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RECASTING THE EURO-ATLANTIC PARTNERSHIP

Drawing from the discussions of a working group of leading U.S. and European experts on NATO and its relations with the European Union that met for a pair of two-day seminars in the second half of 2006, “Recasting the Euro-Atlantic Partnership,” co-authored by Franklin D. Kramer and Simon Serfaty, recommends a broadened strategic focus for the Euro-Atlantic community which explicitly encompasses a number of key issues, in combination with the institution of a Euro-Atlantic Forum to make cooperation among the 32 member states of the EU and NATO more effective. The paper is excerpted below.

The question of how to structure Euro-Atlantic cooperation is critical to future effectiveness, as weak institutional structures will significantly inhibit the generation and implementation of substantive solutions...The three separate dialogues that now occur—within NATO, within the European Union, and between the United States and the Union—need to be substantively and procedurally intertwined in a more effective manner. The bureaucracies of the two organizations need greater high-level political direction instructing them to collaborate. The formal establishment of a council, including all EU and NATO members, as well as the EU itself, since it is an entity of sovereign consequence, would create the appropriate forum for the discussion of the critical challenges to the 21st century Euro-Atlantic community. The NATO Secretary General would also be offered a seat at the table to enhance communication and implementation. This council could be called the Euro-Atlantic Forum.

Such a Forum would eliminate the need to define the respective competencies of the EU and NATO, as well as the role of individual states within each. There are no more trivial and debilitating types of questions than, for example, “whether NATO has the competence to engage in civilian tasks in support of its military missions”—especially as its member countries plainly have that competence—or “whether the EU has the capacity to undertake a military mission,” when most of its members are also members of NATO, the most powerful military alliance in the world...

Creation of the new forum would not mean that either NATO or the EU would be abandoning their respective missions, their structures or even their futures. It would mean that they would be able to operate in a coordinated fashion allowing maximization of effort and resources, eliminating the self-imposed limitations created by focusing on procedure over substance. The new forum would act as a strategic coordinator of the efforts of the Euro-Atlantic community, pooling all available security, political and economic strengths.

Creation of the appropriate new institutional structure is only the first step...the Euro-Atlantic community’s combined focus must move past traditional security questions to face the more difficult and complex issues raised by failing states, radical militant Islam, energy security, and structural global competition...the fundamental joint agenda of America and Europe demands an effective and comprehensive international approach that goes beyond traditional security questions. Maintaining rigid distinctions between security, political, and economic aspects of the global challenges we face often acts as a barrier to achieving successful outcomes. NATO often fails to be effective because it is too limited to the military side. The EU, too, often has little political punch because it has too limited a security dimension. The United States too often fails to create adequate partnerships with allies and partners—and, conversely, the latter with the United States. New initiatives will be necessary to generate the concepts, resources, and commitment necessary to success—and the proposed new forum needs to serve as a catalyst and driver in this process.

“Recasting the Euro-Atlantic Partnership” can be downloaded in full at: <http://www.csis.org/zbc/>

This paper and the NATO/EU-NATO working group are part of a larger two-year project on the U.S., the EU, and NATO, which receives support from the European Commission.

Visions of the Atlantic Alliance: The United States, the European Union, and NATO

Edited by
Simon Serfaty



“...a rational case for a renewed and balanced transatlantic partnership, based on the complementarity of the European Union and the United States.”

-Charles Grant
Director, Centre for European Reform

Foreword by John Bruton

Available online at
<http://csis.zoovy.com/product/0892064765>

Peut-on compter sur la France? La France compte-t-elle encore?

In the December 2006 edition of *L'Essentiel des Relations Internationales*, Simon Serfaty examines the state of U.S.-French relations. He writes:

“Peut-on compter sur la France? La question, qu'on dit avoir été soulevée par le vice-président Richard Cheney au début de l'année 2003, fut jugée offensive. Elle exprimait pourtant l'interrogation qu'une majorité d'Américains se posaient sur un pays qui voulait lui nier un 'droit de retour' en Irak, dont le régime était associé par l'Administration Bush aux événements tragiques du 11 Septembre 2001.

On connaît la querelle qui suivit: en réduire la signification à une nouvelle éruption francophobe aux États-Unis serait simpliste. Confrontés à une menace existentielle, les Américains s'indignaient de l'indisponibilité d'un de leurs alliés de pointe qui, en outre, persistait à leur donner des leçons d'histoire et de géographie en public. Quelques mois auparavant, les pas de deux mis en scène par Colin Powell et Dominique de Villepin au Conseil de sécurité des Nations unies avait pourtant semblé faire de la France l'allié favori des États-Unis—celui qui, mieux encore que la Grande-Bretagne, 'complétait' leur puissance.

Cinq ans plus tard, la question se pose moins. La France 'passe' mieux aux États-Unis, affirmation confirmée par les sondages et qui s'observe dans les faits: fin 2004, l'apport français fut décisif sur des dossiers ponctuels comme ceux du Liban, de la Syrie, voire de la Palestine et de l'Ukraine, sans parler, en 2005, de l'Iran, où la France semble être, des trois Grands de l'Union européenne, celle qui est à la fois la plus engagée et la plus expérimentée. Qui plus est, la logique et les craintes françaises exprimées à propos de l'Irak se sont dans l'ensemble confirmées: ce conflit est une 'salle guerre' et, la menace n'étant pas imminente en l'absence (confirmée) d'armes de destruction massive, il aurait été préférable de prendre son temps afin de mieux préparer l'après-guerre. Dans l'intervalle, on aurait dû traiter d'autres priorités, y compris en Afghanistan où la guerre s'intensifie à nouveau, et la crise au Proche-Orient où, rien n'ayant été réglé, tout a empiré dans un enchaînement de violence qui, à l'été 2006, a fait à nouveau craindre le pire.

Mais, noblesse oblige, les Américains, qui n'aiment pas reconnaître avoir tort, aiment encore moins donner leur dû aux Français, qui aiment eux avoir raison. Et puis, expliquer l'échec en Irak dans des termes qui reprendraient le raisonnement tenu par la France à la veille de la guerre serait exagérer l'importance de l'Hexagone: la France compte-t-elle autant—en fait, compte-t-elle encore? Une nation dont la vision se rétrécit et l'influence s'érode dans une Europe élargie?”

To request a copy of the full article, contact Derek Mix at dmix@csis.org.

Selected Recent Talks of the Brzezinski Chair

- “NATO-EU Perspectives,” *Transatlantic Policy Network (TPN) Annual Meeting*, Brussels, Belgium, February 23, 2007.
- “A Challenged and Challenging Europe,” *11th Karlsruhe Dialogues*, Karlsruhe, Germany, February 11, 2007.
- “The EU's Enlargement and Neighborhood Policy—views from the United States and EU member states,” seminar on *EU Enlargement and the Future of Transatlantic Relations* organized by IFRI and IEP, Paris, France, December 11, 2006.

Selected Recent Editorials of the Brzezinski Chair

- “Le gaffe de Chirac ? Quelle gaffe ?” *Le Point*, February 8, 2007.
- “Irak : en faire plus aujourd'hui et moins demain,” *Le Point*, January 4, 2007.

About the Zbigniew Brzezinski Chair in Global Security and Geostrategy
CSIS established the Brzezinski Chair in July 2003 to advance understanding in the fields of geostrategy, international security, European affairs, and global politics. Reflecting Zbigniew Brzezinski's achievements during a career including public service, teaching, and writing, the chair is awarded to a leading scholar in the fields of geostrategy, international security, and global politics. Simon Serfaty, Brzezinski Chair holder, also remains a Senior Advisor to the Europe Program at CSIS, where he was director from 1994-2004.