

**71st Interparliamentary Meeting
Transatlantic Legislators Dialogue
European Parliament—United States House of Representatives
Jacksonville, FL, 2-4 December 2011**

JOINT STATEMENT

We, the Members of the European Parliament and the United States House of Representatives, held our 71st Interparliamentary meeting (Transatlantic Legislators Dialogue) in Jacksonville, Florida, from 2-4 December 2011. In the light of developments and priorities in our countries, we discussed in particular the economic and financial crisis as well as transport security on the basis of the preparatory work of specialised working groups. We reasserted the importance of regular and open discussion and agreed to report back to our parent bodies.

Transatlantic political and economic challenges

We evaluated the outcome of the November 28, 2011 EU-US summit in Washington DC and the work undertaken by the Transatlantic Economic Council (TEC). Members of both sides welcomed the decision to establish a High-Level Working Group on Jobs and Growth, aimed at identifying policies and measures to increase U.S.-EU trade and investment to support job creation, economic growth and international competitiveness. We encourage the High-Level Working Group to deliver its conclusions by June 2012, prior to the 18-19 June summit of the G20 in Mexico. Removing transatlantic trade barriers is in urgent need, swift results are feasible, and of paramount importance given the economic and financial crisis.

We discussed the need to counter protectionism in our bilateral relations, such as through upstream communication between Legislators. We noted the significance for transatlantic trade of open procurement markets that offer equal access to all suppliers, in particular to small and medium-sized businesses.

We reiterated the importance of a balanced, free and fair global trade agreement in the Doha round. We positively noted the G20 Action Plan for Growth and Jobs agreed in Cannes in November 2011 and progress in implementing the G20 commitments. We reviewed the efforts by the U.S. government to work with China towards settling the global dispute on foreign exchange rates, and encourage the E.U. to support this.

Sovereign debt crisis and global financial governance

We note that the on-going crisis could become the worst global recession for many decades and has revealed underlying problems in the economic policies of many countries in the EU as well as in the US, which left them with an alarming rate of public debt. The long-term sustainability of public finances is essential to stability and growth. We recognised the efforts which highly indebted EU Member States and the US are making to bring about budgetary reform. Sustainable budgetary policy needs to be linked with structural reforms to ensure competitiveness and economic stability. We recognised the global impact of the crisis and the need for coordinated action. We agreed that these challenges require a strong and coordinated transatlantic policy response, in order to promote financial stability and economic growth and create jobs.

We discussed the Eurozone crisis and noted that the euro itself is a stable currency, proven by its value and moderate inflation rate. We concluded that Europe faces a crisis in public debt in some euro area countries, and that Europe is committed to overcome the crisis by taking the necessary steps regarding the economic and monetary union. We think it is therefore important that all commitments will be fulfilled and rules applied.

We discussed the role of international cooperation and institutions in financial regulation and supervision, including response to crisis. We reaffirm the paramount importance of adequate systems of supervision and regulation which leaves no financial market, product and participant without accountability. EU and US supervisors and regulators need to closely monitor the development of any systemic risks. Financial markets must serve the economy by effectively providing credit and liquidity for businesses and citizens under market conditions. We supported cooperation between the EU and the US, aimed at establishing a transatlantic level playing field regarding capital requirements for banks, regulation of banking business models and banking resolution policies. We called for protecting tax payers interests in the resolution of banking illiquidity and failures. We highlighted the need for greater emphasis on values and ethics in corporate governance.

Transport Security

We discussed proposals to better balance security measures while at the same time protecting personal freedom and integrity. Once appropriate screening technologies are available, a revision regarding the ban on passengers carrying liquids, aerosols and gels in aircraft in quantities bigger than 100 ml, should be reconsidered. In the same spirit, we believe that protection of passengers' health, privacy, personal data and fundamental rights should be a fundamental consideration in any security screening process. As regards bodyscanners, technology using ionising radiation (x-rays) should be phased out in favour of alternative technologies like millimetre waves. Further, in order to protect personal dignity and privacy, security scanners should display 'stick figures' rather than body images, if possible by modifying existing scanners with alternative software. We take the view that people undergoing checks should be given a choice as to whether to use security scanners or an alternative screening method

with the same level of effectiveness, without prejudice to the risk evaluation of the passenger.

The new EU-US Passenger Name Record (PNR) agreement should reflect compliance with the principles of proportionality and legal certainty and incorporate an adequate set of safeguards as regards the scope (offences covered), legal redress, data security, length of storage, onward transfers and the use of the *push* method. In order to avoid having to define standards on a case by case basis, we welcome the negotiations on a EU-US general data protection agreement. This agreement should ensure a high level of protection of fundamental rights and have the aim of establishing a clearly defined legal framework and mechanisms to ensure effective application of these standards in practice, while also allowing the exchange of information, which enhances the security of the EU and the US.

We discussed the US requirement for 100% screening of cargo and evaluated its practicality and necessity, in view of the foreseen implementation date of 1 July 2012. We supported approaches based on comprehensive and effective multi-layered risk management processes. We welcomed the agreement at the TEC meeting for mutual recognition for secure traders programs for cargo security, known in the EU as Authorised Economic Operator (AEO), and in the US as Customs – Trade Partnership Against Terrorism (C-TPAT). In that context we look forward to the presentation of the expected US 'Global supply chain security strategy'. We encouraged the competent authorities of the US and the EU to strengthen their cooperation and coordination, in order to better integrate both customs security and other border security controls. We also discussed the problem of piracy, in particular off the coast of Somalia, and considered this an international priority on which the EU and the US should closely cooperate.

EU-US Foreign policy and security cooperation

We see the developments in the Southern Mediterranean and the Middle East as a historic opportunity to expand democratisation of this geopolitically crucial region. The EU and the US need to closely coordinate their policies to support its transition into peaceful, democratic, pluralistic and prosperous states, with a focus on building democratic institutions, human rights and rule of law and freedom of expression, economic opportunities through trade and investment, and ensuring the empowerment of women. We underline the vital importance of resuming the Middle East Peace Process and the EU and the US should support a return to direct negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians.

We support the close cooperation between the EU and the US in their approach towards Syria and Iran. We are deeply concerned by the continued threat posed by the Iranian nuclear ambitions and its support for international terrorism. The EU and the US need to continue increasing pressure on Iran to comply with its international nuclear obligations, stepping up the implementation of sanctions within both bilateral and multilateral frameworks. We condemn the escalating use of force in Syria and

support the efforts by the US and the EU Member States in the UN Security Council for multilateral sanctions against the Syrian regime.

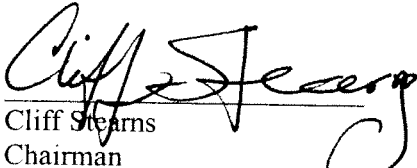
We recognize the urgent need to step up our efforts in securing the cyberspace in which our citizens and businesses and governments operate. In particular we underline the importance of protecting critical infrastructure, the need to update penalties for cybercrime, to exchange best practices for engagement with the private sector and raise cybersecurity awareness.

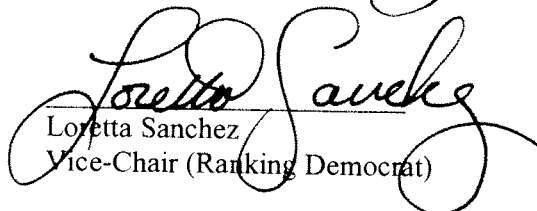
We shared concerns about the economic and security consequences of the growing dependence of the EU and the US on imports of raw materials and rare earths. We are of the view that both transatlantic partners should strengthen their cooperation on resource efficiency, innovation in extraction and on recycling technologies for raw materials, with the goal of developing a joint strategy for global trade in raw materials.

Conclusion

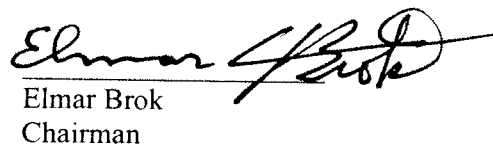
In sum, our members found common ground and room for progress on the issues discussed. Our discussions resulted in support for further developing TLD working groups on both sides of the Atlantic, to provide for continuation of the work started in Jacksonville, which will be reported at the 72nd meeting of the TLD in 2012. The working groups will focus on financial markets and stability and transport security, and look to resolve potential conflicts resulting from legislation that exercises authority beyond the normal boundaries of the US and the EU. This transatlantic working method could be applied to other policy areas, for instance agriculture and food safety in the future. We look forward to the 72nd meeting of the TLD as a venue where these important issues to the transatlantic relationship, as well as the progress of the High level Working Group on Jobs and Growth under the TEC will be addressed.

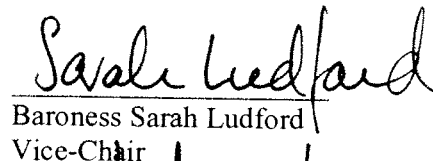
US Delegation:

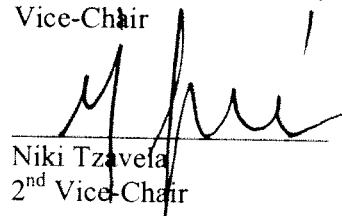

Cliff Stearns
Chairman


Loretta Sanchez
Vice-Chair (Ranking Democrat)

EU Delegation:


Elmar Brok
Chairman


Baroness Sarah Ludford
Vice-Chair


Niki Tzavela
2nd Vice-Chair

Annexes

Conclusions of working groups of the European Parliament can be found at [\(weblink\)](#).