



**76th Inter-Parliamentary Meeting
Transatlantic Legislators' Dialogue
Riga, 27 and 28 June 2015**

JOINT STATEMENT

We, the Members of the European Parliament and the United States Congress, held our 76th Inter-Parliamentary Meeting of the Transatlantic Legislators' Dialogue in Riga, on 27 and 28 June 2015. Based on our common values and shared principles, we discussed ways to deepen and strengthen our relationship, and in particular to increase our readiness to jointly address the diverse set of global security, economic, and environmental challenges that our nations currently face.

Following-up on previous discussions, we exchanged views on: creating growth and jobs through closer trade, improving investment and regulatory cooperation, enhancing our collaboration on energy matters, and augmenting our security and defence alliances.

We committed to show leadership to address these challenges and opportunities together as legislators.

Achieving growth and jobs through trade (Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership)

We noted that the European Union and the United States are unique strategic partners, and that the TTIP is the most recent joint effort that holds promise to reinvigorate our transatlantic partnership well beyond the obvious trade dimension. TTIP seeks to establish a framework to pursue a future of shared opportunities that align our interests and our values.

We highlighted that TTIP should be an ambitious, balanced and comprehensive agreement, leading to lasting genuine market openness on a reciprocal basis and trade facilitation, cooperation on regulatory regimes and rules all geared towards achieving growth and jobs, while safeguarding our mutual labour, social, environmental, health, food safety, public services and other standards.



TTIP presents an opportunity to invest in deeper international cooperation and to shape and enhance the current and future regulatory framework in order to ensure that we thrive in an interconnected world based on common values and a belief in rule-based trade.

We discussed an ambitious approach on public procurement, market access for defined services, mutual recognition of professional qualifications, and the mobility for professionals and individuals between our nations.

We further discussed the regulatory cooperation chapter and its provisions to promote a transparent, effective, pro-competitive economic framework through identification and prevention of potential future non-tariff barriers to trade (which may disproportionately affect SMEs and start-ups), and the facilitation of trade and investment. The horizontal and sectoral regulatory cooperation chapter should foster bilateral cooperation in order to avoid unnecessary divergence, particularly as regards new technologies and services, for the benefit of European and US consumer choice.

We also underlined the need for close involvement of the United States Congress and the European Parliament on the monitoring of negotiations and, eventually, on implementation and democratic scrutiny. We will continue to exchange ideas between our legislatures through this Dialogue, taking into account input from civil society and other stakeholders. The Transatlantic Legislators' Dialogue will continue to work on ways to bring about close involvement of its legislators in the supervision and implementation of the agreement.

We uphold the importance of energy issues in the negotiations, as a way to contribute to energy independence, and as a way to counteract the government of Russia's use of energy as a political weapon.

Cooperating for energy security

We discussed the major global challenges to energy security at a time of increased geopolitical tensions and conflict in the regions that are vital for energy supply and transit. We noted the steps that the European Union is taking to address these challenges. The European Security Strategy and the Energy Union provide a solid framework for cooperation among the Member States in strengthening their resilience and overcoming the challenges of energy security, efficiency, and dependence. We agreed that a fully integrated and interconnected market, building on energy efficiency, sustainability, the use of indigenous resources, including



renewables, and smart infrastructure is essential for the internal energy security of the EU. Externally, diversification of suppliers, routes, and sources of energy should be accelerated, including through TTIP negotiations.

We stressed that trade is a key element in ensuring a secure energy supply. The United States holds tremendous potential as a stable and reliable supply source, providing reassurance for allies as well as jobs and growth for its own economy. We discussed the prospect of exporting liquefied natural gas and crude oil from the United States and legislative initiatives relating to these processes.

We rejected the use of energy as a political weapon by the Government of Russia and reaffirmed our support for Ukraine and other vulnerable countries, encouraging them to pursue the necessary reforms of their energy sector. We welcomed the increased determination of the leading industrialized nations at G7 level to coordinate their actions in the field of energy security.

Reinforcing security and defence cooperation

We reaffirm our key strategic partnership and appreciate the intensification of our cooperation on foreign and security policy in recent times. At this juncture of global challenges, direct threats to European security, to freedom in our open societies, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, radicalization and terrorism, as well as constrained budgets, we believe that even more needs to be done to reinforce our security and defence cooperation.

We therefore reaffirmed and underlined the vital importance of NATO as the cornerstone of our transatlantic alliance. We are convinced that the times require closer strategic and operational coordination between the EU and NATO on comprehensive crisis-response as well as reinforcement in capabilities development to avoid duplication and make best use of scarce resources. We strongly encourage our governments to increase their defence budgets, as well as the effectiveness of spending, to ensure a sufficient level of defence investment in order to effectively confront diverse threats and to increase our collective response, cooperation, and readiness in this volatile global environment.

In view of a more equitable sharing of responsibility for transatlantic security, we welcome the political impetus given to the European foreign, security, and defence policies at the December 2013 and June 2015 meetings of the European Council and at the NATO Summit in September 2014. We commend the enhanced cooperation between the United States and the EU Common



Security and Defence Policy in crisis response management, as is the case in Somalia, the Horn of Africa, and the Sahel. Our delegations discussed the emergence of threats such as cyber and hybrid warfare including active measures and propaganda campaigns. We call for the coordination of approaches between the EU and NATO with a view to effectively face and prevent such attacks. We also believe that transatlantic cooperation on intelligence, in full respect of the rule of law and national sovereignty, must continue in order to counter terrorism and violent extremism, including the phenomenon of foreign fighters departing from and returning to Europe and the United States.

We continue to strongly condemn the on-going violation of Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity by the Government of Russia and reiterate our support for the sanctions and diplomatic consequences imposed by the United States and the EU. If the Minsk ceasefire agreements are not implemented, or the violence escalates, we call for existing sanctions on Russia to be strengthened. Russia's aggression is a threat to a Europe whole and free; we uphold every state's sovereign right to pursue partnership with EU and NATO or others.

We recognize that the on-going war in Syria and Iraq and the threat posed by ISIS/Daesh are a grave danger to the entire region and believe that the military fight against ISIS/Daesh needs to be continued and further supported. We also urge the EU and the United States to develop a common strategy in conjunction with key actors in the region in order to halt financial, military and other support for extremists.

We agree that it is of critical importance to the security of both the United States and the EU that Iran completely and verifiably abandons its efforts to acquire a nuclear weapons capability. We consider it vital that all parties continue to engage constructively in the negotiating process following the Geneva interim agreement so that a final, comprehensive, and satisfactory settlement can be concluded.

Conclusion

Our discussions have convinced us of the need to further strengthen and deepen our relations, particularly with regard to our economic and societal ties, as well as to enhancing our collective security. We will continue the policy-oriented approach in the Transatlantic Legislators' Dialogue, to attentively follow the TTIP negotiations, to work towards increased security and to cooperate more closely on energy and environmental matters in a spirit committed to enriching



our valuable partnership. We look forward to achieving progress on these and other topics by our next meeting in Washington in November 2015.

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