



External Relations:
Commercial Policy and Relations with
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New Transatlantic Agenda

*Senior Level Group Report to the EU-US Summit
The Hague, 28 May 1997*

The New Transatlantic Agenda (NTA) has given new focus and direction to our political and economic partnership. In the second year of engagement, the United States and European Union have broadened and intensified cooperation on key foreign policy, global and economic concerns as well as reinforced the direct ties between our peoples, thus laying the basis for significant achievements in the longer term. We brought many initiatives to fruition during the first half of 1997, emphasising those that produce tangible benefits for our citizens. As part of the confidence-building process of the NTA, an understanding was reached on April 11 concerning the Libertad Act, the Iran and Libya Sanctions Act, and the EU's WTO case regarding the former with a view to solving important areas of disagreement between us. The implementation of this understanding will be a priority in the months ahead.

Our NTA achievements acquire particular significance as we commemorate the 50th Anniversary of the Marshall Plan and the 40th Anniversary of the Rome Treaty which laid the foundations for the European Community. They demonstrate our joint commitment to promoting peace, prosperity, democracy, human rights and open, market-oriented economies. In this spirit, the EU and US have agreed on a Democracy and Civil Society Awards Programme which would encourage communities, individuals and non-governmental organisations at the local level to further these goals across the continent of Europe.

We have further strengthened the substance and structure of our cooperation on key foreign policy issues. In Bosnia, we have intensified our joint efforts to support reconstruction and promote reconciliation, with special attention to strengthening Dayton institutional frameworks and preparing for municipal elections. Our firmness helped persuade the Serbian Government to honour the results of democratic local elections. In Albania, we are cooperating directly and within the OSCE coordinating framework to facilitate delivery of humanitarian assistance and help re-establish democratic institutions. We are working together to strengthen our ties with Turkey and eliminate possible obstacles to closer relations. We have coordinated our efforts to reduce tensions on Cyprus. Our enhanced joint efforts at a delicate stage in the Middle East Peace Process have sought to encourage dialogue among the parties and promote economic development. We are intensifying our consultations on Iran. On Cuba, we have reaffirmed our commitment to promote democracy, economic reforms and human rights and are encouraging others to support those efforts. We have worked to end violence and promote regional stability and political reconciliation in Central Africa. Negotiations have been concluded for the EU to join the US, Japan and South Korea in the Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organisation (KEDO), underlining our global responsibilities and shared commitment to strengthen non-proliferation efforts.

In the area of humanitarian and development assistance, we have improved our coordination by responding to the needs of war-torn societies in countries such as the Democratic Republic of Congo, Liberia, Guatemala and Haiti. We are collaborating on activities to promote democracy and strengthen civil society in Benin, Bolivia and Bangladesh. Joint efforts are under way to ensure food security in Malawi, Angola, Liberia and Sierra Leone.

We have further intensified and better structured our cooperation on counter-terrorism, law enforcement, migration, asylum and other global challenges. In recognition of our

shared commitment to combat terrorism, we have worked together to pass a comprehensive terrorism resolution at the 1996-1997 UNGA. We are coordinating closely on the negotiation of the draft convention on the suppression of terrorist bombing, wider adherence to existing anti-terrorism conventions, aviation security, encryption technology and on other areas of common interest. Our Agreement on Chemical Precursors represents a major success in our efforts to curb the diversion of chemicals used in the manufacture of illicit drugs. Under our joint project, we have identified further steps to improve present counter-narcotic efforts in the Caribbean region in the fields of law enforcement, systems integration, training and equipment and maritime cooperation. We have agreed to augment our cooperation on organised crime. As part of this effort, we have agreed to hold a seminar on cybercrime in The Hague in June. Following the Ministerial Conference in The Hague in April 1997, we started work on a joint information campaign aimed at preventing trafficking in women. We have enhanced our collaboration and exchange of data on migration and asylum, and will shortly hold our second seminar on this issue. We are working together intensely to advance global environmental negotiations on climate change, chemicals, forests, oceans, and sustainable development.

Our joint efforts have achieved important results in both our multilateral trade agenda and our endeavour to build the New Transatlantic Marketplace. In the WTO, we worked together to conclude the Information Technology Agreement and the Basic Telecommunication Services Agreement, which together liberalise approximately \$1 trillion in trade in goods and services. In the OECD, our joint efforts have contributed to the adoption of important decisions on combatting bribery in international business transactions as well as guidelines on cryptography policy.

In the New Transatlantic Marketplace, we have worked to reduce barriers to transatlantic trade and investment, responding in many cases to recommendations of the Transatlantic Business Dialogue (TABD). Regarding an Agreement on Mutual Recognition of Conformity Assessment (MRA), we are pleased to report that our negotiators have made excellent progress on the outstanding issues. There is no agreement as yet between the EU and the US. But we hope to conclude an agreement in a few days time. Our Customs Cooperation and Mutual Assistance Agreement will help to facilitate trade, enhance enforcement, and combat fraud. We have negotiated a Veterinary Equivalence Agreement to facilitate trade in animal products and will continue to address actively the unresolved issues. We are successfully implementing the Transatlantic Small Business Initiative, in particular through partnership events on both sides of the Atlantic. We have negotiated a Positive Comity Agreement to deepen our cooperation on competition matters. We have intensified our dialogue on regulatory cooperation. We also supported a successful TABD biotechnology workshop on 29 April. As part of our agenda on employment we convened on 21-22 May a Workshop on Employment Policy and the Promotion of Employability Security which brought together government, business, and labour leaders to consider current labour market challenges and the existing and proposed policies to address them. We have made progress on our Joint Study, as noted in the interim report.

We have taken new steps to strengthen our commercial, social, cultural, scientific and educational ties. We held on 5-6 May a very successful Transatlantic Conference attended by more than 300 prominent Americans and Europeans from the private and not-for-profit sectors. The group produced a substantial list of recommendations aimed at providing a more coordinated approach to broadening and deepening transatlantic exchanges and training.

New Priorities

For the next six months, we agree on the following priorities under the New Transatlantic Agenda:

I. Promoting Peace, Stability, Democracy and Development

- Continue our active cooperation to promote peace, stability, democracy and reconciliation in

the Balkans; to encourage civil society and economic development in Central and Eastern Europe, Russia and the NIS; to advance a solution on Cyprus; to further strengthen our relations with Turkey; and to support the Middle East Peace Process.

- Explore, in a spirit of enhanced cooperation, possibilities for convergence of approaches regarding Iran, with a view to ensuring that Iran respects internationally accepted norms and refrains from acts of and support for terrorism.

- Intensify consultations on relations with China, whose links with the international community are growing, and on issues relating to Hong Kong's transition.

- Step up cooperation in support of democracy and human rights, particularly in countries, such as Burma, where there are serious abuses.

- Continue support for UN efforts to find a solution to the question of East Timor.

- Coordinate closely regarding Central Africa, and in particular the Democratic Republic of Congo, to address the humanitarian crisis, to support the UN and the OAU in bringing peace and political stability, and to encourage democratisation, including free and fair elections according to a fixed timetable.

- Work together in developing a donors' "code of conduct" for food aid as a step in a comprehensive approach to food security issues; strengthen cooperation on development and humanitarian assistance around the world through in-the-field contacts and by convening a third joint high-level conference.

II. Responding to Global Challenges

- Expand counter-terrorism cooperation, including exchanging views on domestic counter-terrorism legislation, working together to achieve early adoption of a multilateral terrorist bombing convention and discussing steps to counter state-supported terrorism.

- Follow up rapidly on the studies carried out under the Caribbean Drugs Initiative. Work to enhance cooperation on fighting international drug trafficking in Central and Eastern Europe, the NIS and the Western Hemisphere. Cooperate on improving effective control of synthetic drugs. Pursue consultations on the US proposal for a multilateral chemical control mechanism.

- Enhance cooperation on fighting organised crime, taking into account the recommendations of the EU Action Plan and those being developed in other fora, notably the P8. Explore possibilities for institutionalised arrangements between the US and the future Europol. Continue consultations on extradition, building on the results of the June EU-US discussions, with a view to ensuring that fugitives from justice have "nowhere to hide". Give special attention to broadening our cooperation in combatting child pornography and trafficking in women and children, and in the investigation and prosecution of computer crimes.

- Intensify consultations on the NIS migration follow-up conference.

- Develop a broader agenda for the future on environmental issues. Strengthen cooperation in preparing for the Special Session of the UN General Assembly (UNGASS) in June 1997, work to reach common positions for the Climate Change Conference in Kyoto in December 1997 and organise together a Transatlantic Chemicals Conference in 1998 in Italy. Continue our dialogue on eco-labelling and other issues related to trade and the environment.

- Consider new steps to reinforce cooperation on environmental issues in Central and Eastern Europe and the NIS, including expanded support for new regional environmental centres, examining how to phase out CFCs in Russia and addressing the trans-boundary environmental problems of the Aral and Caspian Seas, the Black Sea and the River Danube.

- Accelerate our ongoing efforts to build an effective global early warning system and response network for communicable diseases.

III. Expansion of World Trade and Closer Economic Relations

- Continue our good co-operation in multilateral fora by: building on the momentum of the Basic Telecom Services and Information Technology Agreements, showing EU-US leadership during GATS Financial Services Agreement negotiations, seeking significantly improved MFN-based offers by WTO members by mid-July and meeting the agreed deadline in December 1997; working closely together to support the accession of new WTO members on commercially viable terms; implementing the WTO Work Programme agreed in Singapore in December 1996, including beginning a work programme on trade and competition, trade and investment, and on transparency in government procurement, and exploring opportunities to increase market access for the least developed countries; pursuing work on the WTO's built-in agenda; encouraging enhanced collaboration between WTO and ILO Secretariats on core labour standards; exploring all opportunities for further tariff liberalisation and harmonisation, including through acceleration of Uruguay Round tariff reductions; intensifying efforts to reach an OECD Multilateral Agreement on Investment on the basis agreed in this week's Ministerial Statement in time for the 1998 Ministerial meeting; implementing the recent OECD recommendations on bribery in international transactions and working to ensure the realisation of the OECD Ministerial decision to negotiate a convention by the end of this year.

- Develop further the concept of the New Transatlantic Marketplace, inter alia, by pursuing vigorously the Joint Study and elaborating further its recommendations. In this process, give a high priority to following up on TABD recommendations, including its report to the present Summit. Continue and intensify the dialogue on the Information Society. Examine key issues raised by the rapid growth of electronic commerce, with a view to developing effective solutions to emerging problems through the appropriate international fora. Develop and pursue new initiatives under the Transatlantic Small Business Initiative. Continue to expand cooperation on regulatory issues, including in the areas of automobiles in the framework of the UN ECE, recreational marine engine emissions, and biotechnology. Continue consultations on a Global Navigation Satellite System.

- Intensify cooperation on employment and labour market policy. Initiate a bilateral programme to analyse the implications of new forms of work organisation. Exchange views on approaches to eliminating exploitative labour conditions, such as the Apparel Industry Partnership. Develop an initiative on integrating the disabled into the workforce, with special emphasis on using new technologies.

- In the light of their importance, we will continue to exchange views on macro-economic issues.

IV. Building Bridges

- Continue our high-level support for the activities of the TABD, including its November Conference;

- Review and consider follow-up on the recommendations of the May 5-6 Transatlantic Conference on "Bridging the Atlantic: People to People Links," including those related to a Transatlantic Information Exchange Service (TIES) on the Internet; supporting local linkages and the work of NGOs and brokering new dialogue with respect to civil society; an EU-US workforce development conference in the autumn; and a transatlantic education and training dialogue. Consider other conference recommendations aimed at improving partnerships among private, not-for-profit and public sectors.

- Begin implementing the Democracy and Civil Society Awards Programme to be announced

at this Summit.

- Continue our high-level support for the intensification of the Transatlantic Labour Dialogue, including its October meeting, and encourage new initiatives to promote cooperation between our labour communities.

- Aim to bring negotiations for a comprehensive Science and Technology Agreement to a successful conclusion within the next few weeks, building on the considerable progress made to date.

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