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Franz-Josef Meiers

Transatlantic Relations after the U.S. Elections: From Rift to Harmony?¹

Many outside the United States, Europeans in particular, reacted with “shock and awe” to the result of the presidential election of 2 November 2004. President Bush, whom an overwhelming majority never liked and many had grown to resent,² was re-elected by a country that many observers thought they knew and understood. Values had trumped policies, as a God-fearing nation embraced the perceived morality of a Christian president in spite of misgivings about Iraq, unemployment, budget-deficits and even his competence. His consequential, controversial presidency will be extended by four more years, this time with a popular mandate: 59,5 million Americans (51 percent) voted for Bush, 56 million (48 per cent) for his Democratic challenger, Senator John F. Kerry. Bush’s straight-talking likeability, his perceived strong leadership in protecting the country against international terrorism, and his appeal to religious conservatives as defender of a traditional American moral values like the institution of marriage outweighed the appeal of what Americans acknowledged to be Kerry’s superior intellect.

1 I would like to thank my colleague Thomas Banchoff, Associate Professor of Government, Georgetown University, Washington DC, for the careful reading of my draft paper.

2 Global poll says Kerry preferred over Bush, *Financial Times*, 9 September 2004; Europäer wünschen mehr Unabhängigkeit von Amerika, *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* 9 September 2004; World opinion a world apart, *Financial Times*, 9 September 2004; and Jennifer Joan Lee, Vote in U.S. inflames Europeans, *International Herald Tribune*, 27 October 2004.

It was remarkable that Bush could overcome the issues of war and jobs that would have sunk most other candidates. The decision of the Massachusetts Supreme Court last year to approve gay marriage helped the mobilization of traditionalist and fundamentalist religious voters. Countless Ohioans did not vote their wallet but their cultural values. The Massachusetts court decision was “a lightening bolt that hit right in the pulpit and ignited the whole congregation”, according to Phil Burrell, who ran the Ohio initiative campaign.³ No other state lost as many industrial jobs as Ohio but nevertheless voted against their economic self-interest which, in the end, gave the incumbent the 20 electoral votes to lock up his majority of 286:252 in the electoral college. With undivided power in Washington, political constraints seem to have disappeared at home. Bush may view his victory, matched by a crushing defeat of the Democratic Party in the Congressional elections – the Republican Party will increase their majority in the Senate from 51 to 55 – as a vindication of his domestic and foreign policies. Four years after the disputed election he won a popular vote that he can no longer consider a one-term accident of history. He vowed to use the “political capital” gained from his victory to push an aggressive domestic agenda in a second term. He will move quickly within the next 18 months before the mid-term election in 2006 will edge him toward lame-duck status to pursue conservative priorities reflecting “the will of the people,” like limiting medical malpractice lawsuits, revamping the tax code and adding private accounts to social security.⁴

In spite of Bush’s abundantly clear victory – he gained 8,6m votes more than in 2000 – and the expansion of Republican majorities in both houses of Congress for the first time since Calvin Coolidge, the president has made little headway in establishing a generational Republican majority in the country. The election revealed again deep cleavages in American society, splitting citizens by region, gender, religion, marital status, sexual orientation, values and education level. Almost half of the voters felt that victory for the other side would mean disaster for the nation. President Bush has

3 David S. Broder, An Old-Fashioned Win, Washington Post, 4. November 2004.

4 President Holds Press Conference [www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2004/11/20041104-5.html].

now the second and last chance to show them they were wrong. He can address the national yearning for economic and fiscal stability, a financially sound social security system and adequate spending on homeland security – but such an effort will require bipartisan action. Moderation, however, seems an endangered word amid the exultation of the Republicans. The paradox of the presidential and congressional elections is that President Bush may sooner than later be forced to choose between his conservative supporters on the Hill like Tom Delay, the majority leader in the House, who strongly argue that he should use his presidency to usher in a Republican ascendancy, and the president's pledge to bridge the partisan divide and look for common ground with the Democrats. The imbalance of an undivided government will trigger "Rayburn's law": "When you get too big a majority, said the Democratic Speaker of the House, Sam Rayburn, after F.D.R.'s 1936 landslide, "you're immediately in trouble." To "break the second-term jinx" Bush faces the politically delicate and sensitive task of sticking to the principles than elected him while overcoming the deep divide within the country and on Capitol Hill.⁵

The state of relations with the European allies is a reflection of a country deeply divided. The crisis over Iraq revealed deep rifts within the transatlantic alliance and among Europeans. The lesson of the first term is that the world does not always bend to Washington's will. At his press conference on 4 November, he declared that he will "continue to reach out our friends and allies, our partners in the EU and NATO, to promote development and progress, to defeat terrorists and to encourage freedom and democracy as alternatives to tyranny and terror." Reality is the greatest constraint on President Bush, from macroeconomics to the war in Iraq, which require bipartisanship at home and strengthened cooperation with the European allies. British Prime Minister Tony Blair, the most loyal European ally of President Bush before and after the Iraqi war, made two important points to America's angry allies when he spoke about the election results. One was

⁵ William Safire, *The Dangers of Lopsidedness*, *New York Times*, 4 November 2004; Lou Cannon, *Can Bush Break the Second-Term Jinx?*, *Washington Post*, 9 November 2004; and David Gergen, *The Power of One*, *New York Times*, 19 November 2004.

that is the right time for the US President to reach out to America's traditional allies and time for the rest of the world to accept that Mr. Bush will be around for the next four years and must be dealt with as the choice of the American people. The other is that the critical goal of stability in the Arab world will never be achieved unless the United States assumes the critical role of being the driving force of the peace process between Israel and the Palestinians.⁶ Secretary of State Colin L. Powell emphasized the president's desire "to work with Europe, ... to get over the disagreement of 2003 over Iraq." The US administration would continue "a policy of working multilaterally to deal with problems like the nuclear issue in Iran". He declared that the president would "work very actively to get the Road Map moving forward." He left no doubt that President Bush, with a clear mandate from the American people, would continue pursuing his "aggressive" foreign policy when dealing with "challenges" and "issues", in particular the Global War on Terror. He would not "trim his sails or pull back. It's going to be a continuation of his principles, his policies, his beliefs." American foreign policy would be "multilateral in nature", but the United States would reserve the right "to act alone" where necessary or "with a willing coalition to defend our interests and our needs."⁷ The French Foreign Minister Michel Barnier recalled that France, in spite of the recent surge of "French bashing", is among the "best friends" and one of the "most solid partners" of the United States - both countries work closely in the fight against terrorism as exemplified by French special forces fighting side by side with U.S. forces in Afghanistan. Americans and Europeans have much to do "together" to promote democracy, security and development. In the Middle East, on top of the agenda is "to turn Iraq into a real success story." The deadlock in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict must be broken, "the source of a number of other conflicts and serves as the pretext for numerous acts of terrorism." He continues: "Let us revive the Road Map and reactivate the Quartet" – the United States, the European Union, Russia

6 Prime Minister congratulates President Bush [<http://www.number-10.gov.uk/output/Page6528.asp>].

7 Interview by Hubert Wetzel and Guy Dinmore of Financial Times [<http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/37937pf.htm>]. See also Bush 'will still pursue aggressive' line abroad, Financial Times, 9 November 2004.

and the United Nations in support of a final settlement of the Middle East conflict. The European partners “must be ready to accompany any effort in this direction with financial support, but also with an international presence on the ground.” Because of common interests everywhere, America and Europe should have common ambitions. “America needs a Europe capable and responsible” while “Europe needs an America strong and engaged in world affairs based on multilateralism ... and convinced that the world needs rules and rules respected by all.” In a unstable and dangerous world, he concludes, “our alliance is more necessary than ever.”⁸

The re-election of President Bush raises two related questions: What will a second Bush term mean for Europe? What contributions can Washington expect from its European allies to prevail in the war against terror, against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and in the stabilization and democratisation of the Middle East? Unquestionably Iraq, Iran and the Palestinian-Israeli conflict will be at the top of the transatlantic agenda within the next four years. Doubts, however, remain whether the transatlantic security community can leave the very significant disagreement of 2002-2003 over Iraq behind and agree on a common approach to cope with the security threats of the emerging 21st century as they had proved so successfully for more than four decades during the East-West conflict. Some, like Robert Kagan, argue that the changing structure of U.S.-European relations – in particular the great and growing imbalance of power and the fundamental differences in the worldviews – will inevitably lead to a “transatlantic divide” and the emergence of “a long era of American hegemony”.⁹ Others like NATO Secretary General, Jaap de Hoop Scheffer argue that the partnership between Europe and America will remain as important in the 21st century as it used to be during the cold war. The new “enlightened” atlanticism will move beyond the transatlantic world view of the past towards the requirements of the present and the future. “The agenda of the new

8 Michel Barnier, *Lettre á un ami américain*, *Le Monde*, 10 November 2004; and Michel Barnier, *A Letter to America*, *Wallstreet Journal*, 8 November 2004.

9 Robert Kagan, *Of Paradise and Power. America and Europe in the New World Order*, Alfred A. Knopf: New York 2003, pp. 4, 88.

NATO is nothing less than the agenda of a new future-oriented transatlantic security community.”¹⁰

The following discussion will analyse the pattern of transatlantic convergence or divergence in the three most pressing issues which will be at the top of the transatlantic agenda within the next four years: the stabilization of post-war Iraq, the revamping of the Middle East peace process, and the management of the proliferation risks emanating from Iran’s nuclear program. In addition, efforts of the European partners to strengthen the European Security and Defense Policy (EDSP) within the institutional framework of the European Union (EU) and U.S. concern that a stronger ESDP could undermine the alliance and weaken the transatlantic link will be analyzed.

The focus of the paper is on the need to overcome not only the rift across the Atlantic, but also the division between “new” and “old” Europe. So long as there are serious transatlantic tensions, Europe will not be able to develop effective foreign policies. And, as long as Europe is divided on crucial question of how to cope with U.S. power, a healthy transatlantic relationship is impossible.¹¹

The paper’s main thesis is that transatlantic relations at the beginning of the 21st century are as important as during the Cold War. Both the United States and Europe face new global security risks and threats that, in almost every case, can be dealt with far more successfully if they act together „The good we can do together is far greater than the good we can do apart,“ as President George W. Bush rightly said during his visit to Poland in 2002. Needed is a “strategic consensus” spanning across the Atlantic which iden-

10 Die Zukunft der transatlantischen Sicherheitsgemeinschaft, speech by NATO Secretary General, Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, at the „Welt am Sonntag Forum“, Berlin, 8 November 2004 [www.nato.int/docu/speech/2004/s041108a.htm].

11 Charles Grant, Six Proposals for a More Effective EU Foreign Policy, in: Werner Weidenfeld et al. (eds), *From Alliance to Coalitions – The Future of Transatlantic Relations*, Bertelsmann Foundation Publishers: Gütersloh 2004, pp. 141-159 (141).

tifies core elements of a common vision of threats and opportunities, and strengthens the means of cooperation to address common goals.¹²

1. *Internationalization: the Stabilization of Iraq*

The Iraq crisis of 2002-2003 has been one of the worst, perhaps the worst together with the Suez-crisis of 1956, in transatlantic relations since the end of World War II. The Bush administration was absolutely convinced that the gathering WMD threat posed by the despotic regime of Saddam Hussein could only be averted by a regime change in Baghdad, while only a portion of European allies were prepared to go along. Many allies, in particular France and Germany, were concerned that U.S. military intervention in Iraq would become a pattern of the only superpower taking offensive actions against terrorism with global reach without common decision-making in the alliance and without the blessing of the United Nations.

There are numerous negative developments in the country, many the result of mistaken U.S. policies. On post-war Iraq, U.S. intelligence agencies underestimated the decrepit state of the Iraqi infrastructure, failed to predict the role played by Saddam Hussein's paramilitary forces and did not foresee a second counter-insurgency war.¹³ The Coalition Provisional Authority and the U.S. military failed to make a serious effort to train Iraqi military and security forces properly in the year following Saddam Hussein's fall.¹⁴ To compound the problem, the Bush administration ignored the lessons of previous post-conflict reconstruction. They did not see the symbiotic relationship between nation-building and long-term commitments as the

12 Opening Remarks of Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer at the ambassadors' conference, Berlin, 6 September 2004 [www.auswaertiges-amt.de/www/de/archiv_print?archiv_id=6120]; and James B. Steinberg, *An Elective Partnership: Salvaging Transatlantic Relations*, in: Werner Weidenfeld et al. (eds), *From Alliance to Coalitions – The Future of Transatlantic Relations*, Bertelsmann Foundation Publishers: Gütersloh 2004, pp. 89-105 (90).

13 Michael R. Gordon, *The Strategy to Secure Iraq Did Not Foresee a 2nd War*, *New York Times*, 19 October 2004.

14 Michael R. Gordon, *Debate Lingered on Decision to Dissolve the Iraqi Military*, *New York Times*, 21 October 2004; and Anthony Cordesman, *Iraq is not lost, but US strategy is*, *Financial Times*, 20 September 2004.

American architects of the post-war international system clearly did. One big reason last year's "mission accomplished" started to look like "mission impossible" was that Pentagon planners provided only enough troops to defeat Saddam Hussein's crumbling armies and not enough to provide security for physical and political reconstruction from day one after the statue of Saddam had tumbled in Baghdad. Securing the peace takes more, not fewer, soldiers than winning the peace.¹⁵

The daily pictures of the sole superpower being bogged down in a counter-insurgency war with uncertain outcome show the illusion and hubris of President Bush's foreign policy during the first four years. Iraq looks less like a beachhead for democracy than a failed state in the making. The depressing prospects of post-war reconstruction efforts show the growing gap between U.S. military means and political ends to shape the world to its interests and ideals. Tackling the Iraqi challenges would indeed be a very demanding task if the United States were in the best of shape. But is not. The Iraq experience exposes the erroneous assumptions on which the Bush doctrine of unchallenged U.S. power rests:

- *the limits of U.S. omnipotence*: The foundation of U.S. economic growth is vulnerable. The federal budget surplus of \$ 236 billion turned into deficit of more than \$ 400 billion, or more than 4 per cent of U.S.GDP. The current account deficit is expected to be more than \$ 600 billion this year, or almost 6 per cent of the U.S. GDP. The U.S. accumulated debt to foreign investors is \$ 2,6 trillion or 23 per cent of U.S. GDP. The private household saving rate has fallen to 0,5 per cent, compared with 12 per cent in the euro area. These imbalances suggest that America's future may be a lot less rosy. Some economists see parallels today with the dollar's collapse in the 1970s, when the Bretton Woods system broke down. Like today, that was of large budget deficit, loose monetary policy and rising oil prices, and America faced open-ended costs to pay for the Vietnam war.¹⁶ Furthermore, U.S. superior conventional

15 James F. Dobbins, *America's Role in Nation-Building: From Germany to Iraq*, *Survival* 45 (Winter 2003/04) 4, pp. 87-110.

16 *Checking the depth gauge*, *The Economist*, 13 November 2004, p. 88.

military power is severely stretched in fighting two wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. Half of the Army 33 brigades are currently deployed in Afghanistan (2) and Iraq (15). The redeployment of 650 British troops to a region south of Baghdad to cover for a U.S. unit drafted into the offensive against insurgents in Fallujah indicates how thinly stretched U.S. troops are in the central region. Pentagon planners are forced to extend the tours of troops, to put greater reliance on reservists, and extend reserve call-ups as well. Efforts to jump-start reconstruction and to quench the resistance of insurgent militias will make their task even more difficult: they have to find additional troops - the equivalent of several bataillions, or about 3,000 to 5,000 soldiers.¹⁷

- *the exaggerated belief in force*: There is a huge gap between U.S. lethal military efficiency and its actual ability to bend events to its will. The very fact that U.S. marines had to fight so fiercely to retake terrorist sanctuaries like Fallujah, 18 months after President Bush had declared “mission accomplished”, is a sign of how close U.S. Iraq policy is teetering towards the abyss. Even with more troops in the field the United States can probably win any tactical engagement, but that is, as it was in Vietnam, irrelevant. The textbook victory in Fallujah highlights the dilemma U.S. forces face in fighting insurgents: the hard-hitting combat tactics of U.S. marines are not necessarily the most effective. It has not brought the United States appreciably closer to achieving its political objectives in Iraq, in particular gaining the support of the Iraqis, notably the Sunnis. If Sunni hostility continues to deepen, Fallujah could turn into a Pyrrhic victory. The tactical success on the battlefield must meet the approval of the population. Otherwise, the application of the most efficient U.S. military means will only play into the hands of the insurgents. The operational lesson of Fallujah is that taking cities is comparatively easy, but that holding them is harder and ultimately decisive.¹⁸

17 Costly Troop Deficit in Iraq, New York Times, 22 November 2004; and Officers See Need For Bigger Iraq Forces, Washington Post, 22 November 2004.

18 Charles Clover, Postwar Violence, Financial Times, 21 October 2004; Shlomo Avineri, Playing into Saddam’s hands, Financial Times, 10 November 2004; Eric Schmitt, The Goal is Met. What’s Next?, New York Times, 15 November 2004;

- *the irrelevance of allies*: The Iraq war shattered three of the building blocks of a functioning alliance: strategy, consensus, coalition. The Bush administration moved away from what was once the accepted pattern of employing political diplomacy supported by military might to the application of military might supported by the hope that diplomacy will subsequently lead to success. Efforts at finding consensus have been replaced by the new operating principle: “coalitions of the willing.” European voices had been given little consideration by the Bush administration for the European allies lack, with the exception of the United Kingdom, efficient expeditionary forces as an option. This approach effectively reduced the alliance to a military self-service organization for any number of political coalitions. The more the Bush administration continues to play the unilateral bully, the more its soft power, i.e. attraction, the power of persuasion and legitimacy will fade.

Common crimes, persistent lawlessness and attacks committed by former regime loyalists and other forces are the greatest impediment to Iraq’s economic and political reconstruction.¹⁹ The situation in Iraq, particularly in the Sunni triangle, remains highly precarious. If Sunni hostility continues to deepen, Fallujah could turn into a hollow victory. The triple challenge facing the United States in Iraq is to quench the resistance of armed insurgents mainly in the Sunni triangle, to provide as quickly as possible the basic elements to the people, i.e. water, electricity, security, schools, administration, and to head off a large-scale boycott by Sunni voters of the Iraqi elections scheduled for January. This will require the commitment of more U.S. forces already stretched thin, for Iraq’s security forces are not ready for the demanding task and probably will not be for the next two years. In short, there is no “exit strategy”. The *conditio sine qua non* of a successful reconstruction of Iraq will be the willingness of the Bush-administration to

The Larger Battle in Iraq, New York Times, 15 November 2004; Daryl G. Press and Benjamin Valentino, A hollow victory, International Herald Tribune, 18 November 2004; Thomas L. Freedman, Iraq at the Tipping Point, New York Times, 18 November 2004; and Jackson Diehl, Fallujah’s Fallout, Washington Post, 22 November 2004.

¹⁹ Cadriana Lins de Albuquerque, Michael O’Hanlon and Amy Unikiewicz, The State of Iraq: An Update, New York Times, 26 November 2004.

remain meaningfully engaged in Iraq for years to come. The alternative would be a hasty withdrawal from Iraq which would lead inevitably to the worst-case outcome for the United States, the Iraqis, the neighbouring countries, the region and the entire world: a descent into Lebanon-like chaos and civil war that would quickly spread beyond Iraq's borders and destabilize politically and economically fragile neighbours such as Saudi Arabia or Jordan.²⁰ In short, the stabilization and reconstruction of Iraq after the quick defeat of the armies of Saddam Hussein will indeed be a "long, hard slog" as Donald Rumsfeld, Secretary of Defense admitted in a leaked memorandum in November 2003.

The United States cannot achieve what it wants except in the context of the involvement of the international community. Some degree of the internationalisation John Kerry so strongly argued for during the campaign is the only realistic path towards stability inside Iraq, and sustained domestic support in America. To succeed with its goal of liberating Iraqi from a ruthless dictator and of establishing a democratic system in Baghdad critically depends on the willingness of the Bush administration to embrace the Kerry version of rapprochement and reach out to European allies for help.²¹ On the European side, especially in France, there is an equal need to recognize Europe's genuine interest in a successful outcome in Iraq, rather than standing aloof and telling the world "Iraq is Iraq's and America's responsibility". The "spectators" of the war should become involved in the rebuilding of Iraq. The European allies must find some way to help meaningfully in Iraq: a failure there would do them as little good as it would the rest of the world. "If the gap is to be bridged, it has to be done from the European side and not from the United States ... We cannot afford to see Iraq go up in flames. It is in everyone's obligation that we get Iraq right", Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, NATO's secretary general, concluded.²² José Manuel Bar-

20 Kenneth M. Pollack, *After Saddam. Assessing the Reconstruction of Iraq*, Analysis Paper No. 1, The Sabban Center for Middle East Policy at the Brookings Institution: Washington, D.C., January 2004.

21 David Ignatius, *Bush's New Start with France*, *Washington Post*, 16 November 2004.

22 Warren Hoge, *NATO chief criticizes terror 'gap'*, *International Herald Tribune*, 12 November 2004.

roso, the new head of the EU commission, said in an interview, that Europeans should “leave behind our disagreements on Iraq” and “give a positive, strong contribution to the Iraqi problem.”²³ In short, the issue that helped divide the alliance, now provides an opportunity for uniting it. The post-war restructuring of Iraq is evolving into a transatlantic task.

The alliance, together with the European Union, could become the institution of choice, when a military and political-economic element in nation-building is needed. One option could be sending units of a European rapid reaction force to Iraq. It would give Germany a European cover to change its position, and if Germany changed its position, the pressure on France to do the same would be intense. It would force the EU governments to make good on their pledge to build an independent European force. It would demonstrate that such a force would not be part of a French-inspired effort to weaken NATO and to counterbalance the United States. And most important, it might contribute to what ought to be the ultimate goal of European-American relations: to help assure a stable, prosperous Iraq.²⁴

It appears highly unlikely that Europeans, will send more troops; the Netherlands, Poland and Hungary have all signaled their intention to bring their troops home by the end of 2005.²⁵ It is still out of question for both France and Germany to send troops to Iraq, but they can be persuaded to increase their contributions to peacekeeping operations on the Balkans and in Afghanistan. By assuming greater responsibility for peace and international security – the EU will take over the NATO-run mission in Bosnia-Herzegovina by the end of 2004 and the European NATO allies committed more forces to Kosovo and Afghanistan (where NATO troops serve under two French generals), the European partners could reduce the burdens on America’s overstretched armed forces and release them for some other urgent tasks in Iraq. Michèle Aillot Marie, the French Minister of Defense,

23 Help U.S. with Iraq, executive of EU says, International Herald Tribune, 21-22 August 2004.

24 Richard Bernstein, New sense of urgency over U.S.-Europe ties, International Herald Tribune, 29 October 2004.

25 Judy Dempsey, Poland unexpectedly says troops may quit Iraq in 2005, International Herald Tribune, 5 October 2004.

pointed out that Europe is taking its responsibility as European forces form the “backbone” of NATO’s operations.²⁶

Furthermore, they could make a tangible contribution to the training of Iraq’s military and security forces. The North Atlantic Council approved a military training program in Iraq on 8 October 2004; 16 of the 26 allies have agreed to send up to 300 military instructors backed up by around 2,000 guards and support staff to Iraq. NATO officials are worried about the refusal of some member countries like France and Germany to allow officers posted to alliance staff positions.²⁷ Both countries have insisted they will not send under any circumstances troops to Iraq. Instead, they have offered to help with training Iraqi forces outside of the country.²⁸ The German government appears to be prepared to withdraw German officers from those alliance staff positions which are assigned to NATO’s military training program in Iraq.²⁹ Scheffer warned that this stance could undermine the unity of NATO’s integrated military command and the political cohesion of the Alliance “If there is a political consensus within NATO about the training mission, it is important that all officers working in NATO’s integrated military staffs participate.” General Harald Kujat,

26 Für Frankreich sind die Europäer mittlerweile das Rückgrat der NATO-Einsätze, *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 15 September 2004; Michele Alliot-Marie, Europe is in better shape than ever to face crises, *Financial Times*, 17 September 2004; and Craig S. Smith, Eurokorps Waves EU Flag in Afghanistan, *International Herald Tribune*, 23 September 2004.

27 Enhancement of NATO Assistance to Iraq [www.nato.int/docu/update/2004/09-september/e0922.htm]; Jean-Pierre Stroobants and Laurent Zecchini, Accord limité à l’OTAN pour former les officiers irakiens, *Le Monde*, 23 September 2004; NATO to set up Iraq military training academy, *Financial Times*, 23 September 2004; Nordatlantik-Rat einigt sich auf Ausbildungsmission, *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 9 October 2004.

28 For the French position see Corine Lesnes, Jacques Chirac : « Notre politique en Irak ne changera pas », *Le Monde* 22 September 2004; Corine Lesnes, La France “ne s’engagera pas militairement” en Irak, *Le Monde* 25 September 2004. For the German position see Kanzler stellt klar: Keine Bundeswehrsoldaten in den Irak, *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 14 October 2004; Schröder denies change to policy on Iraq force, *Financial Times*, 14 October 2004; No troops for Iraq, Germany reaffirm, *International Herald Tribune*, 15 October 2004;

29 Klaus-Dieter Frankenberger, Ratlos vor dem großen Krisenbogen, *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 17 September 2004.

chairman of NATO's Military Committee, warned that such a withdrawal would "cause difficulties. We don't have too many experts who can rotate. It's important that everybody contributes. There is a certain obligation."³⁰ If the German government does not honour its commitment to a NATO-training mission in Iraq, it will become an accomplice to a policy strongly advocated by the Pentagon hawks: the move away from common action towards coalitions of the willing.

Another critical task for U.S., Iraqi, and international authorities is to secure materials and equipment that could be used in chemical, nuclear or biological weapons. Equally important are programs that bolster the barriers and disincentives for former Iraqi weapons scientists and technicians who could help terrorists or rogue states acquire these lethal capabilities. Together with the European allies the United States could take a similar approach to the one it has applied to the former Soviet Union. This should be one of the most important tasks in lieu of the disappearance of 377 tons of conventional explosives usable as detonators in nuclear weapons from bunkers which had been sealed by IAEA inspectors before the U.S. invasion.³¹

Short of helping out with forces, the European allies should find it in their interest to augment their contributions to the U.N.-run national elections and actively participate in the tasks of political and economic reconstruction. Here, they could bring in their experience in reforming administrative structures and rebuilding the essential elements of Iraq's infrastructure, i.e. water, electricity, telecommunication. Another area could be debt relief. The French agreed to a compromise formula to forgive more than half of Iraq's \$ 2,9 billion debt to France. The Paris Club of 19 creditor nations agreed on 22 November 2004 to write off 80 per cent of 42 billion that Iraq

30 Katja Ridderbusch, "Europa braucht die NATO". Jaap de Hoop Scheffer zu den zukünftigen transatlantischen Beziehungen, *Die Welt*, 12 November 2004; US Soldaten stürmen Rebellenhochburg, *Bonner General-Anzeiger*, 9 November 2004; Instructors from NATO to help train Iraqi Army, *International Herald Tribune*, 18 November 2004.

31 David E. Mosher and John V. Parachini, *Iraqi Insurgents and Weapons of Mass Destruction*, *International Herald Tribune*, 15 November 2004.

owes them. Iraq owes another 80 billion to various Arab countries.³² Finally, the French government agreed that the only scenario for progress is a successful Iraqi election on 30 January 2005. It urged Iraq's Sunni interim president, Ghazi al-Yawar, during a visit to Paris on 30 November 2004 to remain on board for the elections on which the successful reconstruction of the country critically depends on. He had been highly critical about the U.S. assault in the Sunni stronghold of Fallujah and argued for a delay of the national elections to ensure a comprehensive effort to bring disaffected Sunni Muslims into the political process.³³ An international conference on Iraq attended by twenty representatives of the United States, Russia, France, the United Kingdom, Germany and Arab countries as well as heads of four major regional or international organizations in Sharm, el-Sheikh on 23 November 2004, supported the idea of Iraq's proceeding with its political transition as outlined in U.N. Security Council Resolution 1546, passed last June. They called on the Iraqi government to meet with its political opponents to encourage them to participate in the national elections. "The message is clear that the elections and ballot boxes are the only solution to the crisis of security in Iraq," Jordanian Foreign Minister Hani Mulki said. Michel Barnier, the French Foreign Minister, declared that the message of the conference was that only the political process could solve Iraq's problems.³⁴ The biggest worry is that if too few Sunnis participate in the country's first democratic elections in January 2005, the result will be deemed illegitimate and the insurgency will continue unabated.

In conclusion, the post-war restructuring of Iraq evolves into a central transatlantic task. Rather than remain fixed on past quarrels, the European allies would be well advised to work with the Bush administration to

32 David Ignatius, *Bush's New Start with France*, *Washington Post*, 16 November 2004; and Craig S. Smith, *Major Creditors in Accord to Waive 80 % of Iraq Debt*, *New York Times*, 22 November 2004.

33 David Ignatius, *Bush's New Start with France*, *Washington Post*, 16 November 2004.

34 Robin Wright, *Conference on Iraq May Encourage Leader to Meet Opponents*, *Washington Post*, 23 November 2004; and Neil MacFARQUHAR and Steven R. Weisman, *Leaders at Talks in Egypt Urge Support for Political Resolution of Turmoil in Iraq*, *New York Times*, 24 November 2004.

achieve their common objectives. Those lie, above all, in a stable, prosperous and peaceful Iraq. “Chaos in Iraq benefits nobody except those who share the apocalyptic version of Osama bin Laden and his friends,” as *The Economist* rightly put it.³⁵

2. *Moment of Truth: the Reinvigoration of the Road Map*

The most crucial issue facing President Bush in his second term and the European allies is the Middle East peace process. British prime minister Tony Blair called “the single most pressing political challenge in our world today.” The message he took to Washington in early November 2004 was to restore momentum into the defunct Middle East peace process plan the Bush administration should be ready to “seize aggressively”³⁶ the opportunity presented by the Palestinian leadership transition and the decision of the Israel’s prime minister Sharon to pull out all Israeli settlements from Gaza. The main task is to demonstrate that diplomacy carries tangible benefits for the Palestinians and the Israelis alike.³⁷

If there was once a “peace process”, there is now little peace and even less process. The terror campaign of Hamas, Fatah and Islamic Jihad and the stiff and uncompromising response of the Israeli government, i.e. the deliberate targeting of high-ranking members of the Palestinian terror groups or the build-up of a wall to prevent further terror attacks from the West Bank, have left the peace process moribund. The diplomatic stalemate has been deepened because America and the European allies, notably France, were

35 It’s time to help, *The Economist*, 20 November 2004, p. 12.

36 Colin L. Powell, 8 November 2004, Interview by Hubert Wetzel and Guy Ginmore of *Financial Times* [www.state.gov/secretary/rm37937pf.htm]; and Guy Ginmore, Bush has mandate to continue pursuing ‘aggressive’ foreign policy, says Powell, *Financial Times*, 9 November 2004.

37 PM congratulates President Bush, Downing Street 10, 3 November 2004 [www.number-10.ov.uk/output/Page6528]; Jean-Pierre Langellier, A Washington, Tony Blair demande à George Bush de faire du Proche-Orient une priorité, *Le Monde*, 12 November 2004; and Philip Stephens, The path to Mideast peace is as precarious as ever, *Financial Times*, 12 November 2004.

perceived as partisans, the former as the champion of Israel's goals, the latter of the Palestinian claims. Since 2001, the EU has shown it is ill-equipped to play the broker's role. The only country that could play this role shunned the peace process it saw as a synonym for sterile Middle Eastern chatter and declared Yasser Arafat a *persona non grata* with whom President Bush could not and would not work with, or trust. Throughout its first term, the Bush administration argued that the road to Jerusalem passed through Baghdad. The new comprehensive approach aimed at a regional democratic transformation, beginning in Iraq and extending to a corrupt and terror-tainted Palestinian Authority under Yasser Arafat. This democratic transformation would open the door to an Israeli-Palestinian settlement. However, Abu Ghraib, Guantánamo, the mismanagement of the occupation of Iraq and the excessive use of U.S. military forces in retaking the insurgent stronghold Fallujah have proven disastrous to America's image and credibility as a honest broker in the Arab world. The widespread perception among Arabs that an even-handed U.S. approach to the Middle East was impossible as long as hard-line supporters of Ariel Sharon were "embedded" in the White House,³⁸ further undermined the U.S. role of a honest broker vis-à-vis the Arab and Palestinian parties.

With the decision to go into Iraq the United States no longer has the luxury of treating the Middle East policy as a series of unrelated events. President Bush faces the need for simultaneous actions to avoid failed states while reducing the incentives to violence and instability that threaten both America, friendly Arab states throughout the region, and the European allies.³⁹ It is likewise true that America and the European allies, including all the members of the European Union, have a great deal at stake in what happens with Palestinian-Israeli peace process. This requires a deep, sustained commitment of the United States and a visible engagement of the president. But American resolve will not suffice without the willing engagement of other

38 Philip Stephens, Blair's destiny will not be decided in his own country, *Financial Times*, 1 October 2004;

39 Zbigniew Brzezinski, A grand U.S-European Mideast strategy, *International Herald Tribune*, 26 October 2004; and Brent Scowcroft, A Middle East Opening, *Washington Post*, 12 November 2004.

states, especially those of Europe and the region itself. The key player who is detested so thoroughly in the Arab world particularly after the invasion of Iraq cannot go it alone and needs to include the European players constructively into the peace process. They can provide the requisite financial resources, expertise and troops to turn the road map from vision to manifest reality.

The road map plan agreed on by the United States, the EU, Russia and the U.N. in 2003 should be revived and fortified by actions; the plan outlines a series of reciprocal steps by Israel and the Palestinian leaders ending with the establishment of a Palestinian state. The outlines of such a settlement, by the otherwise stagnation of the process, have become much less contested. Its key elements are a Palestinian state based more or less on the pre-1967 borders (with some negotiated modifications and land-swaps), a Jerusalem shared between the two countries and a recognition that for all but a symbolic handful refugees, the right of return will be to a new Palestinian state, not Israel. Political leadership to implement the road map and a clearer sign of the final dimension of a future viable, contiguous and peaceful Palestinian state have been missing. The coincidence of the start of a second Bush administration, the change in Palestinian leadership and the Israeli disengagement from the Gaza strip next year make some adjustments of the U.S. role in the Middle East peace process inevitable. The yardstick of the seriousness of President Bush to re-engage aggressively in the peace process will be whether

- Ariel Sharon's policy of unilateral disengagement from Gaza does not become Gaza only,
- the successor of Yassir Arafat will be capable of meeting the most pressing political, security and economic needs of the Palestinian people,
- the Islamist militia (Fatah, Hamas and Islamic Jihad) do not take advantage of the Israeli disengagement from Gaza and continue their fighting against Israel unabated,
- and Gaza does not become a failed state.

President Bush has to demonstrate how to proceed from Israel's Gaza-plus-formula, if it is implemented, towards an independent Palestine. Washington will ultimately have to decide if Gaza first becomes Gaza last, as the Israel's prime minister Ariel Sharon seems to prefer,⁴⁰ or if the withdrawal in 2005 will be the first step towards a comprehensive settlement that involves the West Bank. A joint American-European statement which determines the goalposts of the road map should provide both parties a more concrete vision of the peace process and would help to attenuate the hatred on both sides and to generate support for the peace process. After the death of Yasser Arafat, it is the time for America and Europe to emphasize the importance of Palestinian elections in January 2005. They would not only be important for Palestinian stability but could also provide the basis for both parties to resume a dialogue. Those responsible for planning and holding the elections would have to coordinate them with the Israeli military to allow Palestinians living in Jerusalem to participate and to ease conditions in the West Bank and Gaza so that Palestinians can more easily vote there.⁴¹ The leadership change opens the door to resume talks with the new Palestinian leadership. With the withdrawal of Israel from the Gaza strip next year there is a urgent need to work out a "street map", a series of political arrangements worked out with Egypt, Jordan and the Palestinians to have moderates run Gaza and its security forces. If the extremist Palestinian groups continue their attacks on Israelis as they pull out from Gaza, no Israeli prime minister would be prepared to proceed from the Gaza-plus formula towards an independent Palestine. Without an end to terrorism, there is no reason for Israel to trust the Palestinian leadership with negotiating a future state. On the other hand, Israel has to recognize that certain

40 Dov Weissglass, a top aide to Sharon, had been quoted in Israel's Haaretz newspaper as saying the Gaza disengagement plan would indefinitely postpone the creation of a viable Palestinian state. Sharon's Gaza plan, *International Herald Tribune*, 28 October 2004; Henry Siegman, Spelling out Sharon's real plan, *International Herald Tribune*, 13 October 2004; and Greg Myre, For Sharon, peace plan isn't viable, *International Herald Tribune*, 16 September 2004.

41 Dennis Ross, Arafat's successor must be elected, *International Herald Tribune*, 6-7 November 2004; and Steven R. Weisman, Israel to aid Palestinian elections, *International Herald Tribune*, 23 November 2004.

concessions would be necessary to empower a consolidated, moderate, authoritative leadership.⁴²

In concert with an re-engaged U.S. policy in the peace process the European allies can play a vital role in providing for a stable and secure environment that is conducive to the build-up of a democratic Palestinian state based on the rule of law and a negotiated settlement between Israelis and Palestinians. The departure of Yasser Arafat offers the Palestinians the opportunity to participate in democratic elections. A democratically elected leadership that respects the rule of law is the key to genuine reforms to create a viable state the Bush administration so strongly argued for. Democratic structures will enable the security apparatus to become a true law enforcement body capable of providing security for the Palestinians and fighting terrorism. After the death of Yasser Arafat, Europe's primary responsibility is to ensure legitimate elections in Palestine that will open the door to genuine democratic reform as the key precondition to a just and peaceful solution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, based on two democratic states – Israel and Palestine. The Europeans should support and encourage the Palestinian Authority in its quest for establishing a democratic society. They could provide the resources and expertise that will help to advance a viable political and economic, and security infrastructure in the West Bank and Gaza.⁴³ Finally, NATO could play a critical role in bringing greater stability to the Middle East by using its peacekeeping expertise and assets to support a peace agreement between Israelis and Palestinians. With Israel planning to withdraw from Gaza in less than a year, NATO peacekeeping may become a realistic option.⁴⁴

42 Dennis Ross, America is key to a Gaza pull-out, *Financial Times*, 27 October 2004; and Steven R. Weisman, Washington Whispers: Possible New Look at Mideast Policy, *New York Times*, 5 November 2004; and Catherine Field, In the Mideast, France stands and waits, *International Herald Tribune*, 24 November 2004.

43 Joint Statement Between the United States and the United Kingdom Concerning Middle East Peace Process, 12 November 2004 [www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2004/11/print/20041112-3.html]. See also Mustafa Barghouthi, In Palestine, democracy is a security issue, *International Herald Tribune*, 24 November 2004.

44 Joseph Ralston, Nato must prepare for possible Gaza call-up, *Financial Times*, 26 October 2004.

In conclusion, a peaceful solution of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict depends on four elements:

- the emergence of a democratic and capable Palestinian Authority;
- the willingness of the Israeli government to engage in serious negotiations with the Palestinians, including the territory in the West Bank;
- the readiness of the Bush administration to take an active role in the Middle East peace process;
- the constructive engagement of the European allies to help the emerging new Palestinian leadership to consolidate and maintain authority and control.

The Israeli-Palestinian stalemate feeds Muslim anger and despair, gives a larger rationale to terrorist groups like Al Qaeda and to the insurgency in Iraq, makes the promotion of democratic reform in the broader Middle East an elusive goal, and threatens a spill-over of violence from the Middle East to Europe. The United States and the European allies should seize the opportunity of new circumstances in the region to reduce the incentives to violence and instability and increase the odds of a just and peaceful resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, based on two democratic states.

3. *Nuclear Diplomacy: Iran*

Iran is becoming the test case both for the transatlantic allies of how to deal with the enforcement of nuclear nonproliferation rules. The dividing line between the United States and the European partners is how to respond to efforts by “rogue” countries to acquire a WMD capability. While the Bush administration prefers a tough approach which does not take any option off the table, including economic sanctions and the concept of military pre-emption, the European allies are determined to change Iran’s nuclear policy and to supplement the shortcomings of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT) through “conditional engagement”.

A previous deal that the EU-3 thought they had struck in October 2003 with Iran to suspend its uranium and plutonium programs unraveled when IAEA inspectors uncovered many previously hidden activities in violation of the NPT Treaty which could be related to weapons program, including the reprocessing of uranium and advanced designs for uranium-enriching centrifuges, and Teheran, in response to the revelation, refused to end its manufacture of parts for uranium enrichment machines and production of plutonium. Iran's apparent willingness to cooperate only when confronted by the IAEA with compelling evidence confirmed the suspicion of the Bush administration that Teheran is hiding a plan to develop nuclear weapons under the cover of its civilian nuclear program. Because of the scale and history of the Iran's nuclear program Washington argued that Iran has not made any strategic decision to abandon its nuclear weapons program. Instead it used negotiations with the EU-3 as a pretext to continue its nuclear program in private without impunity. The only way to stop Iran's nuclear program is to force the issue to the U.N. Security Council for possible economic sanctions.⁴⁵ The Iranian nuclear program raises two delicate political problems for the transatlantic allies: the need to strike a balance that addresses both the proliferation concerns of Americans and Europeans and to recognize the rights of Iran within the NPT Treaty to enrich uranium for peaceful purposes, and whether nuclear diplomacy can still supplement the shortcomings of the NPT Treaty that allows the development of all enriching or reprocessing of uranium for generating electricity but can be used for making a nuclear bomb.

Rather than refer Iran to a divided Council, France, Great Britain and Germany (EU-3), with the reluctant blessing of the United States, offered the Iranian government a second tentative deal⁴⁶ in late October 2004 to abandon its uranium enrichment program in exchange for receiving nuclear

45 Craig S. Smith, Teheran postpones a visit by team from UN atomic agency, *International Herald Tribune*, 13-14 March 2004; and Gareth Smyth, Teheran to ban UN nuclear inspectors from sites, *Financial Times*, 15 March 2004.

46 In October 2003, the three foreign ministers of France, the United Kingdom and Germany persuaded the Iranian government to sign and implement the IAEA additional protocol which would pave the way for a tougher "challenge inspection" and to suspend all uranium enrichment and reprocessing activities.

technology, i.e., guaranteed access imported nuclear fuel at market prices, the removal of spent fuel, light water reactor systems ill-suited for developing fissile material for nuclear bomb a lucrative EU-Iran trade agreement and support for Iran's membership in the WTO. In a letter to the governments of the EU-3 the Iranian government pledged to halt by 22 November 2004 temporarily all enrichment, to freeze the work on its pilot plan for uranium enrichment in Natanz and to drop plans to convert solid uranium into the gas that is fed into the enrichment centrifuges during the period of talks with the EU-3 on the entire package deal.⁴⁷ In return, the EU-3 have agreed to refrain from referring the issue to the Security Council. The pact, however, fell far short of the comprehensive deal the EU-3 had hoped for, by which Iran would permanently suspend its uranium enrichment and re-processing program.⁴⁸ Instead, the agreement does little more than reinstate a temporary freeze of Iran's most dangerous nuclear activities – a point the European trio thought they had reached a year ago. Iranian officials emphasized after the talks with the EU-3 in Paris that the suspension would not be indefinite and that the country would not give up its legitimate right to use fuel-cycle activities for solely civilian purposes under the NPT Treaty. The agreement still does correspond with what the ruling board of the IAEA demanded in September 2004: the suspension of all⁴⁹ Iranian activities re-

47 The Paris Agreement leaves Iran free to make plutonium. European diplomats saw the uranium issue as more pressing, while plutonium production is years away; the completion of the Arak reactor is estimated to be a decade away. European officials said they would try to persuade Iran to give up its work at Arak in exchange for a light water reactor. William J. Broad and Elaine Sciolino, *Iranians Retain Plutonium Plan in Nuclear Deal*, *New York Times*, 25 November 2004.

48 Iran to look at EU offer on uranium enrichment, *International Herald Tribune*, 22 October 2004; Elaine Sciolino, *Iran Claims Draft Accord with Europe on Uranium*, *New York Times*, 9 November 2004; *Iran: Anreicherung teilweise fortsetzen*, *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 13 November 2004; Elaine Sciolino, *Iran Gives Pledge on Uranium, but Europeans are Cautious*, *New York Times*, 15 November 2004; and Dafna Linzer, *Iran Vows to Freeze Nuclear Programs*, *Washington Post*, 15 November 2004.

49 Iran sought to rattle back in part its commitment to freeze all uranium enrichment programs, demanding the right to run about 24 centrifuges "for research purposes". A day before the ruling board of the IAEA passed a resolution Iran retreated from its demand. EU resists Iran's attempt to alter accord, *International Herald Tribune*, 25

lated to uranium enrichment and reprocessing. In a 32-page report, Mohammed ElBaradei, the director of the IAEA, wrote that all declared nuclear material in Iran has been accounted for, and therefore such material is not diverted to prohibited activities.” The agency, however, was not in the position “to conclude that there are no undeclared nuclear materials or activities in Iran.”⁵⁰

In a surprising shift, President Bush lent support to the European initiative. At a joint conference with British Prime Minister Blair at the White House he said, “We don’t want Iran to have a nuclear weapon, and we’re working toward that end. And the truth of the matter is the prime minister gets a lot of credit for working with France and Germany to convince the Iranians to get rid of the processes that would enable them to develop a nuclear weapon.” Instead of calling Iran’s case to be referred to the Security Council for possible sanctions over Iran’s nuclear program, the Bush administration is giving EU-3 efforts the benefit of the doubt to halt Teheran’s nuclear ambitions in the long term by diplomatic engagement. Washington is making a virtue out of necessity. Only two of the 35 countries on the IAEA board – Canada and Australia – had shown a willingness to refer Iran’s file to the Security Council. With the deal it appears unlikely that even these two countries would support the U.S. position. In addition, China signed an advantageous contract to extract and buy enormous quantities of Iranian oil and gas in late October. Together with Russia, Iran’s main civilian nuclear supplier, China has a veto in the U.N. Security Council to block any resolution imposing economic sanctions on Iran. In short, with a continued “get tough policy” policy with Iran Washington risks complete diplomatic isolation both on the IAEA board and within the Security Council. Instead the United States will focus on several outstanding issues and pursue a toughly worded resolution to be issued by IAEA board on 25 November 2004 that includes more aggressive IAEA inspections and an automatic referral to the Security Council if Teheran breaks any part of the EU-3 deal.

November 2004; and Elaine Sciolino, *Iran Backs Away From a Demand on A-Bomb Fuel*, *New York Times*, 29 November.

50 Elaine Sciolino, *Europeans Say Iran Agrees to Freeze Uranium Enrichment*, *New York Times*, 16 November 2004.

The nuclear diplomacy of the EU-3 has two serious shortcomings. Teheran's linkage policy to use its nuclear program as a bargaining chip to address the perceived security concerns vis-à-vis the United States and Israel as potential aggressors, demonstrate the limits of a compartmentalized approach where the Europeans try to convince the Iranians to dismantle its full nuclear fuel cycle at the bargaining table, while the Bush administration is taking the position of a concerned spectator. The EU offer raises a crucial doubt for Iran: how can it be sure Washington will not one day lean on the Europeans to break their supply promise to Iran? This is one fundamental reason why any EU-Iran deal will need active U.S. support. The Bush administration should actively embrace the European position, and urge the Russians to join the common approach which supports both Iranian efforts to develop nuclear power for civilian purposes in exchange for a comprehensive, verifiable freeze of Iran's uranium enrichment and re-processing program. Another reason is that a non-aggression assurance from Washington might lessen the incentives for Iran, which currently has U.S. forces to the west and east of it, to go nuclear. The Bush administration's policy towards Iran is predicated on the belief that sustained pressure will make the Iranians change their policies. Furthermore, President Bush has made Iran a card carrying member of the "axis of evil" giving the United States a virtual right to wage preemptive war. "Iran will either be isolated or it will submit to the will of the international community," Condoleezza Rice said in August 2004.⁵¹ Hawks in the Bush administration even go a step further: Iran like Iraq, is a gathering threat that must be confronted by military action or regime change. An administration official said that a military option would "never" be taken "off the table".⁵² To compound the issue, Israel warned that it would not tolerate the development of an Iranian nuclear weapon and might be forced to consider military action similar to the attack against the Osirak nuclear reactor in Iraq in 1981 if

51 Quoted in: Dilip Hiro, Washington won't get far by threatening Teheran, *International Herald Tribune*, 17 August 2004.

52 Steven R. Weisman, Bush Confronts New Challenge on Issue of Iran, *New York Times*, 19 November 2004.

Teheran is judged to be on the verge of making nuclear weapons.⁵³ Iranian officials already responded that if Israel or any other country were to attack any site in Iran, they could strike back at Israel with Iran's medium-range Shahab-3 missile, which could also hit U.S. military bases in the Gulf.⁵⁴ Were Iran ever to contemplate surrendering the ambition for nuclear weapons, it would do so only as part of a grand strategic bargain with the United States that provided guarantees of Iran's security. "Why make concessions to the Europeans without reciprocal measures from Washington?"⁵⁵ One reason why the EU-3 approach has not yet brought the desired result is the lack of positive U.S. support. The EU trio are well placed to start talks with Teheran, but they will need strong U.S. backing and deep U.S. involvement to succeed. In short, any effective policy toward Iran requires a common position of the transatlantic partners.

If Iran backslides on the agreement with the EU-3, as it did on a previous one, the EU member countries should be prepared to refer the Iran case to the Security Council for further action, including tough economic sanctions. Such a policy would clash with the EU member countries preferred policy of "preventive engagement" – largely negotiations and economic incentives - based on the optimistic assumption that issues like the proliferation of WMD can be solved through "an effective multilateral system", "a rule-based international order" and "well functioning international institutions." The European Security Strategy of December 2003 leaves the question unanswered how they will react if, for example, the Iranian government refuses to abandon all elements of the country's nuclear enrichment program or if the Iranian government decides to follow the path of North Korea and quits the NPT treaty with the required 90 days notice and

53 Israel's Haaretz newspaper reported in mid-September 2004 that the country was planning to buy 500 "bunker busting" bombs from the United States. Those bombs could be used to destroy Iran's underground nuclear facilities. Craig S. Smith, Iran presses ahead on nuclear fuel, *International Herald Tribune*, 22 September 2004.

54 Iran warns it can strike back, *International Herald Tribune*, 9 November 2004.

55 Philip Stephens, Confrontation is not the only way to deal with Iran, *Financial Times*, 17 September 2004. See also Daniel Dombey, Iran arms drive wedge between EU and US, *Financial Times*, 22 September 2004; Give a chance to nuclear diplomacy, *Financial Times*, 9 November 2004.

turn the country's skills and materials to the construction of a nuclear bomb. If the EU ends up deadlocked over how to reverse efforts of countries to acquire a WMD capability its credibility as a global security force will seriously suffer. Thus, Iran is becoming the test case both for the EU countries' ability to change Iran's nuclear policy through "conditional engagement" and their determination of how to deal with the enforcement of nuclear nonproliferation rules. They need to prove that they cannot only agree to a more active approach in what the Solana paper defines as a crucial part of the EU security strategy. They must also be prepared to take sterner measures against those who have broken the rules.⁵⁶

The mantra of Washington hawks -- if U.N. sanctions fail, the next step is a military strike, proxy or otherwise, to destroy Iran's nuclear installation --, illustrates the broader failure in Washington to understand how U.S. power alone cannot halt the march towards nuclear proliferation. "We are determined that they are not going to achieve a nuclear weapons capability," John Bolton, Undersecretary of State, said of Iran in September 2004. What was not clear was how.⁵⁷ Another anticipatory military strike against suspected nuclear installations in Iran is not a viable option. Solid intelligence on Iran, as was the case with Iraq before the invasion, is fragmentary and uncertain. U.S. decision makers know little about the geographically diffuse nature of Iran's nuclear sites. Furthermore, as a neighbour of both Afghanistan and Iraq, Iran is well placed to stoke further the flames of insurgency in Iraq, especially among the Shia Muslim population, to destabilize Afghanistan and/or to close the Straits of Hormuz.⁵⁸ Given Iran's strategic geography, the present turmoil in the Middle East, the broad hostility of the Muslim population in the region against the United States and the deep-

56 Ivo Daalder and Michael Levi, The U.S. and EU have to come together, *International Herald Tribune*, 27 February 2004.

57 Roger Cohen, Iran sees wide cracks in U.S.-Europe relations, *International Herald Tribune*, 29 September 2004.

58 For an assessment of the risks of coercive military actions against Iran see Michael Eisenstadt, *The Challenges of U.S. Preventive Action*, in: Henry Sokolski and Patrick Clawson (eds), *Checking Iran's Nuclear Ambitions*, Strategic Studies Institute: Carlisle Barracks, PA, January 2004, pp. 113-128. See also Kenneth M. Pollack, *America needs a plan for dealing with Iran*, *International Herald Tribune*, 10 November 2004.

seated aversion of many European allies against pre-emptive U.S. strikes, the Bush administration cannot afford to go to war with Iran. If diplomacy fails, tough action by the U.N. Security Council will be. Washington would need the full support of its key allies then. Therefore, the “Paris Agreement” must be fortified to keep the Iranians honest, the Europeans effectively engaged and the Bush administration firmly committed to a diplomatic process. This can be achieved through a U.S.-European accord laying out the trigger mechanisms for specified consequences if the Iranian government violates certain benchmarks.⁵⁹ In short, the success of nuclear diplomacy hinges upon the readiness of the United States and Europe to agree on a strategy that tips the balance of Iran’s calculation of benefits and risks in favour of the former.

4. *ESDP: Complement, not Rival*

Since its inception, ESDP has generated controversy and concern, particularly in the United States. From the very beginning, U.S. attitude towards an emerging common security and defense policy within the institutional framework of the EU has been ambivalent, if not antagonistic. On the one hand, the Bush and Clinton administration wanted a stronger European partner that could assume greater responsibility for and the commensurate burdens and risks of European security management. On the other hand, any effort by the European partners to beef up the institutional resources and military capabilities of ESDP was perceived as deliberate attempt to undermine NATO and weaken the transatlantic link.⁶⁰

59 Alan L. Isenberg, Needed for Iran: U.S. muscle, European diplomacy, *International Herald Tribune*, 24 November 2004.

60 Sophie Vanhoonacker, *The Bush Administration (1989-1993) and the Development of a European Security Identity*, Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2001, pp. 105-133; Franz-Josef Meiers, *Europäische Sicherheits- und Verteidigungsidentität (ESVI) oder Gemeinsame Europäische Sicherheits- und Verteidigungspolitik (GESVP)?* Bonn: ZEI Discussion Paper C 79/2000, 2000; and Robert Hunter, *The European Security and Defense Policy: NATO’s Companion – or Competitor?* Santa Monica, CA: Rand Corporation, 2002.

At the so-called “chocolate summit” in Brussels on 29 April 2003, Belgium, France, Luxembourg and Germany announced that an autonomous operational planning headquarters should be established outside the EU institutional setting in Tervuren, a suburb of Brussels.⁶¹ The four governments involved were the same four that had vehemently opposed U.S. Iraq policy and had blocked NATO aid for Turkey in January and February 2003. On 20 September 2003, Prime Minister Tony Blair, French President Jacques Chirac and German Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder met in Berlin to discuss defense cooperation. All three tried hard to de-dramatize the sensitive issue of a EU planning unit. At the EU summit meeting in Brussels on 12 December 2003, the heads of state and government decided to establish an autonomous European planning element along the lines of the tripartite proposal put forward by Blair, Chirac and Schröder. An operational planning unit will be established within the existing European military staff in Brussels; an operational planning cell of 50 civilian and military staff will be added to the existing strategic planning capability. If all EU member states agree, this planning cell could take over the planning and command for operations conducted independently from NATO. So-called framework nations would provide, on an ad hoc basis, basic planning and command headquarters to be supported by the personnel and assets of participating allies. In addition, a European planning cell will be set up within Shape that could be used for operations run under the strategic guidance of EU under the Berlin Plus agreement – EU operations using NATO assets. In return, NATO will have access to the EU planning unit through liaison officers.⁶²

The key question at the heart of the Tervuren spat is whether the EU should conduct planning and operations outside NATO’s supervision. U.S. decision makers were deeply concerned that the Brussels proposal would establish a stronger, more integrated defense structure that would weaken the EU links with NATO. Nicholas Burns, the U.S. ambassador to NATO, de-

61 Declaration of the Heads of State and Government of Germany, France, Luxembourg, and Belgium on European Defense Brussels, April 29, 2003 [www.bundeskanzler.de/Kanzler-Aktuell-.7718.481770/a.htm?_printView=y; and www.ifo-france-usa.org/news/statmnts/2003/defense_europe042903.asp].

62 European Council, European Defence: NATO/EU Consultation, Planning and Operations, Brussels, 12 December 2003 [<http://ue.eu.int>].

scribed the plans as “the most serious threat to the future of NATO”.⁶³ One starts to wonder how a EU planning cell with about 50 military staff officers can threaten the very existence of the Alliance. Due to the continued lack of strategic assets in transportation and reconnaissance as well as usable soldiers, the EU can only conduct autonomous operations limited in scope and time as the EU operation Artémis in Congo in summer 2003 showed. Any long-term and operationally demanding mission will rely, for the foreseeable future, on the assured access to NATO’s proven assets. Even the French, the focal point of US suspicion, do not deny this reality. At the special meeting of NATO’s ambassadors in October 2003, the French government assured U.S. diplomats that the EU-led peacekeeping operation Althea in Bosnia-Herzegovina would be planned and operated through NATO.⁶⁴

There is a paradox in EU defense: at time where the overwhelming majority of EU countries have not yet met the “headline goal” commitments in 2003, the EU member countries following the proposals made by Chirac and Blair at the Franco-British summit meeting in Le Touquet on 4 February 2004⁶⁵, have moved the goalposts towards ever more ambitious goals:

- The Headline Goal 2010 commits all member countries to meet the new qualitative requirements of preparedness, military effectiveness, deployability, interoperability and sustainability of forces by 2010.⁶⁶

63 Crossed wires on European defense, *Financial Times*, October 18-19, 2003; Judy Dempsey, NATO and EU try to defuse defense dispute, *Financial Times*, October 20, 2003; Peter Spiegel and Jean Eaglesham, NATO’s European allies offer reassurance to US, *Financial Times*, October 21, 2003.

64 Robert Graham, France seeks to reassure US over its NATO commitment, *Financial Times*, 18 October 2003, Peter Spiegel, France seeks to ease US fears for NATO in Bosnia, *Financial Times*, 29 October 2003.

65 Sommet Franco-Britannique. Déclaration sur le Renforcement de la Coopération Européenne en Matière de Sécurité et de Défense, Le Touquet, 4 February 2003 [www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/actual/declarations/bulletins/20030205.html].

66 Summary of the remarks by Javier Solana at the Informal Meeting of Defence Ministers, Brussels, 5/6 April 2004; and Headline Goal 2010 approved by General Affairs and External Relations Council on 17 May 2004 endorsed by the European Council of 17 and 18 June 2004 [<http://ue.eu.int>].

- EU defense ministers committed to providing troops for 13 rapid intervention units (“battle-groups“), each made up of about 1,500 special troops able to deploy within 10 days to international hot by the year 2007.⁶⁷

At present, the results have not matched the staunch rhetoric of EU member countries. The reality is still that the European partners have not yet mustered the commensurate energy to tackle the three long-existing gaps:

- *the spending gap*: While France and the United Kingdom have made a national commitment to greater defense spending,⁶⁸ Germany as the third Musketeer has not. To illustrate the difficulties: if Germany could increase its defense spending to the Anglo-French level of 2.5 % of GDP, it would have to increase defense expenditures by more than 13 billion euros from presently 23,9 billion euros.⁶⁹ The German defense budget will, however, be capped until 2007 when a modest increase of 800 million euros is envisaged. Robert Cooper, Director-General for Foreign and Political-Military Relations within the EU Ministerial Council rightly observed, “ It is regrettable that many European governments do not spend what is necessary for defense. This is particularly true for Germany. I do not have the feeling that it takes the matter really serious.”⁷⁰
- *the capability gap*: In spite of the deadline set by the European Headline Goal 2003, the European partners still lack critical military capabilities required for global expeditionary missions. By mid-2004, the member

67 Twenty one of the 25 EU nations offered soldiers for the units. Malta and Denmark do not take part, while Estonia and Ireland are still considering their participation. See Military Capability Commitment Conference, Brussels, 22 November 2004, Declaration on European Military Capabilities, Annex A, [http://ue.eu.int/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressData/en/misc/82761.pdf].

68 For British and French expenditures see MOD’s Spending Review 2002 [www.mod.uk/aboutus/keyfacts/factfiles/expenditure.htm]; and Bill of Law for the 2003-2008 military programme [www.defense.gouv.fr/actualites/dossier/d40/index.htm].

69 Einzelplan 14/2005 im Vergleich zum Haushalt 2004 [www.bmvg.de/pic/ministerium/haushalt/041123_650_haushaltbmvg.gif].

70 “Auf Deutschland kommt eine enorme Aufgabe zu”, Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, 27 May 2003.

countries have succeeded in achieving just one (NBC batallions) out of the 24 military capabilities considered critical in November 2001, i.e. strategic air-lift capabilities, air-to-air refueling, precision-guided munitions, command, control and communications, sustainability and protection of forces or logistic and support.⁷¹ At the Capability Conference in Brussels on 19 May 2003, EU Defense Ministers already reached the still valid conclusion that "... the EU now has operational capability across the full range of Petersberg tasks, limited and constrained by recognized shortfalls. ...high risks arise at the upper end of the spectrum of scale and intensity, in particular when conducting concurrent operations."⁷²

- *the usability gap*: With 55,000 soldiers out of a total force of 1,8 million outside the Alliance, the European allies are maxed out. They still have a force structure geared toward the necessities of the Cold War era: too many immobile conscript troops which have to be transformed into a deployable and usable expeditionary force which can engage, at short notice, in high-intensity warfare around the globe. With about 7,700 troops engaged in various missions on the Balkans, Afghanistan and the Gulf, the German armed forces with just under 300,000 troops have reached the end of their rope and are unable to provide further troops for out-of-area mission.⁷³
- The problem is that unless the EU member countries make the necessary investment, it will be a tall order to meet even the less ambitious force goals. This concerns the third Musketeer in particular. As Robert Cooper concluded, "Germany will be confronted with an enormous task."

71 Council of the European Union, Capability Improvement Chart 2004, Brussels, 17 May 2004; 2386 Meeting of the General Affairs and External Relations Committee, Press Release 13802/01, Brussels, 19-20 November 2001; and General Affairs and External Relations Committee, Declaration on EU Military Capabilities, Brussels, 19/20 May 2003 [<http://ue.eu.int/Newsroom>].

72 Declaration on EU Military Capabilities, Brussels, 19 May 2003 [http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/cfsp/intro/gac.htm].

73 Peter Struck, Defence Policy Guidelines, Berlin, 21 May 2003, § 60, p. 13; Peter Struck, Directive on the Further Development of the Bundeswehr, Berlin, 1 October

This would have serious repercussions for ESDP. Just as ESDP without the United Kingdom is pointless, so is ESDP not feasible without Germany. To make ESDP a reality depends critically on the willingness of the third Musketeer to provide the necessary resources, capabilities and structures to the common effort.

The question of whether the Union should move forward with a pioneer group in the realm of security and defense policy raises another serious issue. ESDP including a structured cooperation in defense can only be built with the United Kingdom not without it. The British military capabilities are indispensable to any European defense initiative. Only if the United Kingdom is part of the leadership group can the European security and defense policy progress. As French Foreign Minister Dominique de Villepin said, “There will be no Europe without European defense and no European defense without Britain.”⁷⁴

While a pioneer group without the United Kingdom part of it lacks the power to pull the whole Union forward, the big three can give Europe fresh impetus and pull the whole Union forward. Agreement among the three Musketeers will send a powerful signal that the EU member countries can forcefully “speak with one voice” on matters of security and defense affairs. The trilateral leadership already has proven that it can deliver results on security and defense policy. The big three forged a common EU policy on a limited military planning capability, Iran’s clandestine nuclear activities, and the formation of a 1,500 strong rapid-reaction military forces for peace-making missions under a U.N. mandate.⁷⁵ The involvement of the United Kingdom in the tripartite agreement was essential to reassure the Bush administration that moves of the European allies in security and de-

2003, § 3, p. 2; and Peter Struck, *Neue Aufgaben – neuer Kurs* [www.bmvg.de/archiv/reden/minister/reden/minister031002_struck-punktation-presskonferenz.php]

74 Judy Dempsey, NATO and EU try to defuse defense dispute, *Financial Times*, 20 October 2003.

75 Judy Dempsey and James Blitz, France and Britain to create joint battle units, *Financial Times*, 10 February 2004; Judy Dempsey, German soldiers to join Anglo-French rapid-deployment ‘battle group’, *Financial Times*, 11 February 2004; Laurent Zecchini, Paris, Londres et Berlin proposent de créer plusieurs forces de réaction très rapides, *Le Monde*, 12 February 2004.

fense policy do not threaten the Atlantic Alliance.⁷⁶ The inclusion of the United Kingdom is a recognition of France and Germany that the two countries no longer have the ability to speak in the name of the whole group and that fresh impetus in the field of security and defense depends on access to Britain's diplomatic resources and military capabilities.

The ability to act in the area of foreign and security policy critically depends on the willingness of EU member countries to agree on a common policy towards the United States. Notably France is asked to place her strategy of "multipolarity" – a code work for using the EU as a "counterweight" to the U.S. "hyperpuissance" – within the framework of a strategic consensus between the European partners and the North American ally. "No French influence without Europe, no German-French Europe without the consent of the other member countries, in particular Great Britain, and no powerful and influential Europe without striving to a minimal consent with the United States," as Pierre Hassner succinctly summed up the balancing act of France towards both the European partners and the American ally.⁷⁷ To define ESDP as a "counterweight" against the United States would be counterproductive. Far from uniting the Union, it would perpetuate a dividing line in the Union between "old" and the "new" members, as the Iraq-crisis in 2003 aptly showed. Such a deep division would paralyze the Union and block any effort to strengthen ESDP. This would cause delight among Pentagon hawks. Their ambition is to maintain the wound between New and Old Europe, to practice a policy of divide et impera. France must make sure that ESDP develops in a way that does not deepen the New/Old Europe divide. There is little appetite within the Union for a Euro-Gaullist vision of a rival superpower designed as a counterweight to

76 John Tagliabue, Blair reassures U.S. on European defense, *International Herald Tribune*, 18-19 October 2003; Judy Dempsey, White House accepts separate European military planning unit, *Financial Times*, 13-14 December 2003; and Charles Grant, *EU Defence Takes a Step Forward*, Centre for European Reform, briefing note, London, December 2003.

77 Pierre Hassner, *Fausse manœuvre*, *La revue internationale et stratégique*, (Spring 2004) 53, pp. 57-62 (62). See also Laurent Fabius, *Diplomatie française: passer de la posture à la stratégie*, *La revue internationale et stratégique*, (Spring 2004) 53, pp 53-56 (55).

America's preponderant military power in a multipolar world. The United Kingdom, which under the premiership of Tony Blair appeared more committed to a special relationship with Washington before and after the Iraq war should rebuild its relationship with its most powerful European neighbours. While France needs to become less reflexively anti-American, Britain should become less unconditionally pro-American. Britain's voice will have greater weight in Washington if it speaks in the name of all EU member countries.⁷⁸

Conclusions: It Takes Two for Tango

One crucial consequence of the profound change in the structure of U.S.-European relations since the 1990s is the end of transatlanticism as we knew during the Cold War period. U.S. and European foreign policy no longer center around the transatlantic alliance to the same dominant extent as in the past.⁷⁹ The fundamental purpose of American foreign policy was to ensure that no single power would dominate the Eurasian landmass. With the collapse the Soviet empire in 1991 - the most serious challenge for territorial domination over the European landmass - disappeared. The principal purpose of American foreign policy had been achieved. The successful conclusion of the Cold War competition in Europe means that the United States still has strategic interests in Europe but these interests are no longer strategically threatened. Europe's strategic relevance to the United States had been reduced. Europe is no longer the locus and focus in America's foreign and security policy. The terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001 reinforced America's strategic reorientation towards the two main non-European theaters: the Middle East and Asia. The United States is now

78 Charles Grant, Six Proposals for a More Effective EU Foreign Policy, in: Werner Weidenfeld et al. (eds), *From Alliance to Coalitions - The Future of Transatlantic Relations*, Bertelsmann Foundation Publishers: Gütersloh 2004, pp 141-159 (145-148); Zbigniew Brzezinski, America's policy blunders were compounded by Britain, *Financial Times*, 6 August 2004; and Philip Stephens, Britain needs friends on both sides of the Atlantic, *Financial Times*, 22 October 2004.

79 Ivo Daalder, *After Transatlanticism, What?*, in: Werner Weidenfeld et al. (eds), *From Alliance to Coalitions - The Future of Transatlantic Relations*, Bertelsmann Foundation Publishers: Gütersloh 2004, pp. 107-123 (108-111).

focused on the war against the lethal nexus of terrorists, tyrants and technologies of mass destruction.

For Europe, the United States was its guardian and protector during the Cold War. With the end of the East-West divide Europe is no longer structurally fixated on the transatlantic prism. Europe no longer depends on U.S. security guarantees for its very existence. The principal focus of European foreign policy is both on deeper cooperation among existing members and enlargement of the Union to incorporate many of the neighboring countries in the east. And the member countries are determined to give the Union the institutional and military capabilities to transform it into an credible and effective actor on the global stage. In short, the new age of global politics has replaced the familiar transatlantic world of the Cold War.

The terror attacks of 11 September 2001 were a paradigm-shattering event that caused President Bush and many in his administration to look at the world in an entirely different way. He and his administration came to the conclusion that long-held assumptions of U.S. foreign policy have to be realistically reappraised in light of the fact that “America is at war”. The events of 9/11 have caused American leaders to realize that those international institutions established after World War II as currently structured and operated cannot protect the United States and its people against the most serious threats. The military invasion of Iraq without the consent of the international community underlines the growing proclivity in U.S. foreign policy to move beyond the framework of liberal institutionalism and act forcefully and, when necessary, alone in the long-term global war against terrorism to prevent a future catastrophe, 9/11 on a larger scale.⁸⁰ As regards the alliance, the Bush administration prefers to retain both decisional autonomy and operational discretion. The handling of the Afghanistan crisis – particularly its unwillingness to use NATO – indicated that the administration was downgrading NATO in its strategic planning and began to regard it as a “toolbox” from which Washington can selectively draw as it sees fit. It is also increasingly tempted to replace the U.S. long-standing

80 John J. Amre, *America on the Edge of an Uncertain Future*, in: Werner Weidenfeld et al. (eds), *From Alliance to Coalition – The Future of Transatlantic Relations*, Bertelsmann Foundation Publishers: Gütersloh 2004, pp. 127-140 (139-140).

support for European integration by a policy of divide and rule which gives a clear preference to those EU members representing the “new” Europe while punishing or ignoring the members of the “old” Europe, namely France and Germany.⁸¹ In short, there is a widespread belief within the Bush administration that the United States can remake the world if only it is tough enough, persistent enough, and willful enough.⁸²

This preference of an assertive, unilateralist, force-oriented approach will be counterproductive. The end of old transatlanticism did not change the old fact of the transatlantic security system that the new security threats demand collective power and common action. Even the most powerful country like the United States cannot manage the new transnational threats of international terrorism, proliferation of WMD, regional conflicts, failed states and organized crime without the support of other countries, especially Europe. A unilateral policy is undermining America’s legitimacy. As Zbigniew Brzezinski concludes, “The global credibility of American military might has never as high as it is now; yet never was its global political credibility more damaged.” The use of NATO when NATO is thought useful, namely as coalition of the willing, is undermining the core principle on which the alliance rests: the solidarity of its members to act together in response to a common threat. A strategy of divide and rule would be self-defeating. It would undermine U.S. soft power among European allies and further reduce the leeway that European allies have to help the United States. Their support provides the necessary resources and legitimacy to sustain U.S. foreign policies and to tackle common threats together. Indeed, a stronger Europe, better able to deal with threats and conflicts of the 21st century, ought to be in America’s interest.⁸³

81 Divide and Rule, *The Economist*, 28 April 2003, p. 47.

82 Joseph S. Nye, *The Paradox of American Power: Why the World’s Only Superpower Can’t Go it Alone*, Oxford University Press: Oxford 2002; and Steven E. Miller, *Primacy or Order? American Power and the Global System after Iraq*, in: Werner Weidenfeld et al. (eds), *From Alliance to Coalition – The Future of Transatlantic Relations*, Bertelsmann Foundation Publishers: Gütersloh 2004, pp. 177-192 (182).

83 Joseph S. Nye, Jr., *America needs a strong Europe*, *International Herald Tribune*, 15 November 2004.

The Euro-Gaullist vision of ESDP designed as a counterweight to the United States would be counterproductive as well. France gains nothing from balancing the “hyperpuissance” but a divided and deadlocked Union which will do no good to further France’s global ambitions through a strengthened ESDP. Therefore, the maxim should be to strengthen the EU as credible and effective global actor which can assert itself vis-à-vis the United States without building it up to a bulwark against the United States.

The other Achilles heel of ESDP the big gap between ambition and reality. One reason why ESDP lacks credibility in Washington is its preoccupation with institutional engineering rather than the availability of usable and deployable capabilities wherever needed. The terror attacks of 9/11 have underlined the urgency of providing the Union with effective capabilities to meet the threats of the 21st century alongside the Alliance. Only a EU which transforms itself into an effective and decisive global actor will be a respected, useful and, hence, relevant partner for the United States.⁸⁴ In short, boosting the global role of the EU in security and defense affairs in collaboration with the United States depends on four essentials:

1. A common strategy to act on clearly defined common goals and means to achieve them.
2. The political will to act together according to principles of a common strategy.
3. The availability of adequate military capabilities that rise to the new security challenges of the 21st century and assure that the EU can act in those extreme cases.
4. The strengthening of a global partnership between Europe and the United States, which reflects the experience of the past five decades that only together can Europe and America master the multifaceted challenges of a globalized world in the 21st century.

84 Javier Solana, Toward a united European voice, *International Herald Tribune*, 30-31 October 2004.

Transatlantic Relations after the U.S. Elections

The changing structure of transatlantic relations requires a new basis lest the continued drift end in separation and ultimately, divorce. The signs are there that the Americans and Europeans can learn from failure and move ahead. The Bush administration appears to be ready open the chapter of a new transatlanticism based on the recognition that the successful management of the new threats and challenges stretching from the stabilization of Irak and Afghanistan, the reinvigoration of the Middle East peace process to the control of Iran's nuclear program do require common action. Circumstances in all three – the prospect of Iraqi elections, Iran's apparent nuclear concession, and the death of Yasser Arafat – are driving the United States and its European allies together in a beneficial direction. In all of the three areas, U.S. and European strategic interests coalesce. President Bush stands a chance of success in all three areas only if he reaches out to allies. Europeans can gain from working with the Bush administration to achieve their joint objectives. The transatlantic dispute then is over how to achieve them. Only by working together can both sides of the Atlantic capitalize on what Timothy Garton Ash describes as “historic chance”, namely working in concert “to go beyond the ‘free world’ of the old West and lay the foundations of a free world.”⁸⁵ Or as President Bush put it at a news conference with British Prime Minister Blair at the White House on 12 November 2004, „The world is better off, America is better off, Europe is better off, when we work together.”⁸⁶

85 Timothy Garton Ash, *Free World. America, Europe and the Surprising Future of the West*, Random House: New York 2004.

86 President and Prime Minister Blair Discussed Iraq, Middle East [www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2004/11/print/20041112-5.html].

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