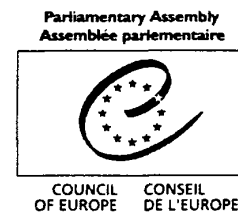


Parliamentary Assembly
Assemblée parlementaire

Europarådet
ERD alm. del - Bilag 15
Offentlig



Doc. 10353
27 October 2004

Relations between Europe and the United States

Report
Political Affairs Committee
Rapporteur: Mr Claudio Azzolini, Italy, Group of the European People's Party

Summary

The Parliamentary Assembly pays tribute to the benefits stemming from a positive transatlantic partnership over the past sixty years. At the same time it expresses its concern over the recent deterioration in the relations, in particular relating to the Iraqi war. It is convinced that diminished transatlantic cohesion entails negative consequences for the world.

The Parliamentary Assembly expresses its readiness to engage in a series of comprehensive dialogues with the United States Congress. It calls on the US Congress to consider applying for observer status with the Parliamentary Assembly and in the meantime to take steps to designate a contact group in the Congress with whom the Assembly could pursue the proposed initiative for dialogue.

I. Draft resolution

1. The Parliamentary Assembly pays tribute to the benefits that for the past sixty years stemmed from a positive transatlantic partnership, both in terms of security and of prosperity. Transatlantic cohesion continues to be an irreplaceable factor promoting stabilisation and security.
2. The Parliamentary Assembly is concerned over the recent deterioration in the transatlantic relationship. While misunderstandings and miscommunications, notably in the run-up to the Iraqi war and during the war, certainly contributed towards the crisis in the United States-Europe partnership, it is obvious that genuine and long-standing differences of opinion concerning foreign policy issues exist between the two sides.
3. In the post Cold War world, we witnessed a shift in geopolitical security objectives and increasingly divergent national foreign policy strategies between European countries and the United States. These factors led to different approaches towards such issues as terrorism, aggressive behaviour by "rogue" states and international justice, as well as poverty and environmental degradation.
4. The Assembly recalls its Resolution 758 (1981) on Relations between Europe and the United States of America and Canada in which it emphasised that neither the democracies of Europe nor those of North America could face the challenges of the 1980s alone. More than twenty years later, the Assembly recognises the continued validity of this assertion.
5. Diminished transatlantic cohesion entails negative consequences for the world. A United States that is isolationist, or isolated, may be more prone to take unilateral, rather than multilateral (or coalition-based), actions. Unilateral actions may weaken international organisations and challenge the principles of collective security. Although the United States is stronger in military terms, it depends more than ever on its allies to gain legitimacy for its actions in the international arena. In other respects, the complementarity of the United States and Europe has been plainly illustrated during conflicts, such as Kosovo and Afghanistan. In those instances, and others, it has been demonstrated that while European states and institutions were unable or unwilling to wield, alone, the military might required to effectively face threats to global security, they can still contribute resources and expertise to carry out post-conflict peace-building and reconstruction efforts, participate in peace-keeping and take on major military tasks in co-operation with the United States in the framework of NATO or a "coalition of the willing".
6. The dangers posed by an entrenched divide between the United States and its European friends are recognised by all concerned, as is the pressing need to save the partnership. The United States and Europe share common values and have common interests which continue to provide a basis for their future relations. While recognising the inevitability of the structural reasons for a changing transatlantic partnership, the Parliamentary Assembly underlines the crucial role that active and frank dialogue between partners operating on the basis of mutual respect can play in ensuring the continued viability and dynamism of the transatlantic partnership.
7. The Assembly notes the EU-US Summit which took place in Ireland (26 June 2004) and welcomes the work that has been undertaken to resolve remaining differences between the United States and Europe over Iraq and notably the commitment to a continued and expansive engagement of the United Nations in Iraq. The Assembly recalls its Resolution 1386 (2004) on the Council of Europe's contribution to the settlement of the situation in Iraq and its support for a leading role for the United Nations in Iraq.
8. The Parliamentary Assembly recalls the results of its Inter-Parliamentary Forum on Transatlantic Dialogue (London, 19 April 2004) in which both members of the United States Congress and the Canadian observer delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly actively participated. The Forum concluded by calling for an institutionalised dialogue between members of the Parliamentary Assembly and the United States Congress. As the Forum proved, there is a wide range of issues which can and should be discussed, and misunderstandings which can be avoided, in frank dialogue. It also illustrated the variety of opinions not only between delegations but also within them.

9. Dialogue should focus in particular on how Europe and the United States can work together to emphasise the benefits of their complementarity. The two sides should agree on means to encourage democracy, respect for human rights, and renewed stability in failing states to find international strategies for effectively combating terrorism, while also respecting human rights and paying attention to the root causes of this phenomenon, and to strengthen the United Nations in order to make it more responsive to the needs of its members.

10. The Parliamentary Assembly is therefore eager to engage in a series of comprehensive dialogues with the United States Congress. The dialogue should be anchored in a shared commitment to human rights, pluralist democracy, international co-operation and focus on ways to strengthen the relationship and creatively address many of the challenges outlined above. The Parliamentary Assembly is ideally suited among European institutions for this vital transatlantic initiative due to its dedication to the maintenance of democratic security, human rights and the rule of law and because it is composed of elected members from 46 European national parliaments.

11. The Parliamentary Assembly considers that communication between European and United States' representatives would be improved if the United States Congress participated actively in the Parliamentary Assembly as an observer delegation.

12. The Parliamentary Assembly notes with interest the European Parliament Resolution on the State of the Transatlantic Partnership on the eve of EU-US Summit in Dublin on 25-26 June 2004 (B5-0185/2004) and especially the notion that existing relationships between the European Parliament and the Congress could eventually evolve into a EU-US Transatlantic Assembly. The Assembly should follow closely the developments and possibly seek involvement with the Transatlantic Assembly so as to avoid a confusing proliferation of similar institutions tasked with facilitating transatlantic parliamentary dialogue.

13. The Parliamentary Assembly calls on the governments of the Council of Europe member states and the United States to:

13.1 engage in a frank dialogue to analyse the existing divergences in the partnership and to reaffirm their shared ideals;

13.2 find an agreement at a pragmatic level on how to best defend and safeguard their common values;

13.3 recognise and take advantage of their complementarities;

13.4 consider the question of responsibility and methods for the worldwide promotion of democracy;

13.5 speed up their efforts, within the framework of the Quartet, for a settlement to the Middle East conflict, without which the G8 Broader Middle East and North Africa Initiative for improving democratic stability would have little chance of success;

13.6 intensify their joint efforts in the fight against terrorism, as well as the proliferation of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction;

13.7 prioritise dialogue and common action on other global security threats such as environmental degradation, ethnic hatred, poverty, mass migration and trans-national health hazards such as the spread of HIV/AIDS.

14. The Parliamentary Assembly calls on the United States' Congress to consider applying for observer status with the Parliamentary Assembly and in the meantime to take steps to designate a contact group in the Congress with whom the Assembly could pursue the proposed dialogue initiative.

15. The Assembly is conscious of the constructive role that the Canadian and Mexican observer delegations can play in reinforcing the transatlantic dialogue. It therefore appeals to them to share their experience with the Assembly and invites them to participate actively in the permanent transatlantic dialogue mechanism with the Assembly.

II. Draft recommendation

1. The Parliamentary Assembly refers to its Resolution (2005) on Relations between Europe and the United States.
2. It recommends that the Committee of Ministers:
 - 2.1 include issues of common concern to its member States and to the United States on the agenda of the Session of the Committee of Ministers at regular intervals and invite the United States to be represented;
 - 2.2 consider inviting the United States Government to be represented in the Third Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Council of Europe in the light of the topics on the agenda.

III. Explanatory memorandum

A. Introduction

1. "The transatlantic dispute simmers", "Europe-US gulf wideness", "A new rift between the US and Europe". These are but few examples of media headlines over the last year dramatically illustrating the climate in the relations between the United States and Europe. These declarations are not simple reactions by media to isolated events, but were caused by a real and rapid rift of the dialogue between the two partners. In the run up to the Iraq war and during the war this estrangement reached its peak and a controversy over "values" broke out.

2. The gravity of the growing transatlantic divide is underlined in statements and declarations on both sides. On 14 May 2003, a group of high-profile Americans signed a *Joint Declaration on Renewing the Transatlantic Partnership*¹ in which they recognise the gravity of the situation and propose urgent action to save the partnership. This declaration expressed concern over how European Union institutions were evolving and called *inter alia* for increased contacts between the Congress of the United States and its European counterparts.

3. In reply to the above-mentioned *Joint Declaration* a group of high-profile European political leaders issued a statement² whereby they fully support their American colleagues' stance on the gravity of the situation and agree on the need for the partnership to be reviewed and saved.

4. In contrast to this gloomy introduction, one should not forget the longstanding tradition of transatlantic friendship between the United States and Europe. For over sixty years, a far-sighted vision sustained the transatlantic partnership for the benefit of the whole world. The benefits of this positive relationship between the United States and Europe are still of substantial importance to world security and prosperity today. As in the past, both the United States and Europe have much to gain by remaining allies. In view of widespread international instability, transatlantic cohesion was and will remain an irreplaceable factor of stabilisation and security.

5. It is necessary to make a few preliminary remarks regarding the "methodological" approach adopted in this report and the particular way it views future developments. When examining the values, interests and the history underlying transatlantic relations it began by stating that the European continent today is essentially a geocultural unitary entity, but it is still far from having its own autonomous foreign policy other than something that is the result - or the mere juxtaposition - of international policies adopted by individual States. One clear example is the European Union, with the difficulties, uncertainties and delays in having its own CFSP, as indicated later: a model which is both too large and too narrowly-defined for the "Greater Europe" represented by the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe. For the members of the PA of the Council of Europe include parliamentarians of countries that are not members of the European Union, which have incisive and authoritative relations with United States, and whose approaches and future prospects are widely differing from those being elaborated within the member countries of the European Union. This "distance" is due to different histories, cultural traditions and economic and production potential. Any comprehensive and updated framework of transatlantic relations from the point of view of the Strasbourg Assembly cannot fail to take account of these factors which recreate a European scenario in which the great unifying coefficients disseminated by the Council of Europe - such as establishing the rule of law, protecting fundamental freedoms, safeguarding the quality of life - coexist with an obsolete obdurate vision of the Nation state and its sovereignty.

6. The United States and Europe share common values. Undoubtedly, the most important of these values are democracy and liberty. Also, issues such as individual freedom, human rights, human equality, and the promotion of free trade are at the centre of these values.

7. The United States and Europe also share common interests. The most prominent of these interests is the preservation of democratic values against authoritarian ones. Other common interests include overcoming threats to shared security, be it in the form of aggressive nationalism or terrorism,

¹ Issued by the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington.

² Published in *Corriere della Sera* on 29 May 2003, and in *Le Monde*, on 14 June 2003, written by the Board of Directors of Notre Europe in Paris.

as well as threats to prosperity coming from practices of economic protectionism which are openly against internationally recognised rules. Even today, the economies of the United States and Europe remain heavily dependent on one another, and they are by far each other's most important commercial partners³. The Assembly has repeatedly underlined the importance of the transatlantic trade relationship, and of the economic, political and security benefits that such trade entails not only for the whole continent, but to the world at large⁴.

8. In fact, the relationship between the United States and Europe took on more than just a security dimension with the economic co-operation brought about at the end of WWII. At that time, the Marshall Plan was the instrument promoting the reconstruction of a Europe severely battered by the war and paving the way for the development of civil society and the strengthening of its democratic roots. Over the following decades, democracy and the creation of new markets brought peace and development within the Euro-Atlantic community. In today's world, Europe and the United States may well set standards and help the populations on their way to building democratic institutions, but at the same time they must make a concrete contribution to the establishment of security and a minimum level of well-being, which are pre-requisites for freedom and democracy.

B. What led to these divergences?

9. It is important to understand what led to these transatlantic divergences before thinking about rebuilding the lost confidence in the relationship⁵.

10. Europeans frequently criticise the United States for its behaviour on various issues, notably for its behaviour as a member of the World Trade Organization (WTO), for its refusal to co-operate with the newly formed International Criminal Court (ICC), and for its withdrawal from the Antiballistic Missile Treaty (AMT) and the Kyoto Protocol on Environmental Change, as well as for its continued use of the death penalty. The Assembly has reflected these European views in some of the texts which it adopted⁶.

11. Moreover, Europeans blame the current United States administration for their unilateralist approach to international affairs and for their willingness to operate outside of existing structures when they consider it in their own self-interest to do so. Europeans worry that the United States resorts to force and coercive action too quickly at the expense of more peaceful methods of conflict resolution such as persuasion and inducement.

12. In turn, the United States criticises Europe for living in a self-contained world of ineffectual laws, rules, trans-national negotiations, and supposed cooperation. It also considers Europe to be soft on terrorism, bureaucratic, old-fashioned and self-centred. Furthermore, Americans worry about what they perceive as a widespread anti-American political populism, expressing old and new ideologies, at times related to anti-democratic ideas⁷.

13. Although the war in Iraq, as well as the overthrow of Saddam Hussein, brought the strain between the United States and Europe to the point of crisis, and made the Atlantic seem much wider, the estrangement actually began much earlier. The end of the Cold War led to the disappearance of a common enemy, and therefore the urgency of maintaining a united front against Communism diminished. The evaporation of the bond which had kept transatlantic relations alive led to a gradually deepening divide on a variety of policy issues ranging from defence spending to social priorities. Nevertheless, it should be noted that the main purpose of the Atlantic Alliance was related to older values and interests, already existing before the Cold War and still claimed in spite of the end of that period. The challenges posed to common interests and – above all – values have been widely recognised, together with the need to meet them, while divergence is still prevailing over how to act.

³ Joseph P. Quinlan, *Drifting apart or Growing Together? The Primacy of the Transatlantic Economy* (Washington, D.C., Centre for Transatlantic Relations, 2003)

⁴ Resolution 1225 (2000) on *Prospects for a new transatlantic trade relationship* and Resolution 1269 (2002) on *Managing globalization: the role of the World Trade Organisation in the world economy*

⁵ Cfr. Robert Kagan, « Power and Weakness », *Policy Review* 113 (2002).

⁶ Resolution 1243 (2001) on *Kyoto Protocol on climate change: need for committed international solidarity*, Recommendation 1627 (2003) on *Abolition of death penalty in Council of Europe Observer states*.

⁷ On Anti-Americanism: M. Teodori, *Maledetti americani. Destra, sinistra e cattolici: storia del pregiudizio americano* (Milano, Mondadori, 2002). By the same author: *Benedetti americani. Dall'Alleanza atlantica alla Guerra al terrorismo* (Milano, Mondadori, 2003) and *L'Europa non è l'America* (Milano, Mondadori, 2004).

14. The "9/11" terrorist attacks certainly represent the most powerful single event that led to a concrete and almost instantaneous divide in setting national priorities, identifying threats, and especially over devising the necessary strategies to respond to them. It led to a reorientation of United States' strategy towards security threats of a military nature, whereas no comparable revision took place in Europe. The USA now perceives terrorism as the greatest historical threat, whilst Europe did not have the same perception, although perhaps after the Madrid "11/3", opinions are changing. Moreover, owing to its culture and history, the United States considers that there should be a close link between defending democracy and freedom and using force, and legitimising the use of force to defend freedom and democracy. On the other hand, Europe focused its rhetoric more on the dangers posed by soft threats and their root causes - such as poverty, migration, and ethnic intolerance and considered many of them as a result of a lack of engagement by the West with the rest of the world.

15. The recent war in Iraq is another illustration of the deepening division in foreign policy between the United States and Europe. In the absence of a shared view on the causes and scope of the danger, the question of Iraq marked indeed the first great crisis within the Atlantic Alliance. For Europeans, the occupation of a sovereign state without prior authorisation by the United Nations Security Council is a worrisome trend, and consequently most European countries declined to participate in both the Iraq war as well as in the country's post-war reconstruction. For many Americans, on the other hand, the unilateral move to war was seen a sign of a realistic and appropriate foreign policy, and considered United Nations Security Council approval desirable, but not necessary, before occupying Iraq. In Resolutions 1326 (2003) on *Europe and the war in Iraq* and 1351 (2003) on the *Role of the United Nations in Iraq*, the Assembly underlined the need for Europe and the international community to act resolutely and to promote consensus around the value of mutual respect, international law, and allowing the United Nations to fulfil its mandate.

16. There has been much talk about the efficiency of international and multilateral institutions especially as a reaction to the war in Iraq. Also, after sharp disagreements over the Kyoto Protocol, and the establishment of the International Criminal Court, Europeans have become increasingly critical of the present United States Administration for being uncompromisingly unilateralist. Consequently, Europe's objective has become to "multi-lateralise" the United States. Clearly, the United States is not keen on working within a multilateral institution which it finds constraining, inefficient and which limits its freedom of action, and on past occasions it has acted alone, or in small coalitions, when the multilateral structures did not follow its aims. On the other hand, the reason for imposing such constraints is to safeguard essential values of international relations such as sovereignty, human rights, and the rule of law. Therefore, an appropriate balance must be found which suits reciprocal interests.

17. From this stems the diverging views as regards the question of responsibility for the protection and extension of democracy in the world. The present United States' Administration seems to consider it as its right, and even duty, to intervene in "failing" or "rogue" states *in so far as they threaten its national security in some way*. The possibility of proliferation of WMD to terrorists is considered by Americans an extremely serious menace and their wish would be that the Europeans share this concern, while the danger's different perception between the two sides of the Atlantic have brought to different positions. Furthermore, although the United States justify their wars as "preventive wars" or "humanitarian intervention," they do not feel compelled to apply the same policy to those states which do not in any way affect American interests, even if they are serious violators of international humanitarian or human rights law. Most European states consider, on the contrary, that such action should be carried out without bias in the framework of the United Nations. Europeans also consider that democracy cannot be exported through military interventions, and therefore efforts should focus on creating the conditions for democracy to develop.

C. Implications of a looser transatlantic cohesion

18. A looser cohesion between the two Atlantic shores has a series of negative consequences risking to make risk factors prevail over stability factors. The isolation of the United States, indeed, together with a few other close historical allies, shifts the burden and responsibility upon their shoulders solely, with the risk that they may apply principles of unilateral - rather than multilateral - interventions. On the other hand, any unilateralist attitude inevitably weakens international organisations and any alternative proposals.

19. Each European country has its own specific relation with the United States, depending on its own international position and its history: such a relation is a particularly sensitive item for their national foreign policy, but it should never legitimise the establishment of "directorates" pretending to represent Europe as a whole *vis-à-vis* the American partners. The Eastern enlargement of the Atlantic Alliance and of the European Union included among their members countries that pay special attention to security issues and to close co-operation with the United States. For this very reason, only an enhanced and strengthened Transatlantic Partnership will pave the way to the building of a European Security and Defence Policy.

D. Rebuilding transatlantic confidence

20. The first step towards rebuilding transatlantic confidence would be to arrive at a reciprocal agreement on the necessity for a common strategy on certain issues. Both sides should show more understanding for the political sensitivities of their allies, and deal with one another as partners rather than competitors. The United States should pay more respect to multilateralism issue which is at the heart of Europeans' concerns. The Europeans should pay more attention to the positive role that their alliance with America has had in permitting them to focus so much on the "soft" issues of international politics. After all, the United States and Europe share common beliefs and values and consequently also pursue common goals.

21. Both the United States and Europe can benefit by acknowledging their complementarities and reciprocal dependency. This complementarity should be seen as an asset to both parties. Some recent conflicts have illustrated clearly the disparity in military technology, as well as the inability of European countries to collectively introduce and sustain a military force in regions of conflict, especially beyond Europe. On the other hand, the examples of Kosovo and Afghanistan have shown that if Europe does not itself wield military might to effectively face threats to global security, it can certainly muster the expertise and the political will to carry out post-conflict peace-building and reconstruction efforts. In short, the United States has the military might and Europe can make an important contribution to the maintenance of peace and post-war democracy-building. However, it should be noted that although it is fundamental to respect complementarity, a clear separation of competences would not be appropriate, since it would lead to significant differences among partners in the command chain and in crucial decision-making.

22. It should be noted that Europe's defence spending is far beneath that of the United States; it has gradually fallen below 2 percent of GDP, while that of the United States has remained above 3 percent of GDP⁸. What is more, many European countries are ending military conscription and concentrating on professional and mobile forces, which are leading to an even further reduced European military capacity. This situation arose in Europe largely due to the United States' powerful security guarantee for more than fifty years. Europeans should not forget the immense added value to them of having a strong United States as an ally. As Europe has left the business of patrolling the world to the United States, it is understandable that the Americans find it difficult to accept that Europeans are now criticising them for being unilateralists. But they should understand that whenever they act unilaterally, they lose consensus on their foreign policy and hardly find allies. Furthermore, it should be underlined that power to act does not necessarily signify power to persuade.

23. It is clear that the European integration and enlargement process will have an impact on transatlantic relations, notably in economic, political and security aspects. A strong, united Europe is a vital element for transatlantic relations and a "reliable" partner for the United States. It is important that the Americans get rid of their basic diffidence to this process and the Europeans do not build their identity in opposition to the United States.

24. The European Union, nevertheless, is not yet united enough on foreign policy issues and its military capacity is still limited. As regards foreign policy, contrary to some expectations, it has not yet come into being. There have been several isolated events where the European Union High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy has taken initiatives, but they have in most cases been limited both in time and in scope. The enlargement from 15 to 25, and any future enlargements, will not make the task of formulating a common foreign policy any easier, even if there were the required political will among all of the member states. The security aspect has not evolved much further either. The reduction of European defence budgets and the tendency to focus on "soft" power, such as foreign aid, peace-keeping and building democratic security, have led to the sidelining

⁸ Close to 200 billion USD and 300 billion USD respectively.

of the "hard" security aspects of foreign policy. On the other hand, NATO has also been enlarged to include new European states and a more coherent European security approach might develop within NATO.

E. Conclusions

25. The divergences between Europe and the United States should be recognised. An honest dialogue between partners can only be based on a sound analysis of the relationship.

26. No one can deny the critical role in the international system which transatlantic relations have played in the last decades. It will no doubt continue to play a decisive role in the future. It is in the interest of everyone to ensure that dialogue between the United States and Europe, at different levels, continues to contribute in consolidating this relationship.

27. As the United States and Europe share common values, they should find an agreement at a pragmatic level on how to best defend and safeguard them. The solution lies in mutual respect and recognition of complementarity. Europe has recognised expertise and skills in nation and democracy building, in monitoring this process, and in peace-keeping. It has also developed during the last decades valuable experience with supra-national system. Although the United States is stronger in military terms, it depends more than ever on its European allies to gain legitimacy for its action.

28. The disagreement between the United States and Europe over the benefits of unilateralism versus multilateralism is largely due to a disparity in the military might of the United States *vis-à-vis* its European allies. The United States acts unilaterally because it has the military might to act on its own and it considers multilateral action as being too slow and constraining. The United States also often finds multilateral action to be inefficient and hopelessly bureaucratic, a charge which must certainly be constructively addressed. Europeans for their part are attached to treaties and multilateralism. They also adhere to these principles due to a dark history that plainly illustrates to Europeans the dangers of unchecked unilateralism in the form of nationalism. The gap in perceptions between the United States and Europe is therefore partly a result of different historical experiences. Therefore, it is also more essential than ever to discuss these issues in depth as a conversation between partners to make sure that mistakes of the past are not repeated, nor that opportunities to improve on the past are not squandered.

29. It is equally important to develop a common policy towards irresponsible, failed or rogue states and towards other global security threats such as terrorism, and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. The new challenges of today require a review of the principles that have always been applied to the use of military capacity and a strategy aimed at anticipating potentially dangerous opponents before they hit their targets could therefore prove to be appropriate. Europeans should recognise the value of deterrence, while the United States should recognise the value of persuasion in their strategy. An agreement on rules and basic principles on how to act in different situations – whether to opt for containment or negotiation must be reached by the United States and Europe at multilateral level involving NATO and the United Nations as well. Such institutions need, however, to be appropriately reformed to enable effective and efficient decision-making. If it were not possible to reform them and the United States acted independently or created separate alliances, NATO and the UN would even be less effective and would appear less interesting even for Europe.

30. A common approach is also necessary to find a solution to the conflict in the Greater Middle East. This region can potentially affect the security and prosperity of the whole world, be it by virtue of its control over oil and gas production, harbouring potential terrorists or through the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. Both Europe and the United States must follow the same path in helping this region to become more democratic and to reach political and economic stability. The recent approval of a UN Security Council Resolution on the political and institutional future of Iraq seems to move in this direction, paving the way for a multilateral initiative in the region and at the same time enhancing the presence of the United States and their allies.

31. However, other threats to global security such as environmental degradation, poverty, diseases ethnic hatred and mass migration must also be addressed. In a world of interdependence, Americans and Europeans have a shared responsibility: to help poorer countries traditionally subjected to totalitarian or fundamentalist regimes, create the conditions necessary for the development of civil society (health, education, employment, freedom of expression, equal opportunities), which in turn can enable the building of democratic institutions.

F. Specific contribution by the Council of Europe

32. The Parliamentary Assembly has repeatedly reiterated its commitment to a multilateral approach to today's security threats. In April 2004, it adopted Resolution 1373 (2004) on *Strengthening of the United Nations*. In this text it calls for substantial reforms in order to make the United Nations more responsive to the current needs of its member states. An Assembly delegation met in February 2004 with members of the United Nations *High-Level Panel on Global Threats, Challenges and Change*, and discussed at length the various threats, both hard and soft, faced by today's societies, as well as the best responses to these threats. The Assembly places great expectations in the recommendations which the *High-Level Panel* will make at the end of 2004 to the United Nations Secretary-General to improve multilateral response to global threats.

33. The Council of Europe has almost concluded its own enlargement process. It should now devote more time to reinforcing the transatlantic dialogue. The Council of Europe has a lot to offer to this endeavour; it has expertise and experience in different areas that can positively contribute towards amplifying the synergies in transatlantic complementarity.

34. The Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe adopted in July 2002 *Guidelines on human rights and the fight against terrorism*. These Guidelines were set as a response to the "9/11" terrorist attacks and they include a range of initiatives, both on the legal front and in terms of prevention, to help states strike the right note in their response to terrorism, notably to adopt anti-terrorist policies which are both effective and respectful of human rights.

35. The Council of Europe has also a long standing expertise in defending human rights and assisting new democracies to build strong and democratic institutions. The Parliamentary Assembly itself has also contributed to the strengthening of human rights practices and consolidation of democratic institutions in its member states. Through the monitoring of elections and the commitments which member states agree to upon joining the organisation, it has played a major role in helping the new member states attain European standards.

36. Moreover, it is not a negligible fact for members of the United States Congress that the Council of Europe is a pan-European organisation, and as such the Parliamentary Assembly can provide a unique counterpart for the United States Congress to interact with elected members of wider Europe.

37. In the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe the Congressmen have the advantage of being in direct contact with national legislators of forty-five European member states, and three observer parliaments (Canada, Israel and Mexico). In order to institutionalise this relationship, the Congress of the United States could apply for an Observer Status with the Parliamentary Assembly.

38. The European Parliament proposes in its Resolution on the *State of the Transatlantic Partnership on the Eve of EU-US Summit in Dublin on 25-26 June 2004* (B5-0185/2004) to strengthen the institutional structure for ongoing transatlantic political dialogue, building on the evolving Transatlantic Legislators' Dialogue (TLD) between members of the European Parliament and the US Congress, with the ultimate aim of establishing an EU-US Transatlantic Assembly. This is an interesting endeavour and the Assembly should follow closely its development and eventually, if it considers it useful, become associated with it. It is important to point out that in the TLD, the United States Congressmen would be in contact with European parliamentarians.

39. The participants of the *Inter-Parliamentary Forum on Transatlantic Dialogue* (London, 19 April 2004) also concluded by calling for an institutionalised dialogue between members of the Parliamentary Assembly and the United States Congress. This dialogue should at the first stage remain a rather informal ongoing contact and seek to reach momentum on exchanges of views and information on issues of common concern. As the Forum proved, there is a wide variety of issues which can and should be discussed, misunderstandings that can and should be resolved. Furthermore, the Forum showed that this can be done quite well in a small group.

40. It might be advisable to institutionalise the dialogue between the Assembly and the United States Congress by setting up an Assembly delegation, and to invite them to meet on yearly basis, either in Europe or in North America. The most natural candidate for this task would be the Sub-

Committee on Relations with Non-Member Countries. At a later date, the frequency of dialogue could become more intense as the contact becomes more valuable. Indeed, high-technology could be used at times to help facilitate communication.

41. In conclusion, the Assembly should not lose the momentum gained at the London Forum, and it should designate the Sub-Committee on Relations with Non-Member Countries (of the Political Affairs Committee) to continue where the London Forum ended.

Reporting Committee: Political Affairs Committee

Reference to Committee: Doc. 9609, Reference 2780 of 18.11.02

Draft Resolution and draft Recommendation unanimously adopted by the Committee on 7 October 2004

Members of the Committee : MM. **Jakic** (Chairperson), **Margelov** (Vice-Chairperson), Spindelegger, (Vice-Chairperson), **Ates** (Vice-Chairperson), Mrs Aguiar, MM. Arzilli, Atkinson, **Azzolini**, **Beneš**, Berceanu, Bianco, Blankenborg, Bokeria, van den Brande, Mrs **Brestenská**, MM. Čekuolis, Curiel Alonso, Davern, **Dreyfus-Schmidt**, Mrs Druviete, Mr Duivesteijn, Mrs Durrieu, MM. **Elo**, Goerens, **Goulet**, **Gross**, Hedrich, Henry, Hörster, Iwinski (alternate: **Jaskiernia**), Jahić, **Jovašević**, **Judd**, **Kalezić**, Karpov, Koçi, **Kosachev**, **Kostenko**, **Lindblad**, **van der Linden**, Lloyd, Loutfi, Magnusson, Marty, Matušić, Medeiros Ferreira, **Meimarakis**, Mercan, Mignon, **Mihkelson**, Mrs **Narochnitskaya**, Mrs Nemcova (alternate: **Curdova**), MM. Németh, **Oliynyk**, Pangalos, Mrs **Petrova-Mitevka**, Mrs Petursdottir, Mrs Pintat Rossell, MM. Pourgourides, Prentice, **Prijmireanu**, **Prisacaru**, Puche, **de Puig**, Pullicino Orlando, Ranieri, Roth, Rzymelka, Severin, **Mrs Severinsen**, MM. Seyidov, **Slutsky**, **Szabó**, Tekelioglu, Torosyan, **Toshev**, Mrs Tritz, MM. Vakilov, **Wielowieyski**, Mrs Wohlwend, Mrs Wurm (alternate: **Muttonen**), Mr Zacchera.

Ex-officio: MM. Eörsi, Einarsson, Russell-Johnston

N.B: The names of the members who took part in the meeting are printed in bold

Head of the Secretariat: Mr Perin

Secretaries to the Committee: Mrs Nachilo, Mr Chevtchenko, Mr Dossow