

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

US – Europe relations : Toolbox for a New Era

**Bernard Kouchner, Minister of Foreign and European Affairs
Brookings Institution
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Dear Strobe, Dear Mr. Benjamin, Ladies and Gentlemen, Excellencies... My deepest thanks to the President of the Brookings Institution for his kind words. I am thrilled to address this particular audience at this particular time.

The French are always very impressed by the influence of American think tanks. Conspiracy theories will be very difficult to dispel now that the Brookings Foreign Policy Studies Program has been able to get Senator Obama elected President of the United States! More seriously, the prominent role of so many Brookings scholars on Barack Obama's team is a tribute to the quality of Brookings... and, of course, to the fine judgment of the President-elect.

The last French presidency of the European Union took place during the second half of 2000. Like this one, it saw the election of a new President of the United States. But that is the only resemblance. What a difference 8 years can make: that world was pre-9/11, pre-Iraq, pre-Afghanistan, pre-food crisis, pre-financial crisis... pre-Guantanamo.

There is probably a lecture every month in this auditorium announcing "a new era" for something or other. But this time, my friends, it is for real. Why this expression in the title for my speech?

Because we stand today at a true turning point. Indeed, the President elected last week is the *first*, and perhaps the *last* one who will have a chance to shape, with the rest of the world and particularly with Europe, the global agenda, together, in a spirit of shared responsibility.

Why the *first*? Since John F. Kennedy's proposal for a "two-pillar Alliance" in 1962, the conditions were never right.

During the Cold war, divided Europe was more of a prize between the superpowers than an actor. After the Wall came down, during the 1990's, America did not necessarily see the value of sharing its "unipolar moment", and this nascent political Europe was not able to demonstrate the necessary unity and resolve to act as one.

Remember the Balkans. Jim Baker said that "the U.S. does not have a dog in this fight" - and was wrong; Jacques Poos said that "the hour of Europe is here" - and was

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wrong. So the wars in the Balkans consumed all of our energies; in the end we worked together, and were successful, but could not focus on the global agenda.

Then came 9/11. Some, including myself, thought that out of this tragedy, and the outpouring of solidarity, could come a new relationship, a new way of dealing with the challenges before us. In Europe, we were all Americans, as I wrote in *Le Monde*. But this illusion quickly faded away – and you know the rest of the story. Iraq drove a wedge between us, and between Europeans.

Why the *last*? Because I do not think that in 4 or 8 years' time, we will, you and us, be able to shape the international agenda by ourselves. I am not interested in lamenting the decline of the West: I am just stating a simple fact, but a key fact. The balance of power is shifting rapidly: from West to East, from North to South, from the national to the local and the global. Globalization means we are no longer alone. The others count. From Astana to Beirut. From Ouagadougou to Pristina.

Today, the issue is about making room for new-comers in existing institutions: moving from a G8 to a G14; reforming the Security Council... But tomorrow, we may find ourselves on the side of the *demandeurs*, and the issue may be about defending these institutions, not just adapting them.

We must act. We must act now. We must act together. We must be bold and imaginative. And this means that we must seize the unique opportunity that we have, together. In a spirit not only of shared burdens, but also of shared risks, shared action and shared responsibility. I would even say, of co-responsibility.

We will be able to build on a very strong foundation. The transatlantic partnership is firmly rooted in our shared history. It helps defend our common security, sustain our common values, and uphold our common interests.

And what we have to bring to this partnership, as Europeans, is a new sense of initiative and unity. Judge for yourselves. Just in the last twelve months:

- we sent a military force to help secure refugees and internally displaced persons on the Chadian side of the border, to address the regional dimension of the Darfur tragedy; unfortunately, on the Sudanese side, the so-called hybrid force (United Nations/African Union) was unable to stop the massacres. In fact the force was not fully deployed.

- In the Georgian crisis, we took the initiative, when America's response was late. Even if everything was far from perfect, we obtained a cease-fire, monitored today by a European force which ensures that commitments are lived up to, and the peace talks have started in Geneva;

- Again, in the financial crisis, Europe has spoken with a single voice and has offered solutions that will inspire, to start off, I hope, the G20 on its meeting November 15th;

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- Just this Monday, the EU launched its first autonomous naval operation, to fight piracy in the Gulf of Aden.

In times of crisis, facing the most difficult issues, Europe has united to bring the best of itself to the world. And our ambition now, looking to the future; is to tighten the bonds of the transatlantic partnership. And to tighten them not against the rest of the world but with it.

This stronger Europe is an asset for the United States.

And a new President of the United States is also an asset for Europe. In particular a new President who so clearly symbolizes change, who has committed to re-engage America on the international scene.

And who embodies hope for so many. Because he represents more justice for the poor. Social justice within our own countries and justice with the third world. A wave of hope across Europe of course, but also from Africa to Asia to Latin America. This *tidal wave* of hope – just look at the reactions in the streets of every city the world over - is a global vote for Barack Obama and what he represents. But it is also a clear message that we have missed too many opportunities. We cannot afford to miss this one.

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Ladies and Gentlemen, just a little over a week ago, I hosted my 26 colleagues, along with Javier Solana, High Representative, and Benita Ferrero-Waldner, Commissioner for external relations, in Marseilles. Together, we agreed, on the basis of a French proposal, on a toolbox containing what the European Union could offer the next administration, what it expected from it and, most importantly, what it hoped we could achieve together. Let me share with you the core of our thinking.

We jointly identified four key sets of challenges. They are not the *only* ones that we face today, but they are the ones that will determine the shape of tomorrow's world.

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First challenge: reinventing an effective multilateralism.

I have already mentioned this. We should start with the reform of the Bretton Woods system and the establishment of an effective and fair system of global economic governance. The obvious need to enhance co-operation in the economic and financial field must act as a catalyst for the other necessary reforms: in the United Nations and the

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G8, we need to give the new-comers the place they deserve. But as I said this is not just about formats. It is also about rules – and mindset.

The institutions that we created in the second half of the last century are just not adapted to the complexity of the next century. And the powers that are emerging *either* are not part of these institutions *or*, when they are, prove less and less willing to constrain their sovereignty.

So we must find new ways of bringing nations together, including developing countries. We must harness the new-comers' energy, and convince them, through dialogue, that it is in *their* interest to accept the basic deal that underpins multilateralism both as a tool and as a system. The deal that countries like the United States accepted in 1945: to trade off individual power for collective efficiency, through enhanced legitimacy.

It will not be easy. But the stakes are too high not to put all of our energies into reforming the international system. On its failure or success will largely hinge *our* failure or success in addressing the wider challenges we face. Because there can be no efficient and legitimate collective action without efficient and legitimate institutions. And this is true whether we are talking global hunger, global health, climate change, non-proliferation, human rights, energy policy... or crisis management, let alone the responsibility to protect.

And it will take a long time for the international experts, and several G20 (or other formats). This is a task for the new administration. And for Europe and Asia. We were impressed, at the Europe-Asia Summit in Beijing, by the will of our Asian colleagues.

I am not naïve. Multilateralism is not a panacea. Just because an action is legal and legitimate does not mean that it will be successful. Witness the United Nations Mission in the Congo. I was in refugee camps in Goma ten days ago with my British colleague, David Miliband. I have smelled death often, but never gotten used to its stench. We saw the all-too familiar face of fear, of despair. We saw families soaked from the rain, but with no water to drink.. And the situation has only gotten worse since. It is fine to invoke the responsibility to protect, but then what? We, EU, must work hand in hand with Washington, the African Union and the UN to stop the massacres.

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We can no longer retreat behind the certainties of our way of life. It is imperative we break down these barriers in our minds, barriers between today and tomorrow, barriers between us and them, between here and there.

More effective institutions must help us shape the agenda, and not just react to it. But that does not mean we do not have to deal with the pressing issues of the day. I see three, in particular: relations with Russia, the Middle East writ large, and Afghanistan/Pakistan.

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Russia is a challenge to us. It may be seen today as part of the problem, but we must not forget that there is no solution to most of today's problems without it, let alone *against* it.

In the past year, Russia has oscillated between cooperation and provocation. It has offered to negotiate a treaty redesigning the security architecture of the continent, while violating internationally recognized borders for the first time since the Cold war. It has asked for a stronger partnership with the EU and offered contributions to the EU military mission, in Chad, while threatening to target European capitals with nuclear missiles, and now to base missiles in Kaliningrad. It has voted all 5 Security Council resolutions against Tehran, while selling sophisticated weaponry to Iran...I could continue. Some may attribute such behavior *simply* to cynicism, or hypocrisy. But, even if this was true – and nothing is *simple* in Russia – it would be beside the point.

The key question, for the European Union and for the United States (but we, Europeans, we are neighbors), is how we can create the conditions for a true partnership with Moscow. In the short term, this means getting Russia to understand that playing power politics will backfire. In the medium and long term, such a policy requires a stronger investment on our part:

- Through and in the economy. We must encourage Russia to sign up to predictable and stable rules. The aim is Russia's accession to the WTO, the OECD and the IEA and the realisation of a single area of economic cooperation between the European Union and Russia. It is our goal.

- In the field of European security. Faced with current uncertainties as regards the CFE Treaty, Europeans and Americans must get Russia to respect its commitments towards the Treaty. But it is also in their interests to closely examine and respond to the Medvedev proposals on Security.

When Russia flexes its muscles and speaks to us with Cold war accents, the smartest thing to do is to come up with a new form of dialogue. Reaffirming our red lines, in particular with regard to human rights, the rule of law or the territorial integrity of sovereign States. But trying to show Russia, at each step, the advantage of foregoing a sterile confrontation. This was our approach when we decided at the meeting of the 27

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foreign ministers that I chaired on Monday, in advance of Friday's EU - Russia Summit, that negotiations on the Framework Agreement with Russia could go forward.

In the Georgian crisis, our ability to respond rapidly, and to remain united, both among Europeans and within the Alliance, was a key asset. We must do whatever it takes to maintain it.

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One of the areas where Russia has continued to cooperate is **the Middle East**. I have just returned from Sharm El Sheikh, where we had a meeting of the Quartet. My message to this administration is simple: continue working the peace process with the same determination as if you had four years ahead of you. My message to the next administration is just as simple: start working the issue from day one as if you only had a few weeks left. Every day wasted reinforces the extremists, not those who work toward peace. Europe's message is straightforward: *dare peace!*

We know the broad parameters of a final settlement – and we have known them at least since Taba. Today, we must join forces to fulfill three urgent tasks:

- Contribute to a viable Palestinian state with strong institutions that respect the rule of law.
- Push for a genuine freeze on all settlement activity, as set out in the roadmap. Settlements are one of the biggest roadblocks on the path to peace.
- Make more room for the Arab Peace Initiative, while we encourage interpalestinian reconciliation.

I know that the peace process is central in the minds of Arab public opinions. But it is not single the key to solving the other problems in the region.

We must seize the moment and respond to positive developments in **Syria and Lebanon**. A converging European and American attitude could help Syria realize that it has more to gain from breaking with its past (above all in terms of its support for terrorism) and getting closer to us than from continuing its current relationship with Iran.

Iraq. I do not need to make the case in Washington that it is in our common interest to do what it takes to ensure Iraq's success. I had good talks with Gen. Petraeus on my last trip to Baghdad. I will continue, however, making the case in Europe, and in France. Iraq is starting to stabilize and rebuild itself. It must take on its full role in the region and affirm its independence and sovereignty. In the future, Iraq can embody something unique in a conflict-ridden Middle East: a democratic country where Shiites, Sunnis and Christians, Arabs and Kurds, can co-exist. Even if the road is still long...

The dark cloud looming over the whole region and beyond is **Iran**. Not just Iran's support for terrorism; not just its missile program, which is rapidly progressing; not just the vile statements of its leadership regarding Israel. Iran's current progress toward a

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nuclear weapon capability is the most serious threat to the international non-proliferation system and to the security of the region. Europeans cannot make effective multilateralism their motto and accept Iran's uranium enrichment, in continued defiance of the IAEA and the United Nations Security Council.

That is why we took the initiative to act on this crisis in 2003. Behind the UK, Germany and France, Europeans took a united stand. And we stuck to it, despite opposition from many quarters. We were railed by the U.S. administration for being weak-kneed, for "talking to the enemy". We remained firm, and were able to rally the support of the United States in 2005 and then of Russia and China in 2006 on a dual-track approach. And last summer, the U.S. participated in E3+3 talks with Iran in Geneva.

Today, I hear some voices, even in this town, saying that we have failed, that we must prepare for an Iranian bomb – or for a military intervention. I could not disagree more.

Our current approach has not yet succeeded (Iran is continuing to enrich) but it has certainly not failed. Iran's increasingly disastrous economic situation, will only become worse because of falling oil prices. The impact of sanctions will continue to grow. And the time will come when the leadership is faced with a clear choice: open negotiations, with all the promise they contain, including assistance on a civilian nuclear program – to which Iran is entitled once it has come clean – with all the promise they entail, or stand ready to pay a price too steep to sustain.

Until substantive dialogue is engaged with Tehran and so long as it refuses to suspend sensitive nuclear activities, we should increase the pressure on the Iranian government. But this is not contradictory with openness to dialogue, and obstinacy in trying to launch such a dialogue. I personally have spared no effort toward this goal. Unfortunately Iran has not yet replied with anything other than delaying tactics.

Today, the United States holds a key card in its hand: the prospect of dialogue opening a perspective for normalization. Depending on how and when this card is played, Washington can either help unlock the current stalemate, or doom the dual-track process, by convincing once and for all the Iranian regime that its perceived position of strength allows it to just continue playing for time. Neither Europe nor France has ever said that there must be no dialogue with Iran. But this dialogue must be meaningful.

The next administration will wish to take a new look at the whole issue. That is normal, given its importance. I know that the Europeans are often seen as "*donneurs de leçons*", or giving lessons. But the stakes are just too high to ignore what we have to say. If we want to ensure that a possible US-Iran dialogue moves us closer to our shared goal, and not further away from it, we must continue to work together. I was very encouraged by the discussion that Barack Obama, Nicolas Sarkozy and I had in Paris last summer.

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Let me turn to the last major challenge we are facing: **Afghanistan/Pakistan.**

European determination to sustain and increase its effort, in the civil and military fields, for as long as necessary to succeed, is crucial. I reaffirm it here today.

I know that there are several reviews underway in Washington. However, success is less a matter of redefining our objectives than of ensuring full implementation of those already set out at the Bucharest NATO Summit last April and the Paris Afghanistan Support Conference last June. In both instances, we underlined that the solution cannot be only military. In American, you say “you can’t kill or capture your way out”. That is why I said “succeed”, not “win”. We are not at war with the Afghan people, we are at their sides.

Our overriding objective remains the exercise by the legitimate Afghan authorities of their full responsibilities, beginning with security. That is the desired end-state. And I said end-*state* not end-*date*. We will remain present as long as necessary. But our action must be guided by the objective of full “afghanization”, which will allow us to leave the moment that Afghan authorities are fully in charge, and in a position to remain so.

This means consolidating our military presence and strengthening our assistance to the Afghan National Army; assisting central and local government by reinforcing their credibility in the field of governance, for example through support in the field of police. The European police mission got off to a very bad start. Under the French presidency of the EU, we have decided to double its numbers, to broaden its mandate, and to change its leadership. “Business as usual” is not an option.

To achieve all of these goals, and to ensure their coherence, our support to Kai Eide, the UN Secretary General’s Special Representative, must be unflagging.

President Karzai has been busy these last few weeks, both domestically and internationally. We support the political initiatives that he has undertaken, whether internationally or locally, to move towards an Afghanistan that is reconciled with itself. Peeling off Afghan Taliban who are pursuing an essentially national agenda from Al-Qaeda jihadists for whom Afghanistan is just another front in the global war against “the infidels” is politically difficult and morally tricky.

But, ultimately, I believe reconciliation with those who give up violence and accept the Afghan constitution will be part of the solution. It will be up to the Afghan authorities to navigate this difficult process.

Neighboring countries also have a key role to play for the security and stability of Afghanistan. A truly comprehensive approach must be a regional approach. This is why I

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have offered to host a meeting on regional cooperation, with my Afghan counterpart and Kei Eide, in Paris next month.

The country that counts most in the neighborhood is of course **Pakistan**. The internal situation is worrisome, especially on the economic front – and we must support it economically. But there is some good news regarding relations with Afghanistan, since the election of the President Zardari, and the arrival of new heads of the military and intelligence. There seems to finally be a realization that there can be no stability in Pakistan while Afghanistan is at war, and Afghanistan will remain at war as long as the Afghan insurgents continue to receive outside support. Deeds must now match words.

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Ladies and Gentlemen,

Commentators point out that the next American President will inherit two wars, the worst economic crisis in a century, and a continued threat from global terrorism. That is true, but it is only part of the story.

First because he will not inherit them by himself: whether Europeans like it or not, we will share with you failure and success alike. That is why we must pool our energies, our resources, our imagination, to act together in our shared interests.

Second because in this ordeal he will also inherit a unique resource: hope, optimism, goodwill, from the world over, and in particular from Europe. I trust he will know how to turn these expectations from a burden into a treasure.

And the “toolbox” whose substance I have summarized for you, on behalf of 500 million citizens from 27 European nations, is an illustration of this extended hand.

Europeans and Americans have moved to a more mature stage in their relationship. One where you know what phone number to call when you need to speak to Europe (despite Henry Kissinger’s remark) - and once in force the Lisbon Treaty will make it even easier. One where we can jointly define the agenda, and not just share the bill. One where we can handle disagreements. One where we can build unity out of diversity, within Europe, across the Atlantic and in reaching out toward the rest of the world. One where our partnership is a partnership of choice, and not of necessity.

Thank you very much.