



European Security and Defence Assembly
Assembly of Western European Union

DOCUMENT A/2040

2 June 2009

FIFTY-SIXTH SESSION

New opportunities for EU-US foreign and security policy
cooperation – reply to the annual report of the Council

REPORT

submitted on behalf of the Political Committee
by Jordi Xuclà i Costa, Rapporteur (Spain, Liberal Group)

DOCUMENT A/2040

2 June 2009

FIFTY-SIXTH SESSION

New opportunities for EU-US foreign and security policy
cooperation - reply to the annual report of the Council

REPORT

submitted on behalf of the Political Committee
by Jordi Xuclà i Costa, Rapporteur (Spain, Liberal Group)

Report transmitted to: the President of the Council of WEU; the President of the Council of the European Union; the WEU Secretary-General/EU High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy; the President of the European Commission; the EU Commissioner for institutional relations and communication strategy; the Presidents/Speakers and the Chairmen of the Foreign Affairs, Defence and European Affairs Committees of the 39 national parliaments represented in the Assembly; the Presidents of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, the NATO Parliamentary Assembly, the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, the Baltic Assembly, the Nordic Council, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation, the CIS Parliamentary Assembly; the President of the European Parliament; the Secretaries General of the Parliamentary Assemblies of the Council of Europe, NATO and the OSCE.

*New opportunities for EU-US foreign and security policy cooperation
– reply to the annual report of the Council*

REPORT¹

*submitted on behalf of the submitted on behalf of the Political Committee
by Jordi Xuclà i Costa, Rapporteur (Spain, Liberal Group)*

TABLE OF CONTENTS

RECOMMENDATION 835

on new opportunities for EU-US foreign and security policy cooperation – reply to the annual report of the Council

EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM

submitted by Jordi Xuclà i Costa, Rapporteur (Spain, Liberal Group)

- I. Introduction
 1. Europe's response to Obama's overtures
 2. Europe as a strategic partner for the new administration
- II. The new president's foreign policy priorities
 1. The situation after the US presidential elections
 2. Initial announcements and first decisions
 - (a) Russia
 - (b) Afghanistan, Pakistan
 - (c) The Middle East
 - (d) Guantanamo and counter-terrorism
- III. Further areas for EU-US foreign policy cooperation
- IV. Conclusions

DRAFT RECOMMENDATION

on new opportunities for EU-US foreign and security policy cooperation

AMENDMENTS

MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE

¹ Adopted by the Committee on 7 May 2009.

RECOMMENDATION 835²

on new opportunities for EU-US foreign and security policy cooperation – reply to the annual report of the Council

The Assembly,

- (i) Welcoming the fact that the election of Barack Obama as the 44th President of the United States has brought a wind of change in international relations and convinced it has opened up new opportunities for transatlantic foreign and security policy cooperation;
- (ii) Aware that it will be vital to make the best use of these opportunities amidst a financial and economic crisis that will absorb policy makers' time and energy;
- (iii) Recalling that governments, parliamentarians and citizens around the globe took an exceptionally strong interest in the US presidential elections, but aware also that the new president, who is accountable only to the US people, will continue to defend US interests;
- (iv) Noting that many of the new president's initial foreign policy decisions directly address longstanding concerns on the part of Europeans;
- (v) Welcoming the fact that the Obama administration has adopted a new tone and style, showing renewed trust in multilateral institutions and being more willing to listen to and consult with Europeans;
- (vi) Urging Europeans to show more unity, take on a greater share of responsibility and act more decisively in order to play their part at a valuable moment which offers the opportunity to create a new dynamic in transatlantic relations;
- (vii) Aware that the imperative for change in the face of the numerous foreign and security policy challenges that lie ahead is one that does not only apply to the United States;
- (viii) Believing that it is above all Europe that can offer the United States partnership in resolving those challenges;
- (ix) Anticipating that an approach involving listening and consultation that yields tangible results will enhance US partnership with Europe;
- (x) Welcoming the review by the US of its strategy towards Afghanistan and Pakistan, believing that the situation in the region offers a serious threat to not only regional but also to global peace and security and thus affects the United States and Europe;
- (xi) Recalling that the need for a comprehensive approach to Afghanistan requires a significantly enhanced commitment by Europe to civil action and a sustained international military effort;
- (xii) Welcoming the new administration's wish to re-establish a result-oriented relationship with Russia, in particular with respect to disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation;
- (xiii) Finding it useful that there should be a dialogue with Russia on President Medvedev's proposal for improving the existing security architecture in Europe on the basis of the principle of equal security for all, in the belief that such dialogue offers the EU and US the opportunity for improving their relations with Russia, but aware that the Russia's invasion of Georgia, its subsequent recognition of the breakaway regions, its military build-up there and its continued failure to observe international commitments reached after the conflict breach the very principles set out by the president;
- (xiv) Believing it is Moscow's responsibility to review its relations with its neighbours, which are marked by lack of confidence, suspicion and tension and overshadowed by Russia's heavy and not always constructive involvement in the "frozen" conflicts and by the way it conducts its energy policy particularly with respect to Ukraine and Moldova;

² Adopted by the Assembly on 2 June 2009 at the 1st sitting.

- (xv) Welcoming the new president's awareness of the crucial importance of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict both for peace and stability in the wider region and for the United States' reputation in the Muslim world;
- (xvi) Concerned by the great difficulty in relaunching the process for establishing lasting peace and stability in the Middle East, but applauding the increasing and positive involvement of the Arab states and institutions;
- (xvii) Concerned by the lack of progress made in the reconciliation talks between Fatah and Hamas brokered by Egypt, aiming at the establishment of a Palestinian unity government, which is indispensable to a successful reconstruction of Gaza as well as for peace negotiations with Israel;
- (xviii) Encouraging the new US Administration in its efforts to find a new and more balanced role in facilitating peace negotiations among all parties concerned and securing the mutually agreed results;
- (xix) Welcoming the decision by the US Government to participate directly in the international talks about Iran's nuclear activities in the E 3 plus 3 framework and a greater readiness to enter into dialogue with Iran but disappointed by Iran's hesitant reaction and lukewarm attitude towards these initiatives and concerned by the further development of Iran's ballistic missile capability;
- (xx) Welcoming President Obama's announcement on the closure of the detention facility at Guantanamo Bay and the banning of unlawful interrogation techniques;
- (xxi) Noting the new administration's appeal for Europe's support in helping offer Guantanamo detainees a new future,
- (xxii) Noting the necessity of renewing the EU-US dialogue on civil liberties and legal values and of addressing controversial counter-terrorism measures;
- (xxiii) Recalling the need to develop common rules between the US and its allies to be applied in crisis-management intervention and law-enforcement operations combining elements of warfare and policing,

RECOMMENDS THAT THE COUNCIL INVITE THE WEU NATIONS AS MEMBERS OF THE EUROPEAN UNION TO

1. Develop a common European political response to the overtures of the President of the United States, one based on more unity, a willingness to take on a greater share of responsibility and the resolve to act more decisively;
2. Invite the United States to recognise the value of such a coherent coordinated and common response, particularly in the field of foreign, security and defence policy, and confirm it has a genuine interest in direct EU-US relations by being willing to strike a new balance between bilateral ties with individual European allies and relations with the EU as a regional entity;
3. Forge a common EU-US strategy for joint action within existing and emergent forums for global governance such as, for example, G 20;
4. Prepare for an open-ended dialogue, involving all Euro-Atlantic countries willing to participate, on ways and means to improve the existing European security architecture and new measures for building mutual confidence and transparency while preserving the transatlantic link;
5. Significantly increase Europe's commitment to civil action in Afghanistan and also maintain an increased military presence there after the presidential elections for as long as necessary;
6. Put relations between the European Union and Pakistan on a new footing, with the objectives of strengthening commercial ties, reforming the country's civil and security institutions and improving its capability for fighting terrorism and securing its nuclear installations;
7. Review Europe's strategy in the Middle East so that it can be fully supportive of the ongoing effort to establish a truce between Gaza and Israel as part of a step by step process leading towards a lasting peace in which all relevant actors are involved;

8. Endeavour to improve the living conditions of the population in Gaza, develop the economic and commercial infrastructure of the West Bank and address demographic developments;
9. Actively pursue their contacts with the Iranian Government in order to promote the E3 plus 3 proposals on cooperation in the civil nuclear field but also leave no doubt about the capacity to impose intensified sanctions if necessary;
10. Show a readiness to seek a more comprehensive relationship with Iran on the basis of mutual respect, shared interests and Iran's strategic importance in the region;
11. Launch a dialogue with the United States on civil liberties and legal values with a view to developing new standards for the treatment of men and women captured in the course of crisis-management operations, including operations to counter terrorism and piracy;
12. Speed up the process of formulating a common and positive European response to the United States' request for Europe to take in former detainees from Guantanamo Bay;
13. Explore further opportunities for EU-US foreign policy cooperation, including for making progress towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals, the improvement of the African Union's crisis-management capabilities and the strengthening of good governance, social and economic development and regional coherence in the western Balkans.

EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM

submitted by Jordi Xuclà i Costa, Rapporteur (Spain, Liberal Group)

I. Introduction

1. The election of Barack Obama as the 44th president of the United States has brought a wind of change in international relations and opened up new opportunities for transatlantic foreign and security policy cooperation.
2. It will be vital to make the best use of these opportunities in a financial and economic crisis that will absorb policy makers' time and energy. At the same time it is important to manage the high expectations raised on both sides of the Atlantic.
3. Many of the new president's first foreign policy decisions directly address longstanding grievances on the European side about the direction of US foreign policy under his immediate predecessor in office, George Bush.
4. The announcement that the controversial prison facility in Guantanamo Bay is to close is of immense symbolic value, epitomising as it does the aberrations of the previous administration. Other announcements concern Afghanistan and Pakistan, Iran and Russia as well as global concerns such as climate change – a testimony to the willingness of the incoming government to review past policies and listen more carefully to allies' and partners' points of view and to implement new policy proposals swiftly. The new president no longer believes the US is leading a global war against terror and while he recognises the threat posed by radical Islamists he also intends to deal with the underlying causes of terrorism.
5. The appointment of Susan Rice, Obama's foreign policy advisor throughout the election campaign, as US Ambassador to the United Nations confirms a new trust in multilateral institutions. As it was the case during the Clinton Presidency, the US Ambassador to the UN has once again been awarded cabinet status giving her direct access to the president.
6. After his first 100 days in office, a clear hierarchy of priorities and actors has been established and all seem to have found their place. President Obama has shown a keen interest in foreign policy and intends to use the prerogatives his office offers him in this field. He has used his first visits abroad to embody the new strategy of listening and consulting. Although she was his opponent in the campaign to obtain the Democratic nomination for US President, State Secretary Hillary Clinton does not challenge the President, always refers to decisions taken by the president and respects them. Vice-President Joe Biden can attend all meetings with foreign visitors to the White House and played an important part when it came to announcing policy changes towards Russia at the Munich Conference on Security Policy. Defense Secretary Robert Gates's reappointment shows the degree to which his views are respected, especially on questions of hard security. Finally, General James Jones, Chairman of the National Security Council, seems wary of public appearances but his advisory role is said to be strong.
7. It is a particularity of the United States political system that it takes a long time to complete the transition to a new administration. About 1 000 senior positions need to be confirmed; in total between 6 000 and 7 000 positions change, delaying the moment until new policies and the changes President Obama intends to implement can be fleshed out. However, European diplomats in Washington say that the Obama transition is in this respect ahead of previous administrations.
8. Your Rapporteur is very grateful to the embassies of Germany, Greece and Spain and to the Delegation of the European Union to the United States for their support in setting up meetings in Washington and for providing background information invaluable for the drafting of the present report.

1. Europe's response to Obama's overtures

9. In the months before Mr Obama's historic victory, foreign policy experts from both sides of the Atlantic had already started to plan for the day after. The Washington Forum organised by the EU Institute for Security Studies³ concluded that the Obama Administration would adopt a new tone and style and be more willing to listen to Europeans, but would also want Europeans to show more unity, take a bigger share of responsibility and act more decisively. Participants at the Forum were worried that Europeans might have difficulties responding adequately to President Obama's overtures.

10. So far, the cases of Guantanamo Bay and Afghanistan have highlighted a basic lack of coherence among Europeans and confirmed concerns that the present, valuable moment in transatlantic history to forge a new dynamic in transatlantic relations could be lost. A cacophony of divergent opinions emerged about whether Europe should take former inmates of the Guantanamo prison on board. Washington also noted the continued reluctance on the European side to deploy additional troops to Afghanistan and the failure to staff the police training mission properly. Europeans remain in a kind of holding position unable to formulate a common European point of view about the way ahead and how to implement the objective of establishing good relations with the new administration (as agreed at a working lunch during the informal meeting of EU foreign ministers held on 8 January 2009 in Prague).

11. Regarding Iran, the European reaction to President Obama's offer of direct talks with Teheran was at first lukewarm. Not until weeks after the president had made his gesture towards the Iranians did the EU warmly support the new direction,⁴ the reasons apparently being on the one hand fear that the US might strike a deal with Iran over the heads of Europeans and, on the other, concerns that Teheran might blow the opportunity. In the latter case, the US would then demand tougher sanctions against Iran, which would hurt European economic interests. The episode shows that the EU, if it wants to be a responsive partner for the dynamic new US Administration, must try to act faster.

12. Washington believes that without support from Russia, it will be very difficult to soften Iran's position on its nuclear programme. But while the United States' current reconsideration of its attitude towards Russia has led it to adopt a policy closer to that supported by the major European allies, it has also given rise to resistance amongst many eastern European partners.

13. At the same time the scope of change in US policy needs some qualification: Guantanamo will be closed and the US, the new president has promised, "will not torture"; but extraterritorial rendition has not been banned and the prison in Bagram remains open. Hillary Clinton said during her nomination hearing that the US was willing to use the UN and other international institutions "whenever appropriate and possible" which can be interpreted as meaning whenever it serves US interests and not necessarily because of a genuine commitment to multilateralism as such. To be fair to his predecessor, the talk of a change in the strategy towards Afghanistan had started well before President Obama's election. Mr Obama has actually increased the number of missile strikes against presumed terrorists in Pakistan.

14. The new president also has to steer the policy changes successfully through the US Congress. In the US Senate, a simple majority is not enough; a majority of 60 out of 100 senators is needed to prevent opposition senators delaying proposals. The Democrats may achieve such a majority soon, but until then, any senator can hold up the president's initiatives.

15. The US no longer denies that climate change is happening and recognises the impact it has as a conflict catalyst and multiplier. But pushing CO₂ reductions through Congress will not be easy. Also, there is already the temptation to link US moves on climate change to European moves in other areas. Europeans should resist such attempts. The US must change its policy on climate change on account of its global environmental responsibility, not to gain advantageous negotiating positions on other issues.

³ The Forum was followed by an ISS report on "European perspectives on the new American foreign policy agenda", edited by Alvaro de Vasconcelos and Marcin Zaborowski, January 2009.

⁴ Conclusions of the Meeting of the General Affairs Council on 27 April 2009.

16. On both sides of the Atlantic there are great expectations about the opportunities ahead. Seen from the US, Washington is offering change and is looking for more support from Europeans. As one participant in the EU Washington Forum said, “the easy times of the Bush years are over”, Europeans cannot hide behind the former president’s unpopularity any more.

17. Seen from Europe, there is a risk of expecting too much too soon – and too different a policy from the new president. The fundamental foreign policy interests of the US have not changed and its essential security concerns remain the same.

18. As Otto Pick, former Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic explained during the Assembly’s recent colloquy on EU-NATO relations in Prague: the new president will listen and there will be many “feel-good” elements in what he communicates, but he will be adamant and first and foremost defend US interests as he is accountable only to the US people. Europeans already had a taste of this when President Obama, with Turkey’s strategic position and importance for stability in its region in mind, called, during his visit to Ankara, for EU membership for Turkey.

2. Europe as a strategic partner for the new administration

19. Given that the US is both an Atlantic and a Pacific power, Europeans need to show Washington the advantages of the transatlantic partnership. Seen from Washington, there are other regional poles of power. During the 1990s for instance, the patterns of US trade relations slowly but steadily changed from being transatlantic to being focused on the Pacific Ocean. China and Japan, not Europe, own US national debt. The new Secretary of State’s first visit was to Asia.

20. We Europeans need to ask ourselves three questions. First, do we want to contribute to the resolution of the huge challenges ahead of us? Second, do we want to have a special relationship with the United States? Third, how can we be an attractive partner to the US both inside and outside NATO?

21. If the answer to the first two questions is “yes”, then we need to show that we share the same values, that the US can rely on us for strategic questions and that we are ready to work together to face the global challenges ahead of us. As the Director of the Europe Department at the Centre for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), Julianne Smith, told your Rapporteur, Europe, “the beacon of soft power” should not believe change lies with the US only.⁵

22. We need to show that it is first and foremost Europe that can offer the help the US needs in resolving those challenges. This does not mean following US policy per se, but the offer that has been made by the US to listen must be seized. We Europeans need to agree on how we are to make use of it. The current window of opportunity will not be open forever. It will close by the latest in the run-up to the mid-term congressional elections in November 2010.

23. The US, on the other hand, needs to support European integration including in the field of foreign, security and defence policy and confirm a genuine interest in direct EU-US relations. The US must strike a new balance between bilateral and regional relations with its European allies. The US and Europe quite simply need one another to solve things. If they cannot get them done on their own, at least they will be able to set things in motion and get others to join them.

24. It might be necessary to review the current transatlantic institutional arrangements in order to support the new transatlantic political agenda institutionally. Some ideas have been put forward with a view to deepening EU-US relations and making the transatlantic dialogue more effective. Such new initiatives should involve all EU and NATO countries.

25. Daniel Hamilton, Director of the Centre for Transatlantic Relations at the School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS) of the Johns Hopkins University, believes the current institutional set-up in EU-US relations, which dates from 1995, is not equipped to deal with the security challenges both sides are facing together.⁶ He points out that there are no mutual obligations between the EU and the

⁵ During a meeting in Washington on 23 February 2009.

⁶ In a meeting with your Rapporteur on 24 February 2009 and with a delegation of the Political Committee on 22 April 2009 in Washington.

US other than to consult. He proposes a new commitment to transatlantic solidarity and assistance in the case of natural and man-made disasters and other major disruptions. These are areas where NATO would be able to play a supporting role but should not take the lead. Cyber security, energy security and protection of the homeland against terrorism are the type of new home security missions where more and deeper EU-US cooperation is necessary.

II. The new president's foreign policy priorities

1. The situation after the US presidential elections

26. President Obama took office in what is probably one of the most difficult situations ever encountered by a new president. The country is engaged in two major wars in Afghanistan and Iraq and faces the worst financial and economic crisis since 1929. Its international credibility is weakened both because of the military difficulties and the role its financial system played in the origins of the financial crisis.

27. At the same time relations with Russia are at an all-time low; prospects for peace in the Middle East have been seriously damaged by Israel's military intervention in Gaza during the transition phase between the presidential elections and the new president's inauguration. Teheran is continuing with its nuclear programme which might soon provide it with the breakthrough that allows it to build a nuclear weapon. If Iran and North Korea manage to maintain a nuclear weapon capability against the stated wish of the international community, the future of non-proliferation hangs in the balance. At her confirmation hearing, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton expressed her deep concern that nuclear weapons could end up in the hands of a terrorist group.

28. The new administration will concentrate on these subjects. The two reasons that could prevent the re-election of Mr Obama in 2012 are a failure to solve the economic crisis and a major terrorist attack on the US homeland. Such are the priorities and the parameters that frame the space for EU-US cooperation.

2. Initial announcements and first decisions

29. The new president has again made non-proliferation and disarmament a top priority. An announcement to the effect that he will ask the US Congress to ratify the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) has been made and he has carried a campaign pledge to pursue the ultimate goal of a world without nuclear weapons over to the White House. The export of cluster munitions has been banned. In a ground-breaking speech in Prague, President Obama outlined his vision of a world without nuclear weapons.⁷ Although he himself recognised that his vision might not become a reality even in his lifetime, the announcement was a positive step towards striking a balance among the different groups at the 2010 Non-Proliferation Review Conference.

30. President Obama wants to re-establish a result-oriented relationship with Russia, in particular with respect to disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation. He has understood that Russia wants to be treated as a superpower, something only the United States can offer. Two emissaries from the White House and the State Department were sent to Moscow to deliver a proposal that links the further deployment of missile defence installations in the Czech Republic and Poland to Russian pressure on Iran. This made clear that if there is progress on halting Iran's nuclear and missile programmes, the rationale for missile defence installations in Europe goes away.

31. The feeling in Washington is that achieving agreement with Russia on disarmament and arms control questions could be relatively easy and would pave the way to bringing the relationship with Russia back on track. In the recent past, Russia has demonstrated an immense potential to obstruct, spoil or delay US foreign policy initiatives. Getting the relationship with Russia right once more could prove crucial in tackling a number of foreign policy issues. Progress on disarmament would also facilitate the 2010 Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) Review.

⁷ www.whitehouse.gov. The Assembly adopted a report presented by Charles Goerens (Luxembourg, Liberal Group) on the idea of freeing the world of nuclear weapons (Document 1982, 3 December 2007).

32. Only half a year on from the war in Georgia, the US had to push some of its allies hard to renew dialogue with Russia inside NATO and resume work in the NATO-Russia Council. The new administration is aware of Polish and Czech anxieties about putting missile defence on the backburner but accepts this as unfortunate but unavoidable collateral damage if it helps cut a deal with Russia.
33. The president gave one of his first television interviews to the Arab channel Al Arabiya. He wants to repair the image of the United States among Muslims in the world. In his inaugural address, he spoke about wanting people everywhere to live in “dignity” which goes down much more easily among many conservative Muslims than the aggressive rhetoric of his predecessor on democratisation and liberty. At the same time, never since the times of the crusades have there been more western soldiers in Muslim countries.
34. There remains a fundamental concern in Washington about Muslim radicals promoting the emergence of a unified Islam and an Islamic uprising. Al-Qa’ida is identified as a continuing threat to the US and its allies.
35. Countries that used to belong to the infamous “axis of evil” have been offered either direct talks with the US Government (Iran) or have seen first visits by US envoys (Syria). Syria is a much-courted country these days and considered in Washington to be a key to facilitating the Middle East peace process.
36. The new president modified the timetable but confirmed the pull-out of Iraq of US combat troops. The reappointment of Robert Gates as Defence Secretary suggests that Obama trusts that the surge strategy he implemented under President Bush is working and will continue to allow Iraq to stabilise.
37. The president announced that the United States will further increase the number of troops in Afghanistan by 21 000, as part of the review of US policy towards the region. The new strategy stresses the need to develop and implement a comprehensive approach comprising both military and civil measures. The president has also made clear that he understands the need for a regional approach towards Afghanistan that not only includes Pakistan but all neighbouring countries.
38. The situation in Afghanistan is also linked to the role NATO will play in the security of its member states. During a meeting with your Rapporteur, representatives of the State Department complained that Washington lacked evidence that European allies see Afghanistan as much as a priority for their security as the US does.
39. NATO’s 60th anniversary summit marks the transition from consultation to decision-making among allies. The new president was instrumental in striking a deal among his allied colleagues on the appointment of Anders Fogh Rasmussen as successor to Secretary-General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer. The review was launched of NATO’s 1999 Strategic Concept and its posture in relation to the European Security Strategy.
40. A number of significant nominations were made that indicate a new US confidence in diplomatic efforts. Many personalities with a distinctively “European” background joined the new administration. The new Chairman of the National Security Council, General James Jones, grew up partly in Europe and speaks perfect French. The new US Ambassador to NATO, Iva Daalder, is of Dutch origin and moved to the US at a young age. The State Department and the Pentagon are engaged in heavy recruitment of specialists on Russia.
41. The participation of Vice-President Joe Biden, Defence Secretary Robert Gates and National Security Council Chairman James Jones, together with a huge delegation of advisors, in the Munich Conference on Security Policy only days after the presidential inauguration was a first demonstration of the new administration’s mood of listening and consultation. It also offset the first visit by State Secretary Hillary Clinton who went to Asia.
42. In Munich, Joe Biden made clear that while the US was “ready to press the reset button” with regard to Russia, this would not mean renouncing certain standards or accepting Russian views on spheres of influence, recognition of the Georgian regions Abkhazia and South Ossetia or its energy policy towards third countries.

(a) Russia

43. The new administration's policy on Russia is one of its most advanced. Meeting on 1 April 2009 in London in order to review their relations, President Obama and President Medvedev reached initial agreements on how to negotiate a treaty on nuclear disarmament to replace START I and issued a joint statement on broader issues of non-proliferation.⁸ According to Samuel R. Watson, Acting Director of the Office of Russian Affairs at the State Department, a third document containing a more detailed action plan, including more tangible policy proposals, is currently under discussion.⁹ He explained that while under the previous administration relations were driven by summits which yielded few results, the goal was now to further institutionalise relations and create a new architecture for meetings bringing the two countries' foreign affairs and defence ministers together more regularly.

44. The senior members of staff needed to flesh out the details of this policy are now in place. They include officials with experience of working in Russia, such as the chief US negotiator on the replacement treaty for START I, Assistant Secretary of State for Verification, Compliance, and Implementation, Rose Gottemoeller, a fluent Russian speaker who until recently was head of the Carnegie Office in Moscow. European diplomats confirm that the new administration has a much greater potential for showing empathy and understanding for the Russian perspective than the previous one which got carried away with the idea of punishing Russia for its behaviour instead of engaging the country in order to bring about a change of policy.

45. Andrew Kuchins, Director and Senior Fellow of the CSIS Russia and Eurasia Programme, underscored the all-time low reached in US-Russia relations in the final years of the Bush administration.¹⁰ The Obama administration must therefore make it a priority to rebuild a minimum level of trust and confidence.

46. However, US allies geographically close to Russia are observing this shift in priorities with concern. Some are worried that President Obama in his desire to achieve quick results might make too many concessions to Russia, which might lead the US to be more accommodating of Russia's wish to maintain a sphere of influence in its neighbourhood or could further delay NATO membership for Ukraine and Georgia. The new President's highly pragmatic approach takes into consideration factors that until recently were sidelined for ideological reasons, such as whether the people of the countries concerned actually want to join NATO or whether the presence of the new members would enhance the NATO countries' security.

47. The new administration seems to have no illusions about Ukraine's ability to establish political stability and improve governance in the short term. The enthusiasm for the Georgian President that was once fashionable in Washington has waned. More people in Washington than ever before are putting themselves in Russia's place and seeing Moscow's point of view that NATO would become more unfriendly to Russia if those countries joined it. And indeed meetings at NATO and elsewhere are already undeniably permeated by anti-Russian tendencies.

48. On the other hand, it is Moscow's responsibility to review its relations with its neighbours, which without exception are marked by a lack of confidence, suspicion and tensions. Russia's heavy involvement in the so-called frozen conflicts has not always been constructive. The pressure on Russia to denounce anti-democratic tendencies needs to be maintained: the number of assassinations of journalists and other citizens critical of the ruling authorities and the incapacity of the police and justice system to find and prosecute the perpetrators are extremely disturbing.

49. The new administration believes that the issue of disarmament offers the highest potential for reaching agreement with Russia in a strategic area. It is in the interests of both sides to conclude a successor agreement to START I, due to expire in December this year. The two countries together account for around 95% of world nuclear weapons. Russia has a strong interest in reducing the cost of maintaining and upgrading those arsenals. Its recent attempts to demonstrate its capacity to replace older strategic weapons with new ones were unconvincing or simply failed.

⁸ www.america.gov

⁹ In a meeting with a delegation of the Political Committee on 20 April 2009 in Washington.

¹⁰ In a meeting with a delegation of the Political Committee on 21 April 2009 in Washington.

50. The negotiating teams are now in place. The aim is not simply to prolong the current arrangements, although these could be extended for up to five years,¹¹ but to agree further reductions by December 2009. Once an agreement has been reached there would be room for further steps, some of which would be difficult, if not impossible, to achieve without first rebuilding confidence. It will be very difficult to find support in the US Congress for controversial decisions, for instance with regard to the ratification of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) or completion of the negotiations on a Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty, unless there is a successful follow-up agreement to START I.

51. It is often claimed that engaging Russia in disarmament discussions allows it to assert its renewed status as a superpower. While this may be true, it also implies that there are limits to disarmament, since the fact that Russia has nuclear weapons in the first place puts it in a position to deal with the US on an equal footing. Russia will not want to give that up. European efforts are therefore needed in order to bring home to both sides the positive global impact of further arms reductions for a successful outcome of the NPT review conference in 2010 and the preservation of the non-proliferation regime.

52. All the other issues will be put on the table, including US-Russian cooperation on Iran and Afghanistan. Russia could play a constructive role in these matters but is unlikely to give its support unless it receives concessions in exchange. Although Russia is opposed to Islamic radicalism, terrorism, al-Qa'ida and the Taliban, one cannot simply take it for granted that the current Russian Government will consider it to be in the country's interest to help NATO succeed in Afghanistan. On the contrary even, NATO's failure in Afghanistan and a subsequently weakened Atlantic Alliance would give Moscow a great strategic advantage.

53. Russia needs to decide whether it wants to be part of the greater Euro-Atlantic community of modern democracies. If it prefers to remain aloof, resting on its laurels as a permanent member of the UN Security Council and possessor of an aging nuclear arsenal, it might be inclined to do little more than wield its disruptive potential. In this case it faces the risk of decline, given its demographic trends and heavy dependence on energy exports. Its population has decreased steadily since 1992, while male life expectancy has stagnated for the last 40 years and is lower today than it was more than half a century ago.¹² Russia needs the West in order to achieve economic prosperity and to develop its health and social systems. A stand-alone position will not be sustainable.

54. Moscow must offer a serious response to Washington's new approach: it is in the EU's interest to promote the necessary debate and process of reflection within Russia. At the same time Russia must be made to see that it too stands to gain from better relations: here also the EU can contribute. This is the third time since the end of the cold war that the chance of a real new beginning in relations with Russia has presented itself. On previous occasions, following the break-up of the Soviet Union and the 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks, the potential for cooperation was not fully exploited. The US, Russia and the EU must grasp this new opportunity, failing which it may be the last one for a long time to come.

55. President Medvedev's proposal to discuss ways and means of improving the existing security architecture in Europe offers a further opportunity to substantially improve US-Russia-EU relations. It has been almost a year since President Medvedev made his proposal. At the time few people could see his point, but the subsequent war in Georgia was to prove him right: the existing institutions are clearly not up to dealing with the current challenges.

56. In a speech at Helsinki University on 20 April 2009,¹³ President Medvedev said that "certain political forces are still obsessed by the need to expand what they see as obligatory military-political alliances" and that "the rules of international law are applied selectively, on the basis of so-called political expediency, and sometimes simply ignored". He cited as examples military operations in the

¹¹ Article 18.2 of the START I Treaty.

¹² Washington Post, 19 April 2009, Nicholas Eberstadt, "Drunken Nation: Russia's Depopulation Bomb" in World Affairs Spring 2009 (www.worldaffairsjournal.org), and Carel de Rooy, "Life Performance as a Government Performance Measure in Russia", 24 March 2008. www.unicef.org

¹³ www.kremlin.ru

Balkans, the recognition of Kosovo's independence, the situation in the Caucasus and the crisis in the talks on the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE). He invited the United States and the European Union to develop "multi-faceted cooperation" and "realise confidence-building in Europe" to be followed by a new "large-scale European treaty on security" based on "the recognition that the security of the European continent is indivisible". He proposed that the negotiations on this "Helsinki plus" treaty be launched by a summit of all Euro-Atlantic states.

57. Some see this proposal as merely a ploy to get the NATO allies and the OSCE, Council of Europe and EU members wondering whether they have the right set-up, creating unwarranted insecurity about the legitimacy, efficiency and credibility of those institutions. Many people in Washington suspect that Moscow aims to weaken the human rights dimension of the OSCE and to effectively veto further NATO expansion by maintaining an acknowledged sphere of interest in its neighbourhood.

58. However, 20 years after the end of the cold war we are still trying to define Russia's place in Europe. A part of Russia is European geographically, while the United States is European in the political sense. Any new European security architecture must try to better integrate Russia without excluding the United States from Europe's security. However, the current structure is insufficient and ad hoc solutions such as the NATO-Russia Council have yet to prove that they can serve as confidence-building platforms. All too often up until now Moscow has been given the impression that its proposals are not taken seriously.

(b) Afghanistan, Pakistan

59. The new US policy on Afghanistan and Pakistan, which lays greater emphasis on non-military measures, is the one that most successfully addresses European criticism of the previous government's approach. The Obama administration believes that hard security efforts must continue but recognises that in parallel there is a need to train the Afghan army, police, judges, lawyers and government staff and increase civilian efforts generally. In addition, more emphasis is being placed on the situation in neighbouring Pakistan. A new regional approach is emerging that seeks to embrace all the actors in the region, including Iran and India.

60. However, Europeans remain reluctant to seize the opportunity offered by the new president and support this strategy by sending more troops and civil staff to Afghanistan. Europeans and Americans do not have the same take on the situation in Afghanistan and Pakistan as regards the consequences for national security. President Obama had been warned not to expect a significant increase in European troop deployments. Consequently, when the president returned from his first visit to Europe where he attended the G20 meeting, the NATO summit and the EU-US meeting, there were no complaints from US officials who say they got what they expected. But will a more significant European civilian contribution be sufficient to compensate for the lack of military commitment? Civilian input clearly needs to be substantial and will entail difficult decisions on development aid to Pakistan and the removal of trade barriers (in the textile sector, for example). Otherwise Europe cannot be a real partner to the United States and will do no more than offer precious support.

61. When European diplomats in Washington explain with some relief that the US Government will not ask for more troops, they knowingly present only a half truth. The new president's objective on his first visit to Europe was to change the mood towards the United States. He succeeded in establishing personal relationships with many European leaders and was pleasantly surprised to prove so popular with the political elite and the general public. But sooner or later the honeymoon will end. Lack of European commitment will not always be met with understanding and the president will not turn a blind eye for the sake of maintaining a good atmosphere. If the listening and consulting approach does not bear tangible results, it will be considered in Washington as ineffective and a failure.

62. In the meantime, the situation in Afghanistan and Pakistan is becoming ever more critical. The problem for President Obama is that he cannot put the blame on his predecessor as easily as in the case of Iraq. He already said during his election campaign that Afghanistan, not Iraq, was the military priority, and by ordering an additional 21 000 troops to be sent to the country, Afghanistan has become President Obama's war. With Taliban forces moving closer to the Pakistani capital despite the increase in drone and missile attacks by US forces and following the agreement between Islamabad

and the Taliban to establish Sharia rule in the Malakand region, fears of Pakistan's nuclear weapons falling into the hands of radical Muslims have been revived.

63. The policy on Afghanistan and Pakistan has also suffered from the Obama administration's haste to present policy changes and use new language. There are certain misjudgements and there are likely to be some amendments. Senator John Kerry was the first to publicly alert Washington to the fact that the term "AfPak", indicative of the new approach whereby Afghanistan and Pakistan are seen together in a regional context, was ill-advised. Afghanistan may be the tip of the iceberg and Pakistan may be the iceberg, but Islamabad does not appreciate being lumped together with Afghanistan. Also, Islamabad only very reluctantly accepts that its historic rival India is being courted into solving the Afghanistan/Pakistan conundrum. Finally, of all the special envoys appointed by the president to deal with a specific foreign policy issue, Richard Holbrooke's knowledge of the situation and acquaintance with the actors seems to be the least comprehensive.

64. Afghanistan and Pakistan are neighbours, the Taliban move between the two countries which both have a large Pashtun population, but the similarities end there.

65. As Shuja Nawaz, Director of the South Asia Center of the Atlantic Council, explained,¹⁴ Afghanistan lacks infrastructure and a strong civil society, and has neither a functioning army nor a reliable police force. Pakistan is a third world country with first world weapons. It has a dynamic economy (with an average growth rate of 6% over the past 20 years despite poor governance), but has suffered from autocratic rule which has damaged civilian institutions. The country needs help to relearn democracy and re-establish the rule of law. In Mr Nawaz's view, exiled politicians had wasted their time and not prepared themselves for the new realities in the country.

66. Mr Nawaz also believes that the Obama administration needs more time to cope with the situation and foster support for the new strategy. Several hearings are scheduled in the US Congress in the coming weeks and months. In Pakistan there are huge discrepancies between the rich and the poor and Mr Nawaz believes that the Pakistani Government should take on more responsibility for improving the social situation in the country. The previous US Administration had only been seeking economic and strategic advantages and had neglected the social realities. He also says that the Pakistani authorities need support in the internal fight against the secret services. He recalled that for the various reviews that were conducted by the new US Administration Pakistani military and political delegations came separately to Washington.

67. Relations between Pakistan and India are strained and tensions could escalate in the event of another cross-border terrorist attack. India would be forced to take action. The events in Mumbai had been a warning.

(c) The Middle East

68. The Obama administration's Middle East policy seems to be among the least advanced, although it was clear at a very early stage that the new president had no intention of making the same mistake as his predecessor and waiting too long before launching an initiative on this issue. One reason for the lack of progress, of course, has been the delay in forming a new government in Tel Aviv following the February 2009 general election.

69. However, if the US were to wait for the new Israeli Government to formulate its foreign policy it would risk losing the political initiative. The risk is very real, as can be seen from the Tel Aviv government's attempt to link the Israeli-Palestinian conflict on the one hand and Iran's nuclear programme and negative influence in the region, on the other, and its claim that the latter poses a more immediate threat to Israel's security.¹⁵ At her hearing at the Foreign Relations Committee of the House of Representatives, Secretary of State Clinton immediately rejected such a link.¹⁶

70. As a candidate Mr Obama expressed support for a two-state solution, and he has clearly said that as president he will pursue that goal. But since taking office he has been more cautious about

¹⁴ In a meeting with a delegation of the Political Committee on 20 April 2009 in Washington.

¹⁵ "Israel puts Iran issue ahead of Palestinians", Washington Post, 22 April 2009.

¹⁶ Washington Post, 24 April 2009.

committing himself and talking openly about the things he thinks must happen in order to achieve statehood for the Palestinians and peace and security for both sides to the conflict. As president-elect he refused to take a stance on the war in Gaza on the grounds that he was not yet in charge. That was a missed opportunity.

71. The real obstacle to the formulation of a new US Middle East policy, other than the enormous complexity of this longstanding conflict, is the United States' bad reputation among the peoples of the region as a country that sides with Israel and uses military force against Muslims.

72. President Obama has directly addressed this problem, first of all in his inaugural speech when he said "to the Muslim world, we seek a new way forward, based on mutual interest and mutual respect",¹⁷ then again when taking the decision to visit Turkey. In his address to the Turkish Parliament he insisted that "the United States is not, and will never be, at war with Islam".¹⁸ But this new attitude must be backed up by tangible action in order to bear fruit and change the way in which the United States is perceived by ordinary people.

73. By appointing Senator Mitchell as Special Envoy for the Middle East the new administration has issued a strong signal that it places the Middle East conflict high on its agenda and views it as a central problem with repercussions for a whole range of foreign policy issues.

74. Senator Mitchell has engaged in extensive consultations in the region but has made few public comments. According to European diplomats in Washington, so far he has had only limited resources, unlike the Special Representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan, Richard Holbrooke, who has a large staff to draw on. But the same sources also say that Senator Mitchell has the confidence of the president who has given him a free hand to explore the ways and means of finding a lasting peace. It is therefore likely that the president will wait for Mr Mitchell to produce a realistic plan before backing it publicly. After his meeting with King Abdullah II of Jordan, President Obama simply expressed the hope that over the coming months he would see "gestures of good faith on all sides".

75. It is also highly likely that the major part of the political work will be done behind closed doors. Given the sensitivity of this issue discretion is essential, for the disclosure of any small advances that may have been made could force one or both sides to deny or justify such initiatives before they were ready to be publicised.

76. Traditionally Israel's staunchest allies are to be found among the Democrat members of Congress who are making it difficult for the new president to exert the necessary pressure on the Israeli Government and to gather sufficient impetus to implement dramatic policy changes. Things have become even more difficult following the formation of the current Israeli Government.

77. However, there are subtle nuances, as illustrated by the tentative contacts with Syria. The logic of talking to your adversaries inherent in the new administration's approach to conflict resolution implies that sooner or later the US Government will also talk to Hamas. Indeed, the recent visit to Gaza by the Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, John Kerry, suggests that those talks are already taking place, because such a visit could not have been undertaken without the backing of Hamas. And as David Ignatius so aptly pointed out: "It's hard to comprehend Palestinian support for Hamas until you visit Gaza".¹⁹

78. The real policy change, if it occurs, will be with respect to Israel and will address such controversial issues as the settlements and territorial concessions. Some administration officials, pointing to the fundamental role that peace between Israel and the Palestinians would play in other conflicts involving Muslim countries ("Peace is important"), advocate a more assertive policy. Others adhere to the more traditional view that support for Israel is in the US' strategic interest ("Israel is important").

79. Haim Malka, Deputy Director of the CSIS Middle East Programme, believes that there is a risk that the current administration will pursue the same unrealistic policy line as its predecessors, with the

¹⁷ 20 January 2009, www.america.gov

¹⁸ 6 April 2009, www.whitehouse.gov

¹⁹ "Caught in the Middle", by David Ignatius, in Foreign Policy May/June 2009, www.foreignpolicy.com

focus on reaching a final agreement between Israel and the Palestinians rather than on first stopping the violence and establishing a truce.²⁰ In his view, given the current circumstances, negotiations on such an all-encompassing peace agreement will not lead to peace or put an end to violence and will therefore not be a viable solution. Even if such an agreement could be concluded formally, the major players would either not be interested or simply be incapable of implementing it. Fatah and President Abbas are weak and have little control over Palestinian territory. Hamas is not interested in a deal with President Abbas because its popular support is growing and its leaders believe that time is on their side.

80. In Mr Malka's view, there needs to be a step-by-step approach. The Palestinians need to agree on a basic form of unity and power-sharing, without which there can be no viable economic development. Such a basic form of unity would enable Hamas to engage in direct negotiations with Israel, making it possible to declare a truce. This would allow Israel to calm the frontier with Gaza and open up possibilities for dealing with other issues. The search for a peace settlement should be left to a later stage.

81. Your Rapporteur believes that the European countries and the United States, through the Quartet mechanism and outside it, could provide the support needed to bring about such a truce and monitor its implementation. A strong EU-US mediation role must be based on a pragmatic appraisal of the political realities on the ground and help the Palestinians achieve the legitimate government and coherent political leadership that would constitute a credible negotiating partner vis-à-vis Israel. The EU and the United States should also work together immediately to improve the living conditions of Palestinians living in Gaza.

82. To go on ignoring Hamas's political role does not constitute a viable policy any more than to disregard the negative impact of an unrestrained Israeli settlement policy does. Europeans have to join the United States to make a complete break with the failed policies of the past and engage in serious diplomacy involving all the regional players.

83. EU-US cooperation should therefore build on regional proposals, such as the Arab Peace Initiative. This not only engages a wider group of countries but also offers the prospect of sharing the burden of guaranteeing future agreements and making those guarantees more credible to all sides.

(d) Guantanamo and counter-terrorism

84. One of the first executive decisions of the new president was to stop the controversial military tribunals at Guantanamo Bay and to announce the closure of the detention facility. He also ordered an end to special investigation rules for the CIA and the military and the closure of all secret prisons outside the United States.

85. However, President Obama has not yet made any announcement concerning the detention camp at the Bagram US Airbase in Afghanistan where up to 600 prisoners are being held without charge, or about having their detention reviewed before a regular US court.²¹

86. Furthermore, the practice of extraordinary rendition has not been banned.²² This has been a matter of some controversy among European countries and a source of embarrassment for many European governments because of their alleged cooperation with the CIA in authorising stopovers of CIA chartered flights moving prisoners from Afghanistan to supposed detention facilities on their territories.

87. The United States continues to be affected by the trauma of the 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks. With the courageous release of confidential memos on interrogation methods, President Obama has nevertheless taken the change of direction to a new level.

88. For the EU, such openness provides an opportunity to engage the United States in a new dialogue on civil liberties and legal values with the ultimate goal of not only preventing similar

²⁰ In a meeting with members of the Political Committee in Washington on 21 April 2009.

²¹ Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, 24 April 2009.

²² Los Angeles Times, 1 February 2009.

violations from occurring again but also lending new credibility to talk of promoting the rule of law and human rights. Both parties could develop an initiative aimed at setting new standards for the treatment of men and women captured during crisis-management operations.

89. The need for such rules is clearly illustrated by the difficulties EU member states experience when dealing with pirates captured off the Somali coast. Handing over these pirates to the Kenyan authorities cannot of course be likened to what happened to many inmates of the prison in Guantanamo and elsewhere, but Europeans must accept that people have the right to ask the same questions as were addressed in the past to the United States about the coherence of their values and standards.

90. Terrorism and piracy will not disappear and we need to deal with the grey area of what kind of rules to apply during crisis-management interventions and law-enforcement operations that combine elements of warfare and policing and take place outside the area of jurisdiction of the intervening forces' national legal system.

91. With respect to Guantanamo, the new administration is currently reviewing each prisoner's case. Some will be tried before regular US courts and others will be released in the United States. It will be possible for a limited number of prisoners to be returned to their home countries. For the rest, it is likely that the US Administration will want to hand them over to European countries.

92. A few EU member states have said they are willing to accept released prisoners, while others have refused, citing security reasons. For those EU countries which take former prisoners in, arrangements will be made on a bilateral basis with the United States. However, once a former prisoner enters the Schengen area, it is no longer a bilateral issue. Efforts are under way inside the EU to find a coordinated approach.

93. The United States has announced it will formally ask European countries to take in released prisoners. European diplomats say that the US Administration is getting increasingly nervous about the difficulties the EU has in agreeing on a common policy. In Prague, during the informal EU-US summit, President Obama said that closing Guantanamo would be much easier if EU member states were to accept some prisoners.²³

III. Further areas for EU-US foreign policy cooperation

94. Afghanistan, Iran and non-proliferation are the immediate US foreign policy priorities where a bigger European contribution is welcome and expected. Russia is another top priority but here a direct bilateral approach will be applied which means that Europeans need to be confident, while showing support. However, they will not have much influence.

95. There are other areas which offer opportunities for the US and Europe to work together more closely and where closer cooperation could make a real difference.

96. While the EU provides 60% of world public development assistance, the US is the single biggest donor. But the two often do not work together and instead pursue competing goals. Have we reached a joint understanding about our ultimate common interests? What if by working together more closely, the biggest donors in the world could help people out of poverty and make the Millennium Goals a reality?

97. During her confirmation hearing, State Secretary Clinton highlighted the need to improve the situation in Darfur. The strengthening of African crisis-management capabilities is another field for EU-US cooperation.

98. The previous administration made NATO enlargement a top priority and pressed European allies to accept Georgia and Ukraine as members of NATO. There is great reluctance among many European NATO partners to admit those countries quickly to the commitments and challenges of the Washington Treaty. A NATO enlargement policy that might be perceived as anti-Russian should be rejected. But we need to develop a strategy for countries located inbetween the EU and Russia.

²³ [Euobserver.com](http://euobserver.com), 7 April 2009.

99. Today, NATO enlargement may not provide the best answer to their and our concerns. But if NATO enlargement is not the right thing for the time being, what else can we suggest to those countries and what can the EU in particular offer them? Might the nascent EU Eastern Partnership Initiative receive transatlantic support?

100. There is an opportunity for the EU and the US to find a common way of preparing those countries for accession that moves at the pace of both new and old partners. As Daniel Hamilton, Director of the Centre for Transatlantic Relations at the School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS) of the Johns Hopkins University, explained to your Rapporteur, a “forced development” implies too much disregard for public opinion in many of the countries concerned and reduces foreign policy options to the military question of NATO membership.²⁴

101. Shaping the future structure of global governance is a further area for EU-US cooperation. During the EU Washington Forum the point was made that the presidency of George Bush was marked by a permanent shift towards multipolarity. New powers such as China and India and the re-emergence of Russia increasingly prevent the EU and the US from dominating global governance.

102. New structures, such as the G20 initiative, are aimed at involving those countries. It therefore follows that the existing world governance forums, such as the G7/G8, will further lose influence. If the G20 meetings prove effective, one can hardly imagine then going back to the times before the financial crisis. If the G20 develops into a consultation forum for global governance, the EU and the US need to create strategic cooperation inside the G20 to identify and pursue their joint interests.

103. The Iraq war has been synonymous with the deterioration in transatlantic relations during the Bush presidency. However, this should not rule out increased European involvement in Iraq. The country’s administration is in need of modernisation and people still face many problems in their daily lives, including with electricity and water supplies, to which Europeans can offer solutions. There are also many opportunities in relation to the development of the Iraqi oil sector. Leaving the differences of the war behind, the EU and the US could help Iraq’s return to being a normal country once again.

104. Given the deleterious effect the ongoing dispute between Turkey and Cyprus is having on EU-NATO relations, a joint transatlantic effort would be useful. Both countries are members either of NATO or the EU and need to understand that the other members are growing increasingly weary of the obstacles they raise to better inter-institutional cooperation.

105. Further transatlantic efforts are needed with a view to improving and intensifying the EU-NATO strategic partnership as agreed by the two organisations. The settlement of the Cyprus issue would make a positive contribution to those efforts.

106. There is also unfinished business on the transatlantic agenda as regards the western Balkans and especially Kosovo. The western Balkans is not a priority for the new US Administration, although it has said that the goal of achieving recognition of Kosovo by 100 countries by 2010 remains valid. A continuing US military presence and US participation in the EU’s ESDP operation EULEX are the basis for ensuring stability in the region. Joint efforts are still necessary in order to ensure the normal functioning of EULEX operations in the north of Kosovo.

IV. Conclusions

107. The power of a new US president is probably never greater than at the beginning of his mandate. Bearing this old wisdom in mind, Barack Obama has launched a plethora of initiatives. Not only does he believe that deeds must follow words, he also understands the mechanics of political change.

108. Against the backdrop of a severe economic and financial crisis, the president must first and foremost call a halt to the present engulfing mood of depression. He has managed, through his response to the economic difficulties, to lay the foundations for lasting change. This president recognises the threat posed by climate change and has started to steer his country towards a more environmentally conscious course.

²⁴ In a meeting in Washington on 24 February 2009.

109. President Obama has also understood the importance of restoring America's reputation. He has shown that he is willing to talk to enemies and adversaries, putting the ball in their court – although not everyone is capable of seeing an opportunity where it exists. Iran's reaction, in particular, has so far been disappointing. However, as always, the situation in Tehran is complex and things may take a different turn after the Iranian presidential elections.

110. Some say Mr Obama has too many balls in the air to land them all successfully. But the underlying logic of the new US foreign policy approach to conflict resolution is that it should be applied coherently and wherever the previous course shows signs of deadlock.

111. Your Rapporteur believes this Assembly should welcome the opportunities offered by Mr Obama's election and encourage European governments to take advantage of this unprecedented moment in transatlantic history.

112. A United States that is willing to listen and consult, that actively seeks the involvement of multilateral institutions and does not address every security problem from a military perspective is the kind of partner Europe has been looking for. Europe must be the partner the United States can count on, not only for moral advice and political support, but also in action. It is up to Europeans to meet the dynamism of the new administration with a more concerted, more capable and more resolute response.

DRAFT RECOMMENDATION***on new opportunities for EU-US foreign and security policy cooperation***

The Assembly,

- (i) Welcoming the fact that the election of Barack Obama as the 44th president of the United States has brought a wind of change in international relations and convinced it has opened up new opportunities for transatlantic foreign and security policy cooperation;
- (ii) Aware that it will be vital to make the best use of these opportunities amidst a financial and economic crisis that will absorb policy makers' time and energy;
- (iii) Recalling that governments, parliamentarians and citizens around the globe took an exceptionally strong interest in the US presidential elections, but aware also that the new president, who is accountable only to the US people, will continue to defend US interests;
- (iv) Noting that many of the new president's initial foreign policy decisions directly address longstanding concerns on the part of Europeans;
- (v) Welcoming the fact that the Obama administration has adopted a new tone and style, showing renewed trust in multilateral institutions and being more willing to listen to and consult with Europeans;
- (vi) Urging Europeans to show more unity, take on a greater share of responsibility and act more decisively in order to play their part at a valuable moment, which offers the opportunity to create a new dynamic in transatlantic relations;
- (vii) Aware that the imperative for change in the face of the numerous foreign and security policy challenges that lie ahead is one that does not only apply to the United States;
- (viii) Believing that it is above all Europe that can offer the United States partnership in resolving those challenges;
- (ix) Anticipating that an approach involving listening and consultation that yields tangible results, will enhance US partnership with Europe;
- (x) Welcoming the review by the US of its strategy towards Afghanistan and Pakistan, believing that the situation in the region offers a serious threat to not only regional but also to global peace and security and thus affects the United States and Europe;
- (xi) Recalling that the need for a comprehensive approach to Afghanistan requires a significantly enhanced commitment by Europe to civil action and a sustained international military effort;
- (xii) Welcoming the new administration's wish to re-establish a result-oriented relationship with Russia, in particular with respect to disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation;
- (xiii) Finding it useful that there should be a dialogue with Russia on President Medvedev's proposal for improving the existing security architecture in Europe on the basis of the principle of equal security for all, in the belief that such dialogue offers the EU and US the opportunity for improving their relations with Russia, but aware that Russia's invasion of Georgia, its subsequent recognition of the breakaway regions, its military build-up there and its continued failure to observe international commitments reached after the conflict breach the very principles set out by the president;
- (xiv) Believing it is Moscow's responsibility to review its relations with its neighbours, which are marked by lack of confidence, suspicion and tension and overshadowed by Russia's heavy and not always constructive involvement in the "frozen" conflicts and by the way it conducts its energy policy particularly with respect to Ukraine and Moldova;
- (xv) Welcoming the new president's awareness of the crucial importance of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict both for peace and stability in the wider region and for the United States' reputation in the Muslim world;

(xvi) Concerned by the great difficulty in relaunching the process for establishing lasting peace and stability in the Middle East, but applauding the increasing and positive involvement of the Arab states and institutions;

(xvii) Encouraging the new US Administration in its efforts to find a new and more balanced role in facilitating peace negotiations among all parties concerned and securing the mutually agreed results;

(xviii) Welcoming President Obama's announcement on the closure of the detention facility at Guantanamo Bay and the banning of unlawful interrogation techniques;

(xix) Noting the new administration's appeal for Europe's support in helping offer Guantanamo detainees a new future;

(xx) Noting the necessity of renewing the EU-US dialogue on civil liberties and legal values and to address controversial counter-terrorism measures;

(xxi) Recalling the need to develop common rules between the US and its allies to be applied in crisis-management intervention and law-enforcement operations combining elements of warfare and policing,

RECOMMENDS THAT THE COUNCIL INVITE THE WEU NATIONS AS MEMBERS OF THE EUROPEAN UNION TO

1. Develop a common European political response to the overtures of the president of the United States, one based on more unity, a willingness to take on a greater share of responsibility and the resolve to act more decisively;

2. Invite the United States to recognise the value of such a coherent coordinated and common response, particularly in the field of foreign, security and defence policy, and confirm it has a genuine interest in direct EU-US relations by being willing to strike a new balance between bilateral ties with individual European allies and relations with the EU as a regional entity;

3. Forge a common EU-US strategy for joint action within existing and emergent forums for global governance such as, for example, the G20;

4. Prepare for an open-ended dialogue, involving all Euro-Atlantic countries willing to participate, on ways and means to improve the existing European security architecture and new measures for building mutual confidence and transparency while preserving the transatlantic link;

5. Significantly increase Europe's commitment to civil action in Afghanistan and also maintain an increased military presence there after the presidential elections for as long as necessary;

6. Put relations between the European Union and Pakistan on a new footing, with the objectives of strengthening commercial ties, reforming the country's civil and security institutions and improving its capability for fighting terrorism and securing its nuclear installations;

7. Review Europe's strategy in the Middle East so that it can be fully supportive of the ongoing effort to establish a truce between Gaza and Israel as part of a step by step process leading towards a lasting peace in which all relevant actors are involved;

8. Endeavour to improve the living conditions of the population in Gaza, develop the economic and commercial infrastructure of the West Bank and address demographic developments;

9. Launch a dialogue with the United States on civil liberties and legal values with a view to developing new standards for the treatment of men and women captured in the course of crisis-management operations, including operations to counter terrorism and piracy;

10. Speed up the process of formulating a common and positive European response to the United States' request for Europe to take in former detainees from Guantanamo Bay;

11. Explore further opportunities for EU-US foreign policy cooperation, including for making progress towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals, the improvement of the African Union's crisis-management capabilities and the strengthening of good governance, social and economic development and regional coherence in the western Balkans.

AMENDMENTS

1-4²⁵

tabled by Lord Anderson of Swansea (United Kingdom, Socialist Group)

1. After recital (*xvi*) of the preamble to the draft recommendation insert the following new recital:
“Concerned by the lack of progress made in the reconciliation talks between Fatah and Hamas brokered by Egypt, aiming at the establishment of a Palestinian unity government, which is indispensable to a successful reconstruction of Gaza as well as for peace negotiations with Israel;”.
2. After recital (*xvii*) of the preamble to the draft recommendation insert the following new recital:
“Welcoming the decision by the US Government to participate directly in the international talks about Iran’s nuclear activities in the E 3 plus 3 framework and a greater readiness to enter into dialogue with Iran but disappointed by Iran’s hesitant reaction and lukewarm attitude towards these initiatives and concerned by the further development of Iran’s ballistic missile capability;”.
3. After paragraph 8 of the draft recommendation proper insert a new paragraph as follows:
“Actively pursue their contacts with the Iranian government in order to promote the E3 plus 3 proposals on cooperation in the civil nuclear field but also leave no doubt about the capacity to impose intensified sanctions if necessary;”.
4. After paragraph 8 of the draft recommendation proper insert a new paragraph as follows:
“Show a readiness to seek a more comprehensive relationship with Iran on the basis of mutual respect, shared interests and Iran’s strategic importance in the region;”.

Signed: Anderson of Swansea

²⁵ See 1st sitting, 2 June 2009 (Amendments adopted).

MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE

Chairman

Mr Theodoros PANGALOS (GR) (Soc)

Vice-Chairmen

Mr Michael HANCOCK, MP (UK) (Lib)

Mr André SCHNEIDER (FR) (Fed)

Titular Members

Mr Pedro AGRAMUNT FONT DE MORA (ES) (Fed)

Lord ANDERSON of SWANSEA (UK) (Soc)

Mr José Luís ARNAUT (PT) (Fed)

Mr John AUSTIN, MP (UK) (Soc)

Mrs Anna BENAKI (GR) (Fed)

Mr Cristian BOUREANU (RO) (Fed)

Mr Mihaita CALIMENTE (RO) (Lib)

Mr Mevlüt ÇAVUSOĞLU (TR) (Fed)

Mr Erol Aslan CEBECI (TR) (Fed)

Mr Hendrik DAEMS (BE) (Lib)

Mrs Herta DÄUBLER-GMELIN, MdB (DE) (Soc)

Mr Odd Einar DORUM (NO) (Lib)

Mr Daniel DUCARME (BE) (Lib)

Mrs Josette DURRIEU (FR) (Soc)

Mr Andras György EDLER (RO) (Fed)

Dr Matyas EÖRSI (HU) (Lib)

Mr Piero FASSINO (IT) (Soc)

Mr Dario FRANCESCHINI (IT) (Lib)

Mr Zdenko FRANIC (HR)

Mr Charles GOERENS (LU) (Lib)

Mr Gerd HÖFER, MdB (DE) (Soc)

Mr Joachim HÖRSTER, MdB (DE) (Fed)

Mr Zmago JELINČIČ PLEMENITI (SI)

Mr David KAFKA (CZ) (Fed)

Mr Norbert KAPPELLER (AT) (Fed)

Mr Jan KASAL (CZ) (Fed)

Mr Leon KIERES (PL) (Fed)

Mr Haluk KOC (TR) (Soc)

Mr Tarmo KOUTS (EE) (Fed)

Mrs Elzbieta KRUK (PL) (Fed)

Mr Pavol KUBOVIC (SK) (Fed)

Mr Jaakko LAAKSO (FI) (Soc)

Mr Hallgeir LANGELAND (NO) (Soc)

Mr Markku LAUKKANEN (FI) (Lib)

Mr Eduard LINTNER, MdB (DE) (Fed)

Mr Juan Fernando LOPEZ AGUILAR (ES) (Soc)

Mr Gennaro MALGIERI (IT) (Fed)

Mr Jenno MANNINGER (HU) (Fed)

Mr Kestutis MASIULIS (LT)

Mr Atanas MERDJANOV (BG) (Soc)

Mr Jan NADVORNIK (CZ) (Fed)

Mr Ionas NICOLAOU (CY) (Fed)

Mr Aleksandar NIKOLOSKI (MK) (Fed)

Mr Rory O'HANLON (IE) (Lib)

Mr Remzi OSMAN (BG) (Lib)

Mr Aristotelis PAVLIDIS (GR) (Fed)

The Rt. Hon. John PRESCOTT, MP (UK) (Soc)

Mr Gabino PUCHE RODRÍGUEZ (ES) (Fed)

Mr Frédéric REISS (FR) (Fed)

Mr François ROCHEBLOINE (FR) (Fed)

Mr Ricardo RODRIGUES (PT) (Soc)

Mrs Malgorzata SADURSKA (PL) (Fed)

Mr Giacomo SANTINI (IT) (Fed)

Mr Janis STRAZDINS (LV)

Mr Giacomo STUCCHI (IT) (Fed)

Mr Zoltán SZABÓ (HU) (Soc)

Mr Tugrul TURKES (TR) (Fed)

Mr Luc VAN DEN BRANDE (BE) (Fed)

Mr René VAN DER LINDEN (NL) (Fed)

Mr José VERA JARDIM (PT) (Soc)

Mr David WILSHIRE, MP (UK) (Fed)

Mr Jordi XUCLA I COSTA (ES) (Lib)

Mrs Hanna ZDANOWSKA (PL) (Fed)

Alternate Members

Mr Adam ABRAMOWICZ (PL) (Fed)

Mr Ruhi AÇIKGÖZ (TR) (Fed)

Mr Miroslav ANTL (CZ)

Mr Roberto ANTONIONE (IT) (Fed)

Mr Ivo ATANASOV (BG) (Soc)

Ms Virginija BALTRAITIENE (LT)

Mrs Meritxell BATET LAMAÑA (ES) (Soc)

Mrs Maria de BELÉM ROSEIRA (PT) (Soc)

Mrs Deborah BERGAMINI (IT) (Fed)

Mr Jozef BURIAN (SK)

Mr Lorenzo CESA (IT) (Fed)

Mr Evgeni CHACHEV (BG) (Fed)

Mr Constantin CHIRILA (RO) (Fed)

Mr James CLAPPISON, MP (UK) (Fed)

Mr Detlef DZEMBRITZKI, MdB (DE) (Soc)

Mr Metin ERGUN (TR) (Fed)

Ms Anke EYMER, MdB (DE) (Fed)

Mrs Blanca FERNÁNDEZ-CAPEL (ES) (Fed)

Mrs Sonia FERTUZINHOS (PT) (Soc)

Mr Kenneth G. FORSLUND (SE) (Soc)

Mr Jean-Claude FRECON (FR)

Mr Marcel GLESENER (LU) (Fed)

Mr Peter GÖTZ, MdB (DE) (Fed)

Mrs Arlette GROSSKOST (FR) (Fed)

Mrs Corien W.A. JONKER (NL) (Fed)

Mr Reijo KALLIO (FI)

Mr Emmanouil KEFALOYIANNIS (GR)

Mr Paul KEHOE (IE) (Fed)

Mrs Birgen KELES (TR) (Soc)

Baroness KNIGHT OF COLLINGTREE (UK) (Fed)

Mr Franz-Eduard KÜHNEL (AT) (Fed)

Mr Jean-François LE GRAND (FR) (Fed)

Mrs Izabela LESZCZYNA (PL) (Fed)

Mr François LONCLE (FR) (Soc)

Mr Dan Ilie MOREGA (RO)

Mr João Bosco MOTA AMARAL (PT) (Fed)

Mr Philippe NACHBAR (FR) (Fed)

Mrs Tuija NURMI (FI) (Fed)

Mr Maciej ORZECZOWSKI (PL) (Fed)
Mr Johannes PFLÜG, MdB (DE) (Soc)
Mr Gonzalo ROBLES OROZCO (ES) (Fed)
Mrs Albertina SOLIANI (IT) (Lib)
Mr Stanislaw SZWED (PL) (Fed)
Lord TOMLINSON (UK) (Soc)
Mr Karim VAN OVERMEIRE (BE) (n-a)
Ms Tanja VRBAT (HR)
Mr Paul WILLE (BE) (Lib)
Mr Marco ZACCHERA (IT) (Fed)

Mr Arpad PAL (RO)
Mrs Liljana POPOVSKA (MK)
Mr Ingo SCHMITT, MdB (DE) (Fed)
Mr Dimitris STAMATIS (GR)
Mr Bruno TOBBACK (BE) (Soc)
Mrs Özlem TURKONE (TR) (Fed)
Dr Rudolf VIS, MP (UK) (Soc)
Mr Konstantinos VRETTOS (GR) (Soc)
Mrs Betty WILLIAMS, MP (UK) (Soc)

Secretary

Mr Michael HILGER (DE)

Assistant Secretary

Mr Kostas PANAGIOTOPOULOS (GR)

Assistant

Miss Isabel de TARAZONA (ES)

