

**67th Interparliamentary Meeting  
Transatlantic Legislators' Dialogue  
European Parliament - United States House of Representatives  
New York, 4-7 December 2009**

**Joint Statement**

We, the Members of the European Parliament and the United States House of Representatives, held our 67th Interparliamentary meeting (Transatlantic Legislators' Dialogue) in New York City, from 4-7 December 2009.

Building on the joint statement issued following our last meeting in Prague on 18-20 April 2009, we reasserted the importance of regular dialogue on the pressing political, social and economic challenges that affect citizens on both sides of the Atlantic. We agreed to report back to our parent bodies on the content and outcome of our discussions in New York, with an emphasis on the areas where joint efforts are likely to produce positive outcomes.

The Transatlantic Legislators' Dialogue appreciated the Lisbon treaty's entry into force, with its enhancement of the powers and competences of the European Parliament in areas such as International Trade and Justice and Home Affairs, as well as the appointment of an EU President and High Representative. We expressed our desire to continue building on the political momentum created by the election of new administrations in Europe and the United States in order to further strengthen the transatlantic relationship.

We called for continued collaboration between legislators in the U.S. Congress and the European Parliament on legislation and issues of common concern, formalising lines of communication and information-sharing between EU and U.S. legislators to promote compatible legislation reflecting transatlantic cooperation through the work of the committees, in full respect for each side's sovereignty.

We discussed a wide array of international political questions such as the situations in the Middle East, Afghanistan/Pakistan, the Balkans, Russia and Iran's nuclear programme.

We also examined a wide array of issues of common interest, including global concerns relating to Energy and Climate Change, Financial Services and International Trade. We examined how the United States and the European Union could best cooperate in matters of Civil Liberties and Justice and Home Affairs.

Our conclusions are as follows:

**International Political Issues:**

a) Peace in the **Middle East** requires a durable ceasefire, an immediate and unconditional end to terrorist attacks on Israel, a functioning and effective government in the Palestinian Territories and the resumption of the obligations under the roadmap, including an end to incitement and a solution for the question of settlements. The goal is a secure Jewish state of Israel and a viable Palestinian state, living side by side.

b) We held a strong debate exchanging a wide array of views between and within the delegations on the strategy for **Afghanistan/Pakistan** announced by President Obama on 1 December 2009, which provided a new impetus for renewed international commitment to confronting the ongoing challenges of security, terrorism, governance, corruption and socio-economic reconstruction. We

look forward to the international conference on Afghanistan that will be held on 28 January 2010 under the auspices of the UN. The EU and the U.S. should enhance their cooperation and support, foster burden-sharing, work to improve the coordination and effectiveness of Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs), and seek to help build critical infrastructure across Afghanistan. Maintaining the stability and cooperation of Pakistan is equally important as well.

c) On **Iran**, the dialogue noted the recent, troubling moves by the Iranian Government regarding its nuclear programme, affirmed that a nuclear armed Iran is unacceptable and expressed its concern about the human rights situation in the country. We urge the leaders on both sides of the Atlantic to develop a common policy and unite the international community to meet this threat, including strong sanctions, if it continues to fail to comply with its international obligations in the nuclear area.

d) Relations with **Russia** should involve constructive cooperation on challenges and threats, including security matters, disarmament and non-proliferation, along with respect for democratic principles including human rights standards, and adherence to international law. The dialogue expressed concerns about Russia's continued failure to comply with the 2008 ceasefire agreements with Georgia negotiated by French President Sarkozy, as well as the potential for another energy dispute with Ukraine this winter. We also cited the need to enhance mutual trust between the transatlantic partners and Russia. We welcome the ongoing U.S.-Russia negotiations on arms reduction and look forward to Russia's membership in the WTO, once those negotiations are satisfactorily completed, with all its legal obligations.

e) Challenges remain in our efforts to integrate the **Western Balkans** into a united Europe. Cooperation between the United States and the European Union remains the most effective way to encourage political and economic development in Kosovo as well as to facilitate constitutional reform in Bosnia, and ensure respect for the rule of law, including cooperation with the International Criminal Tribunal for Yugoslavia, throughout the region.

### **Energy and climate change**

We agreed that the Copenhagen Conference is one of the biggest challenges for international cooperation. We welcomed the announcement of President Obama's personal involvement in the COP-15 Summit in Copenhagen.

We discussed the common goal to provide the necessary stimulus for sustainable economic growth, promoting green technologies and creating new jobs.

We discussed how the EU and the U.S. could work together to reach an international agreement to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by setting ambitious reduction targets for industrialised countries and identifiable actions by developing countries. We discussed cap-and-trade systems and the need to avoid incompatible emission trading systems to pave the way to a transatlantic, and ultimately a global carbon market. We noted the link between tackling climate change and addressing energy security and economic growth, recognizing that the fight against climate change could also be an opportunity to create new jobs and sustain economic growth.

We welcomed the creation of a new EU-U.S. Energy Council at the last EU-U.S. Summit in order to strengthen the dialogue on strategic energy issues of mutual interest, foster cooperation on energy policies and further improve research collaboration on sustainable and clean energy technologies. We look forward to the Energy Council deliberations feeding the TEC process and we consider this as another area where the TLD can develop further.

## **Financial Crisis**

We examined the consequences of the global economic and financial turmoil. We agreed that the crisis requires a strong and coordinated policy response by the U.S. and the EU. Recovery plans currently being adopted are critical in mitigating the effects of the crisis: approaches chosen should be compatible, strengthen financial supervision to ensure confidence in the system, avoid protectionist measures, and avoid distortions of competition in the transatlantic marketplace.

We discussed the role of international cooperation in financial regulation and supervision, including better crisis prevention and management, and agreed that the EU and U.S. should cooperate on the reform of international financial institutions.

We are pleased that the G-20 leaders have decided to give the emerging countries, within the International Monetary Fund, a position commensurate with their weight in today's global economy so as to ensure support for the developing world and to achieve the Millennium Development Goals.

## **Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs**

We welcomed the "Washington Declaration" on 28 October 2009 on enhancing transatlantic cooperation in the area of Justice, Freedom and Security within a context of respect for human rights and civil liberties. We expressed the hope that it will provide a framework to replace the ad hoc approach of the last decade on data collection and sharing arrangements (PNR, SWIFT, MoUs linked to visa waiver, etc.) with a more strategic approach of law enforcement and judicial cooperation through the Mutual Legal Assistance and Extradition Agreements and through developing an agreement on data protection.

We discussed President Obama's desire to close the **Guantanamo** detention facility within a year, taking note of the offer by several European countries to accept Guantanamo inmates and encouraging the U.S. and the EU to continue seeking joint solutions to combat terrorism.

The dialogue also discussed the EU-U.S. negotiations to extend the **Visa Waiver Programme** to the remaining EU member states. We hope that the U.S. visa waiver programme will be extended to all EU citizens as soon as possible, when the criteria have been met. An exchange of views took place on the recent adoption of the U.S. Travel Promotion Act.

In light of the concerns about the **Safe Port Act** raised by port operators and the trade community, in particular with respect to the cost/benefit ratio of the scanning requirement's possible negative effects on competitiveness and on transatlantic trade flows, we were of the view that the U.S. Administration should re-examine this legislation.

## **International Trade and WTO negotiations**

We agreed that trade is as central to the EU-U.S. relationship as it is to world recovery. We call upon the European Commission and the United States to redouble their efforts to bring the Doha Round of world trade talks to a successful conclusion.

We believe that international trade can make a contribution to the restoration of world economic growth and that work to integrate and harmonise EU and U.S. trade practices will lead to a global improvement in living standards and will help secure quality jobs in both the European Union and in the United States.

We believe that participation by Congress and the European Parliament in the Parliamentary Conference of the WTO and in its Steering Committee would enhance cooperation at a global level. We, therefore, call on the leadership of both bodies to take appropriate steps in order to allow us to collaborate in this context.

### **Development of Transatlantic Economic Council**

We reiterated our commitment to the Transatlantic Economic Council (TEC), stressing its utility as a framework to achieve a barrier-free market and for macro-economic cooperation between both partners. We welcomed the results of the meeting held on 27 October, particularly the extended dialogue between the Administrations with legislators that identified past challenges and future opportunities. We discussed progress made over the past year in promoting transatlantic economic integration, including investment, accounting standards, regulatory issues, the safety of imported products, and the enforcement of intellectual property rights.

As we told our Administrations during the recent TEC meeting, transatlantic economic cooperation must be more accountable and transparent. In order to help achieve this objective, the schedules of TEC meetings, agendas, roadmaps and progress reports should be agreed upon between the core stakeholders as early as possible and then made public. Such measures are crucial to developing a clear and transparent process for setting the agenda of the TEC, extending the TEC to new sectors, and establishing a roadmap. We continued to encourage the EU and U.S. executive branches to facilitate more active participation by members of the U.S. Congress and the European Parliament in the TEC process, in particular via the TLD, especially for a pre-legislative dialogue between the respective committees of Congress and the European Parliament. TLD members should be full partners in the Transatlantic Economic and Energy Councils.

We note that on the European side, responsibility for coordinating the TEC will pass from the European Commission's Directorate-General for Enterprise and Industry to its Directorate-General for Trade. We believe that this can provide a new impetus toward removing barriers to trade and investment and on fostering competitiveness in the transatlantic market.

### **Strengthening the TLD**

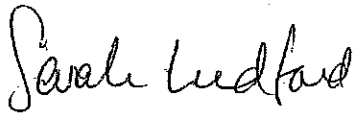
We agreed that a working group should come up as soon as possible with a list of concrete proposals for the further work of the TLD. We noted the recent document written by the Atlantic Council of the United States along with several other policy think tanks, entitled "Shoulder to Shoulder: Forging a Strategic U.S.-EU Partnership." We supported several of the recommendations in the document and will use them as a starting point. For example:

- *U.S. Members of the TLD should be drawn from both House and Senate. U.S. House members should be appointed by the Speaker of the House.*
- *The U.S. Congress should open an office in Brussels. The office would service the TLD and monitor legislation affecting U.S. interests. We noted the European Parliament is opening an office in Washington in January 2010.*
- *The TLD should convene a joint consultative committee on the extraterritorial implications of domestic legislation; and focus regular exchanges on upstream regulatory legislation.*
- *The TLD should hold joint hearings and conduct joint study tours to areas of common concern, for instance to the Middle East.*

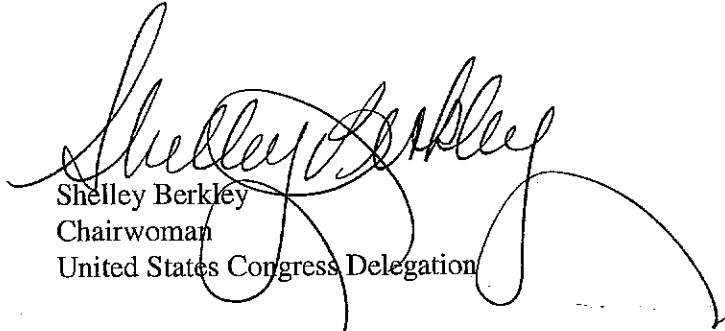
- *The U.S. Congress and the European Parliament should ensure regular contacts between appropriate staff, not simply in foreign affairs-related work but across the board in key areas of mutual engagement.*
- *The TLD should spearhead a new generation of internships in Congressional and European Parliament offices. Each Congressional office should offer to host one intern from the EU; each European Parliament office should offer to host one intern from the United States.*

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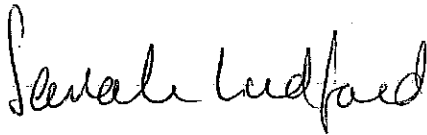
In conclusion, we reaffirmed our commitment to strengthening the transatlantic relationship and working in partnership to solve common challenges. We pledged to continue improving the effectiveness of our dialogue in order to realize the full potential of our invaluable interparliamentary relationship, as well as to ensure the relevance of the TLD's work to the European Parliament and the United States Congress.



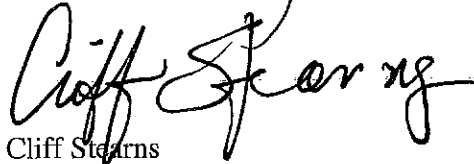
P.P. Elmar Brok, MEP  
Chairman  
European Parliament Delegation



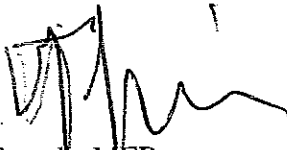
Shelley Berkley  
Chairwoman  
United States Congress Delegation



Sarah Ludford, MEP  
Vice-Chairwoman  
European Parliament Delegation



Cliff Stearns  
Vice-Chairman (Ranking Republican)  
United States Congress Delegation



Niki Tzavela, MEP  
Vice-Chairwoman  
European Parliament Delegation



Jim Costa  
Vice-Chairman  
United States Congress Delegation