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""The state of current US-German relations""
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Ladies and Gentlemen,

Thank you for inviting me to talk about the current state of Transatlantic Relations after the German and the US elections. Since the parallel election campaigns in both countries, bilateral relations between them seem to have got on to rocky ground. In both campaigns, the issue of Iraq played an important role, but in different ways. As a result, some harsh words and accusations were traded across the Atlantic. At the same time representatives of the media were tossing stereotypes about rather than arguments: American cowboys or Rambo figures on the one hand, and naive and timid Europeans or EU-nuchs on the other. I do not need to point out how much I think that these verbal tradeoffs were most unfortunate and, even more, how much they misrepresent the reality of German- and European-American friendship. The display of anti-American prejudice in Europe or anti-European prejudice in America is as unhelpful as the stereotypes are inaccurate.

I.

For over fifty years, the transatlantic partnership has been one of the basic tenets of German foreign policy alongside the Franco-German tandem and the process of European unification in the EU. For all of us, this special relationship was, is and will continue to be based on values, interests, and ultimately visions of what the world should look like. Germany's reaction to 11 September illustrates our closeness to the US. It was the German people who after 11 September demonstrated second to none their horror, grief and sympathy with the American people. The shared feelings made possible the incredible success of the German American Solidarity Fund, which our Embassy in Washington established. No other nation donated more than the German.

In the political arena, Chancellor Schröder pledged unstinting solidarity with the US in the global fight against terrorism. With his decision to commit troops to Operation Enduring Freedom and the military campaign in Afghanistan last year, he even placed his political existence on the line – and it worked. Just last week, the German Bundestag renewed Germany's commitment to Enduring Freedom.

A recent study by the German Marshall Fund and the Chicago Council on Foreign Relations confirms once more that when it comes to values and principles, the Germans and Americans, even to some extent French do not have such different ideas as media reports would have us believe. For instance, numerous surveys have demonstrated that American citizens have a much more multilateral view than is generally believed. The number of Americans favouring military intervention abroad increases disproportionately if this policy is supported by America's partners. The majority of American citizens even show strong support for strengthening the UN.

Bearing in mind this solid bedrock, the obvious question is how did the debate on Iraq evolve into the current discord. During the process of German unification the Bush 41 administration had a farsighted vision about Germany's future role in international politics. They understood that Germany, integrated into the EU and into NATO, will continue to share and support in principle US global positions, though differences in opinion would occur in individual cases. This optimistic analysis still stands to be corrected, Iraq is such an individual case.

I would like to make a couple observations on this note of discord.

Firstly, we should not forget that Germany, France and the US agree on the fundamental aspects, even in the debate on Iraq. We agree that Saddam Hussein is a brutal and aggressive dictator who has flouted UN Security Council resolutions with possibly the worst of intentions. We agree that the weapons inspectors should fulfil their task and that Iraq should be relieved of its weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems. However, Germany, France and the US have disagreed in the past about the right methods to achieve these common goals. Germany welcomed the US decision to go to the UN in search of a multilateral solution. We applaud the new UN Security Council Resolution 1441 to which France has contributed so much.

It has opened a way forward for a political solution. We are also aware that if Saddam fails to live up to his obligations and a political solution subsequently fails, the US is working on post-Saddam concepts for the region which would address a number of concerns Germany has raised and about which it feels strongly. The NATO heads of state and government have pledged their full support for the implementation of the Resolution 1441. Even though Germany remains sceptical about military action, Chancellor Schröder has underlined that Germany will live up to its obligations laid down in NATO related agreements.

Last but not least, we recognise that it is Saddam who is posing a threat, it is up to him to adhere to the UN resolutions and bring peace to his country.

Secondly: The discord on Iraq has been mainly between our current governments. The people on both sides of the Atlantic, in the US as well as in France and Germany, ask the same questions and voice similar concerns. As the American population seems to be relatively supportive about military actions against Iraq, even the population of its most vociferous ally on this issue, the British is deeply sceptical. At the same time, a minority in Germany would support military action against Iraq if the UN expressly sanctions such action and other options do not ensure that Iraq stays free of atomic weapons.

Thirdly, Germans remain torn about war in general, and about Iraq in particular. Given their traumatic memories of World War II, Germans are very adverse to the thought of German troops going to war. In the past forty years, the Federal Republic of Germany has had great success with its multilateral foreign policy (e.g. Euro-Atlantic integration, CSCE) and it will continue to strive to solve problems primarily along these lines. The situation is even more complicated for the citizens in East Germany. As a result of their own post-war history, they tend more towards pacifism, wish to avoid any additional uncertainties after the overwhelming changes of 1990 and harbour suspicions about global power politics.

The aforementioned study by the two American think-tanks clearly underlines that the current mood in Germany is not a matter of anti-Americanism but about a German attitude towards military power and the use of this military power. On the one hand, compared to the French and the British, less Germans have problems with US

superpower status and Germans have just as many warm feelings towards the US as the British. Following the general election, the only political party in the former Bundestag which is truly anti-American, the post-communist PDS, fell short of the mark and is for the first time in its existence shut out of the parliament.

On the other hand, in comparison to the French and the British:

- Germans are more convinced that the EU should play a regional role and leave global tasks to the US,
- they are less inclined to think that the EU should become a superpower like the US,
- they are less willing to increase the defence budget and expand economic aid,
- they are less convinced that it will be the best for the future of their own country if it takes an active role in world affairs and
- they are much less willing to act militarily even if Iraq does possess weapons of mass destruction.

Fourthly, the figures in the study also underline that Germany has already come a long way since 1990. Against heavy opposition, respective German governments have gradually stepped up German participation in international military operations. In the last decade Germany has seen its troops in action in Somalia, Bosnia, East Timor, Kosovo, the Caucasus, Macedonia and now Afghanistan. Currently, some 9,500 German troops – second only to the US - are involved in military missions abroad, be it in the Balkans (KFOR 4600, MAZ 220, SFOR 1500) or as part of Enduring Freedom. Some 100 German elite soldiers are fighting in Afghanistan, German tanks remain stationed in Kuwait, and the German navy patrols the Horn of Africa. In the context of ISAF, some 1,300 German troops are stationed in Kabul and the Netherlands and Germany will furthermore jointly assume lead-nation responsibility in Kabul next year. For the time being, Germany has more or less exhausted its capabilities for military engagement beyond homeland defence.

Ten years ago, such an engagement would not only have been impossible but also inconceivable. Thanks to sound political leadership, Germans are slowly getting adjusted to a more robust policy based on the use of force as a means of last resort. Political leadership has changed gradually political patterns and even soul with regard

to the use of force in foreign policy. However, election campaigns are not usually the time when politicians try to change deep-rooted public opinion. On top of this general observation the red-green coalition government has not been convinced before and after the elections that a German participation in a military campaign against Iraq is yet justifiable. Optimistic as I am, I predict that through the next decade Germany's public opinion will more and more come to terms with a more robust security policy and thereby more and more adopt attitudes similar to public opinion for instance in France and the UK.

Fifthly, Iraq is not the only issue feeding the usual transatlantic frictions, which again primarily persist between our respective government. The Kyoto Treaty, the International Criminal Court and other cases are on our agenda. As a common denominator, Europe and the US in most of these cases agree in principle on the goals but differ about the methods. The increase in the points of friction between the transatlantic partners is also a result of their relations becoming ever closer. Growing economic and social integration and lively cultural exchange help nurture the almost domestic-policy character of these relations. Today people on both sides of the Atlantic are discussing issues that were traditionally the preserve of domestic policy: environmental and consumer protection, domestic security, the death penalty to name but a few. The domestic policy debates impact each other, particularly during election campaigns. I would wish that both sides would bear this in mind and that the protagonists would deal with their differences in a less heated, more sober manner.

Sixthly: Eurobashing, too is back in fashion in the US. Pick up any US-newspaper on any given day, and you can find somebody speaking out against Europe. What has prompted these anti-European rumblings?

First, US is constantly ambivalent in its approach to Europe, on the one hand supporting European integration, on the other fearing the birth of a new rival, calling for burden sharing, but refraining from sharing leadership.

Second, as America wields unprecedented power, it is susceptible to disregarding others.

Third: Still, Americans have difficulties in keeping step with the changing realities in Europe, be it regarding the EU or be it regarding the individual countries like yours or

my own. Take for instance the American response to the EURO. First inattention, then assertions that it cannot succeed, then a debate about its potential to rival the Dollar. Most of American reactions to European progress follow this pattern.

Turning around the famous quote attributed to Henry Kissinger about the lack of a single phone number in Europe - which definitely has its merits - we Europeans too have to grapple with the confusion of competing power centres in the Administration itself and Washington on the whole.

II.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The events of 11 September have made it clear that we are living in a time of change which has begun long before the attacks on Washington and New York. Until then, especially European attitudes, mindsets, and the transatlantic routine were still trapped in cold war thinking and thus in an Eurocentric viewpoint, even if the Berlin Wall had fallen more than ten years earlier. Since 1990, for the first time in centuries, Germans have been living with the reassurance that they are surrounded only by friends and partners for the first time in centuries. Today, there are more than a million fewer soldiers stationed in Germany now than in 1989; almost all nuclear weapons and most foreign troops – happily not all - have been withdrawn. The legitimate joy over new opportunities after the end of the cold war in Germany and in other European countries thus blurred the perception of new risks — until 11 September shook up the world.

I would like to highlight only a couple of the fundamental changes which have occurred in the last decade:

- The number and character of international players has grown and changed considerably. 11 September proved that the world has entered a new period in which non-state actors, even individuals are capable of seriously threatening national and international security.
- We are confronted by a host of "new" issues, some of which are not totally new but have been suppressed or been of secondary importance during the Cold

War, for example terrorism, illicit trade in drugs, international crime, money laundering (which accounts for an estimated 2 to 5% of global income), disease; some of which have changed their nature as transnational terrorism; others which we have inherited from the Cold War, for instance global proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems, large quantities of highly toxic plutonium, huge stockpiles of chemical weapons.

- The attacks of 11 September demonstrated the vulnerability of an open society. What has been the favourite pass-time for some experts, to analyse hypothetical attacks against public utilities or our communication systems, amongst other via cyberspace, has now moved to the centre of our attention. If we used to think almost exclusively of nuclear weapons as weapons of mass destruction, events since 11 September – I need only refer to the anthrax attacks in the US – have made it clear that in future we also have to fear biological and chemical attacks on our security. As the potential to wreck havoc has increased, we have to concentrate more than ever on preventing emerging risks from materialising.
- The geographical distance to a crisis becomes less and less important. In consequence, we can no longer think of security in entirely military terms or simply in terms of defending borders.

The impression of a new uncertainty in the sense of a reality that is growing more and more complex has been made possible and enhanced by the rapid pace of technological development and economic liberalisation in the last decades. New technologies are changing our societies in fundamental ways, offering tremendous new challenges and opportunities. The Internet and the New Economy are enabling, individuals, enterprises, organisations, associations and communities to operate, learn and communicate in previously impossible ways and moreover ever more quickly and cheaply. Three decades ago, phone lines could accommodate about 80 calls at one time between Europe and North America; today they can handle one million. Today, every day, 500,000 airline passengers, 1.4 billion e-mail messages, and 1.5 trillion dollars cross the Atlantic Ocean.

III.

The US have for quite a while made efforts to adapt their security policy to the emerging threats. Missile defense is an outcome of these efforts. With the myth of American invulnerability shattered on 11 September, the debate on how to tackle these new threats and how to devise international security has picked up speed. On the one hand, the US has a desire to establish a deterrent capacity against asymmetric attacks. Additionally it is pondering the possibility of preemptive strikes in case prevention, deterrence and containment fail. On the other hand, the US, too acknowledges that military power alone doesn't resolve conflicts. To quote President Bush from his speech he delivered in the Reichstag last May: "To make the world secure, we have to create a better world". In consequence policies furthering development, democracy, human rights are perceived to be equally necessary. The National Security Strategy published on 20 September reflects this comprehensive approach. Unfortunately this other side of the coin has received too little emphasis in the rhetoric of the Administration and in consequence even less attention in European public opinion.

In consequence, the US Administration is well aware that the US needs partners in pursuing the comprehensive approach. It may be able to wage and win wars alone, however it needs regional and international partners, at the very latest, when it comes to securing the ensuing peace.

IV.

Europe is called upon to challenge these new ideas or security doctrines and the assessment on which they are based on. For instance, it is not in the interest even to the US to develop principles that grant every nation the right of pre-emption on the basis of it's own definition. Other questions are floating around. When would regime change be legitimate? Could regime change be in accordance with current international law? There are a host of new items on the transatlantic agenda and Europeans have to address them.

The security strategy the US Administration is outlining at the moment deserves broad and critical reflection, but not cheap criticism. It is not the US view on security strategy which has changed first, the security environment has. Instead of grumbling,

Europeans have to develop viable alternatives and position these on the market place of ideas, especially in Washington.

European criticism of America and America's problems with Europe have always derived in no small measure from Europe's weakness. Europeans need to improve their capacity for joint action. At some point this requires a discussion on a common vision of European security, or perhaps even on Europe's role in the world. At least it concerns the development of adequate diplomatic, police, intelligence, and military capabilities.

Now, the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) has been created to increase Europe's capacities for common action. Last Thursday, our Foreign Ministers Villepin and Fischer went a step further, introducing a number of propositions in the EU Convent to develop ESDP to an European Security and Defence Union (ESDU). On the eve of the 40th anniversary of the Elysee Treaty, Franco-German co-operation has once again demonstrated its value and potential in furthering European integration. The propositions will lead the way to a more effective policy-making and uniform external EU action. They touch on a number of sensitive issues like the establishment of an European armaments agency or the political commitments to strengthen military capabilities. Though, the time has come to take them up.

Last but not least: only if Europe manages to make decisive progress in the field of CFSP or ESDU and the shaping of EU foreign and security policy as a whole will Europe satisfy its citizens' expectations.

However, it is in Germany's opinion, that increasing Europe's scope for action is not intended to build up Europe as a counterweight to the US, but rather to make this Europe a more effective partner for the US. With additional capabilities, Europe would become more relevant in the eyes of Washington.

V.

Despite the current disagreements, we all, Europeans, Canadians and Americans alike have to keep the big picture in mind. As I have outlined right at the beginning, North America and Europe are linked by shared values, interests, and, ultimately,

visions of what the 21st century world should look like: a world based on freedom, human rights, and the rule of law. Neither side can successfully work for peace and democracy in the world when it stands alone, even less so in opposition. Only together will we be able to defend our convictions. The transatlantic partnership is one of the key prerequisites for global stability and security.

In the future, just as in the past, managing the new agenda of common values and of differences will keep putting the Euro-Atlantic relationship to the test. However, debates on individual issues cannot shake the bedrock of transatlantic friendship and solidarity.

Thank you very much for your attention!