

Transatlantic Legislators' Dialogue
63rd Meeting of Delegations
From the United States and the European Parliament
Las Vegas, 5-8 October 2007

Joint Statement

We, Members of the European Parliament and the United States House of Representatives, held our 63rd interparliamentary meeting (Transatlantic Legislators' Dialogue) in Las Vegas, Nevada on 5-8 October 2007.

Building on the joint statement issued following our last meeting in Charleston on 1-3 December 2006, we stressed the importance of regular dialogue on a range of political, social and economic issues that affect all of our citizens. We agreed to report back to our parent bodies on the content and outcome of our discussions, particularly in the areas where joint efforts are likely to result in positive outcomes.

We agreed that legislators on both sides of the Atlantic should increase dialogue and consultation amongst themselves in order to prevent possible conflicts of legislation. Direct and timely contacts between specialist committees from Congress and the European Parliament -- such as those that have occurred in recent months within the TLD framework -- have been valuable means of enhancing cooperation; the exchange of information should be continued and enhanced. The European delegation welcomed the invitation from the US House Subcommittee on Horticulture and Organic Agriculture to discuss agricultural issues and organic farming in greater detail.

We examined a wide array of foreign policy issues, agreeing that joint action by the United States and the European Union is the most effective way to approach problems that affect both sides of the Atlantic. We had a stimulating discussion led by Ambassador Dennis Ross on the myriad of challenges in the Middle East, particularly regarding the nuclear threat posed by Iran and efforts to further the peace process in the region. We discussed the future status of Kosovo, including the importance of maintaining peace and stability in the Balkans. We expressed concerns about worrying developments in Russia's domestic and foreign policies and agreed to discuss these issues in greater detail at our next session.

We assessed our economic and political relations with China, emphasizing the importance of toy and product safety as well as the need for transparency in China's financial and business practices. In particular, we called on China to play a greater role in promoting a peaceful resolution to the ongoing conflict and particularly to the current violent crackdown in Burma. We also called upon China to assist in solving the horrific humanitarian crisis in Darfur.

During the dialogue we explored the current status of anti-Semitism, anti-discrimination, race hate and civil liberties in the United States and Europe. Abe Foxman of the Anti-Defamation League provided an overview of the current situation. We agreed to continue our open discussion about these issues at future meetings as well as to address them within the United States and EU Member States.

We discussed climate change following an informative presentation by Michael Totten of Conservation International. We agreed to continue exchanging strategies for combating the environmental challenges confronting our planet.

We also:

1. had a briefing at Nellis Air Force Base and visited the facility designated for training American and coalition military personnel; we also saw a presentation about the Thunderbird pilots and viewed the F-22 fighter plane.
2. heard a briefing by the United States Department of Energy regarding its plans to establish a safe repository for nuclear waste at Yucca Mountain as well as concerns summarized by the Nevada Agency for Nuclear Projects.

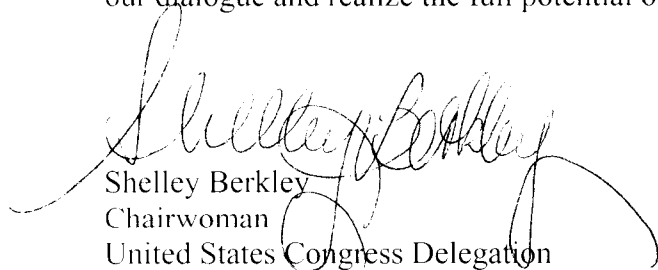
We welcomed the establishment of a Transatlantic Economic Council (TEC) at the April 2007 EU-US Summit. We agreed that the TEC initiative should be characterized by transparency and consultation of stakeholders: legislators, consumers, and producers should be informed in a comprehensive and timely manner by the EU and US executive bodies on the advancement of activities as well as the definition of priorities for future work. The establishment of the 'advisory group' to the TEC, which includes the leaders of the three dialogues constituted under the New Transatlantic Agenda, is an important step in this direction. Furthermore, we believe that awareness of the transatlantic impact of proposed legislation and regulation should be developed in the relevant legislative and regulatory bodies.

Our discussions focused on a range of regulatory issues that will affect legislators in the United States and the European Union. With regard to priorities for future activities within the TEC, the TLD welcomed progress on items contained in the list of 'lighthouse projects' and related initiatives included in the 2007 Summit declaration. In particular, we developed a series of recommendations that we agreed should be taken into account during the TEC's first meeting on 9 November 2007:

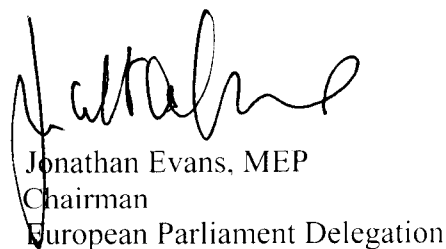
- ✓ with regard to *accounting standards*, efforts should be made to reach agreement on the equivalence of US GAAP and IFRS (as implemented by the EU) in order to avoid requirements for reconciliation. Important progress registered in recent discussions between regulators needs to be finalized as soon as possible;

- ✓ with regard to *trade and cargo security*, achieving reciprocity and mutual recognition of security standards is of the utmost importance. We recognized concerns about the recently-passed US legislation requiring 100 per cent cargo scanning;
- ✓ with regard to *intellectual property*, a commitment is needed to harmonize the different patent regimes on the basis of the 'first-to-file' system;
- ✓ with regard to *investment*, obstacles to bilateral investment should be addressed via an operative dialogue;
- ✓ with regard to *biofuels*, developing compatible specifications between the EU and US is a clear priority, particularly in view of achieving wider international harmonization at International Standards Organization (ISO) level; and
- ✓ with regard to *the safety of toys and other products*, recognizing that it represents a major concern to consumers on both sides of the Atlantic, improvements should be discussed between regulators and complementary standards should be developed.

Both sides renewed their commitment to make the TLD's work more relevant to the United States House of Representatives and to the European Parliament. In so doing, we resolved to provide the TLD with the required resources to improve the effectiveness of our dialogue and realize the full potential of our interparliamentary relationship.



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