

**Remarks for the Foreign Policy Association Dinner  
New York City, 17 June 2004**

Ladies and Gentlemen,

This is a great moment in our lives, which we will not forget! Josh Busby has already expressed our gratitude as winners of the transatlantic essay contest sponsored by the FPA and the Richard C. Welden Foundation – and I can only thank you once again. Awarding an American and a European with this prize proves that at the personal level transatlantic relations remain strong and committed to find common approaches to today's problems.

The recent past has made it clear that transatlantic cooperation can no longer be taken for granted. However, as we have argued in our essay, talks about an irreversible transatlantic divorce are premature. The reasons for troubled Atlantic waters can be found on both sides. Josh Busby has referred to some US aspects, and I would like to share with you some thoughts on the European side.

With the end of the Cold War, Europe has ceased to be the prime strategic concern for Washington. But it is only recently that Europeans have begun to realize what this means. The fact that the war in the Balkans could not be solved without US engagement was ample proof of Europe's strategic weaknesses. Since then, a promising process to establish Europe's security and defense policy has been launched. Although far from being accomplished, this process has produced a remarkable document – the European security strategy – that sets out the goals to be achieved, the risks to be faced, the instruments to be used and the capabilities to be developed.

The successful implementation of this strategy will require Europeans to come to terms with a key observation: From the outset, the strategy makes it clear that as a Union of 25 states and a quarter of the world's Gross National Product the EU "is inevitably a global player." The responsibility that comes with this statement will require a departure from the current practice of European cooperation. Without increased readiness to cede sovereignty in foreign, security and defense policy, more efficient ways to provide the necessary capabilities and ultimately more resources to overcome well-known shortfalls Europe will not be a global player!

Sustained cooperation with the United Nations and increased European activities in the Near and Middle East as well as in Iraq are two examples that illustrate what it means for Europe to act as a global player. Last week, the European Commission has adopted a blueprint for cooperation with Iraq. The good news is that the Commission thinks about leveraging the Union's impressive soft power to support Iraq and to stabilize the whole region. The bad news is the lack of reference to the Union's new hard power. On the one hand, it is understandable that the Commission has not yet launched the idea of fielding a European stabilization mission in Iraq. On the other hand it is a pity that this has not happened because it would have triggered the kind of strategic debate that Europe desperately needs in light of the new security strategy.

Because the European Union is just about to learn how to walk with an additional "military leg" good transatlantic relations remain indispensable. As long as the Union's strategic thinking and its capabilities are confined to the "European theatre" Europe needs NATO and the United States to provide peace and security in distant pockets of crises. Although somewhat different, the equation looks similar from Washington. That's why Josh Busby was right to argue that a shift in foreign policy is in the long-term interest of the United States.

Let me conclude by noting that after the fall of the Berlin wall creating a post-Cold War order required "more of the same" in the sense of enlarging Western European and transatlantic institutions to include the former Warsaw Pact countries. Today, after the enlargement of the EU and NATO and in light of the War in Iraq this task has become much more demanding. Especially – and I dare say this with all due respect to this audience and the hosts of our dinner – because the United States has lost portions of its credibility and is about to witness serious leadership setbacks. Now more than ever, the United States needs European partners that are willing to provide leadership: not to satisfy national interests, but – in the words of the UN charter – "to maintain international peace and security and to develop friendly relations among nations."