority than on power.

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<sup>19</sup> Samuel Berger, 'A Foreign Policy for the Global Age', *Foreign Affairs*, November-December 2000

### 3. A global partnership? Yes, but...

To overcome the sense of drift in transatlantic relations, many analysts and practitioners of foreign policy propose to rebalance the relationship and transform it into a real global partnership. Europeans have long clamoured for a more equal relationship with the US, but recently a rising number of US experts have also supported this idea. As a Council on Foreign Relations Report noted in 1999, “The United States should draw Europe, over time, much further into a global strategic partnership to help shape the international system in the new era.”<sup>20</sup>

It is trite – but no less true – to say that, if they act together, the US and the Europeans will clearly be the dominant force in world politics. Other countries such as Russia, China and India can then decide, depending on the issue, to ally themselves with or oppose this US-European grouping. Moreover, the careful construction of such a global partnership is a necessary precondition for solving many of the world’s problems. The success or failure in managing globalisation, African stability or the reform process in Russia depends critically on the ability of Europe and America to pull in the same direction.

It is likely that during its first year in office the new administration will make a big push to revitalise the transatlantic relationship. In that context, the global partnership concept is likely to resurface. For the Bush team, this would mostly be about trying to enlist European support for US strategy world-wide (particularly on “rogue states” such as Iran, Iraq and North Korea). The Europeans need to be prepared for this overture and make sure that the agenda will be broad and not pre-set in Washington. But if adroitly handled, the proposal has much to offer to both sides – and indeed to the rest of the world.

What type of reforms would be required on both sides to make this partnership effective? For a start, the Europeans would have to address in a meaningful way the diplomatic incoherence and military weakness of their common foreign and security policy. The “mental maps” of European foreign policy practitioners would also have to change: they should learn to think more globally and strategically. For example, they should pay more serious attention to developments in relations between China and Taiwan, or to the security situation in the Caucasus.

In return, the Americans would agree to hold early and genuine policy consultations. At the moment, the American habit is first to decide the security agenda (i.e. what are the main security challenges for the West) plus proposed remedies (i.e. a preference for coercive, unilateral measures), only to discover – often indignantly – that the Europeans have reservations about both. This habit would have to end. Moreover, American policy-makers would have to make the mental switch from Europe as a place to Europe as a partner.

Quite apart from the potential benefits to promoting stability and development worldwide, the creation of an equal and global partnership is also important for the health of the transatlantic relationship itself. There is a growing realisation in Washington and European capitals that the “core business of the Alliance” will be harmed if both sides increasingly disagree on foreign policy issues outside of Europe.

Notwithstanding the attraction of this idea of a global partnership, there are a number of problems and pitfalls. As argued throughout this paper, the hard truth is that Europe and America disagree significantly on what in today’s world counts as a problem, whether it is a priority and how it can best be addressed.

One way to deal with these differences is to plead for a division of labour. Each side should play

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<sup>20</sup> ‘The Future of Transatlantic Relations’, Council on Foreign Relations, New York, February 1999

to its strengths. Since it is easy in the US to get funding for the military but difficult to commit ground troops, the Americans should concentrate on the high-tech and the bombing. In a complementary fashion, Europe should supply the troops and the money. Put in its crudest form, this division of labour would mean that the US does the war, while Europe takes care of the peace.

But this deliberate exaggeration also shows the problems of such divisions of labour. While a degree of specialisation is unavoidable and may well be healthy, in the medium term it would be corrosive. After all, the policy stance of countries is heavily influenced by the kind of military action they are prepared to take. For example, during the early 1990s Europe and America repeatedly fell out over Bosnia. The Americans favoured lifting the arms embargo and implementing air strikes, which the Europeans – who had troops on the ground – opposed. This kind of division of labour can lead to serious policy disagreements and needs to be deftly handled.

Still, the idea of transforming US-European relations into a global partnership deserves a lot of support. But the Europeans will need to stress that they have strong views and legitimate concerns about what the global partnership is all about, in terms of process and also substance.

Those who work in government often say that “government is 90% process.” This is to say that “how a policy is developed and carried out is often as important as the policy itself.”<sup>21</sup> For the partnership to work and be acceptable to the rest of the world, both sides will need to make conscious and sustained efforts to pursue the aims of the alliance through multilateral organisations. On the substance, the Europeans need to make sure that, crudely put, the global partnership should not just be about “mad men and loose nukes.” Other issues are equally important: failed states, environmental degradation, debt relief, migration and so on.

Provided these conditions are met, the concept of a global partnership offers the Europeans a good chance of achieving two of their key foreign policy objectives: developing a rule-based international system and multilateralising the US.

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<sup>21</sup> Ellen Frost, *op. cit.*

## 4. Suggestions on the way forward

When thinking about the curious mixture of co-operation and rivalry, admiration and disdain that characterise US-European relations, it is important to remember that political divorce is unthinkable between Europe and America. Whatever the scope and intensity of the divergences in transatlantic foreign policy, the most likely outcome – if these deeper, almost philosophical disagreements are not addressed – is the continuation of a degree of malaise and a failure to realise the full potential of the transatlantic relationship.

It is clear that below the surface of particular disagreements – over levels of defence spending, the wisdom of proceeding precipitously with NMD and various trade disputes – lies a deeper, more fundamental divergence over the organising principles of the post-Cold War world. It is essentially a debate about the importance of rules, norms and institutions in the international system. While a convergence of views on global governance is highly desirable, it is unlikely to come about soon. Hence, caution and perseverance should be the watchwords. Still, a number of policy recommendations can be identified:

### What the Europeans need to do:

- The European Union should explicitly recognise that multilateralising the US is one of its key foreign policy priorities for the coming years. In discussions with American counterparts, the Europeans must constantly reiterate the benefits to the US of supporting global regimes: staying inside multilateral frameworks is almost always necessary to ensure policy success; and America will also need strong and effective international regimes once the unipolar moment has passed.
- One of the best ways for Europe to make an impact on US thinking is to move from strategic irrelevance to helpful partner. Europeans who clamour for more equality should realise that this requires Europe to raise its game in foreign policy – in particular by making greater efforts to match words with deeds. For example, when European talk excitedly about European defence, they should ensure that the outcome will not be another false dawn but a meaningful increase in military capabilities and effective decision-making procedures. Only on this basis can a global partnership with the US come about. Conversely, the Europeans can and should stress that this partnership will only work if the Americans agree to genuine and early consultations, and if they pay greater attention to European views on how the international system should be structured.
- To enhance respect and support for multilateral governance, Europeans should be more serious about their own international obligations. For example, to date the EU has not made its import regimes for hormone-injected beef and bananas compliant with WTO rules. Reform of these regimes is long overdue. Equally, the negotiations between the EU and South Africa over the bilateral free trade agreement – when obstruction by southern EU member-states meant that the agreement had to be renegotiated after it had already been formally signed – showed that the Europeans are not averse to using unilateral measures either. Europe should lead by example and refrain from acting unilaterally.

- The Europeans should make systematic efforts to enlist the support of those Asian governments that are sympathetic towards the construction of a rule-based international system. Because many in Asia and Europe recognise and deplore the weakness of the political dimension of the Europe-Asia link, a structured and focused debate on global governance should be put on the agenda of the meetings of Asian and European ministers (ASEM).
- Europe should think more globally when it comes to hard security questions. Active European participation in peace-keeping (4587 troops in 15 UN-run peace-keeping operations versus no troops in any for the US) and extensive European foreign aid budgets counter American dismissal of the Europeans as narrow-minded provincials. But it is true that when it comes to traditional security problems (difficult states, proliferation issues, China/Taiwan), EU governments tend to leave them to the US – and yet reserve the right to criticise Washington about the way it deals with them. While the Europeans do not necessarily have to act globally, they should start thinking in a more strategic manner.
- The Europeans must improve the representation of their views and the rationale of their policies to members of Congress. At present, separate national efforts have too often proved disjointed and ineffective. To explain European preferences, the EU High Representative for foreign policy, Javier Solana, should hold informal briefing sessions, perhaps three or four times a year with members of the House and Senate that deal with international issues. These visits should become a regular event on the transatlantic calendar and help to give a “face” to EU foreign policy in Washington.
- In all their activities in Washington, the Europeans need to make greater efforts to support and strengthen the position of American multilateralists. It is vital for Europe that the multilateralists win their battles with the unilateralists.

### **What the Americans need to do:**

- The Americans need to realise that norms and multilateral governance will not go away as a European preoccupation. In fact, they will only increase in importance. Therefore those Americans who want to set up a global partnership with Europe should accept that the promotion of a rule-based international system must be an integral part and an explicit aim of it.
- To maintain Alliance cohesion, both sides need to be prepared – financially and politically – to use the full spectrum of foreign policy tools. Therefore the trend in America toward spending ever more money on the military and ever less on diplomacy needs to be reversed. Equally, the US must realise that on troop deployments a policy of “spend but don’t send” will strain transatlantic security co-operation.
- The Bush administration will need to make greater efforts to curb the unilateral instincts of members of Congress. The fact that the White House, the Senate and the House of Representatives are all in Republican hands – albeit narrowly – justifies a degree of optimism. This may reduce the party political infighting that has beset US foreign policy under President Clinton. But since wariness towards global governance is deep-rooted, especially among Congressional Republicans, the administration will have to make concerted efforts and be willing to spend political capital on this issue.

- Of all the treaties that the US has refused to sign or ratify, those relating to arms control issues involve European interests most directly. To allay growing European concerns, the US should quickly sign and ratify the Land Mine Treaty; ratify the CTBT (as suggested once again in January 2001 by General John Shalikashvili); and reassure Russia, China and others that it will not withdraw unilaterally from the ABM Treaty to deploy a missile defence system. Furthermore, American policy-makers need to consider the damage to US standing in the world of continuing opposition to international conventions such as the ICC and the Kyoto Protocol.

### **What Europe and America should do together:**

- To promote a convergence of views on many individual foreign policy issues, closer and more systematic consultations are needed. For America, this means making greater efforts to consult the Europeans early on in their decision-making process, avoiding *faits accomplis*. For the Europeans, this means trying to avoid the problem of rigidity: once 15 member-states have agreed a common position, it is subsequently difficult to change it. In practical terms, there should be an EU diplomat stationed in the National Security Council, while the Americans should have one diplomat posted in the Policy Planning and Early Warning Unit of the EU's High Representative.
- Most of all, Europe and America need a real debate about global norms and governance. Existing divergences on the importance of norms are creating rising levels of irritation and resentment. They need to be tackled head on. To give greater impetus and direction to this much-needed debate, a High-Level Working Group, composed of senior officials on both sides, should work out a Declaration of Principles. The point of the declaration would be to list the principles – for instance on the importance of rules and of reducing unilateral actions to an absolute minimum – that should guide both sides in their foreign policies. After a broader discussion, involving parliamentarians, foreign policy specialists and others, this declaration should then be officially proclaimed at the EU-US summit in December 2001. The declaration would not be legally binding, but it would have a huge political significance. It would set out the basis for a global partnership that has so much to offer – to Europe, to America, and to the rest of the world.

Steven Everts

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*Dr Steven Everts is Senior Research Fellow at the Centre for European Reform and Director of its Transatlantic Programme. He is the author of "The impact of the euro on transatlantic relations", published by the CER in January 2000.*

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