

Procedure file

Basic information	
COS - Procedure on a strategy paper (historic)	1995/2249(COS) Procedure completed
Europe and the United States US: the way forward	
Subject 6.40.11 Relations with industrialised countries	
Geographical area United States	

Key players			
European Parliament	Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
	AFET Foreign Affairs, Security and Defense Policy		22/11/1995
		EDN SOUCHET Dominique F.C.	
Council of the European Union	Committee for opinion	Rapporteur for opinion	Appointed
	ECON Economic and Monetary Affairs, Industrial Policy		28/11/1995
	RELA External Economic Relations	The committee decided not to give an opinion.	
Council of the European Union	Council configuration	Meeting	Date
	General Affairs	2057	08/12/1997
	General Affairs	1883	21/11/1995
	General Affairs	1871	02/10/1995

Key events			
26/09/1995	Non-legislative basic document published	COM(1995)0411	Summary
02/10/1995	Debate in Council	1871	
09/10/1995	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
21/11/1995	Debate in Council	1883	
08/12/1997	Debate in Council	2057	
08/12/1997	Vote in committee		Summary
08/12/1997	Committee report tabled for plenary	A4-0410/1997	
13/01/1998	Debate in Parliament		

14/01/1998	Decision by Parliament	T4-0023/1998	Summary
14/01/1998	End of procedure in Parliament		
02/02/1998	Final act published in Official Journal		

Technical information

Procedure reference	1995/2249(COS)
Procedure type	COS - Procedure on a strategy paper (historic)
Procedure subtype	Commission strategy paper
Legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 142
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	AFET/4/07121

Documentation gateway

Non-legislative basic document	COM(1995)0411	26/09/1995	EC	Summary
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading	A4-0410/1997 OJ C 014 19.01.1998, p. 0005	08/12/1997	EP	
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading	T4-0023/1998 OJ C 034 02.02.1998, p. 0059-0100	14/01/1998	EP	Summary

Europe and the United States US: the way forward

OBJECTIVE: to analyze the main aspects of US-EU relations and define a new framework for these relations in the light of international developments (end of the Cold War) and internal changes within the Community (entry into force of the Maastricht Treaty). **CONTENT:** the Commission communication reaffirms the central role played by US-EU relations, for both parties and for the world as a whole, in political, economic and security terms. However, the Commission feels that these relations can no longer be based on structures which go back to the Cold War and do not take adequate account of developments within the Community. For these reasons it proposes a series of measures with a view to establishing a new joint action programme to be adopted at the Transatlantic Summit in December 1995: 1) security: the two sides should focus their dialogue on the place of the Union within NATO, the non-proliferation of nuclear arms, preventing the illicit sale of nuclear materials, controlling the international arms trade, export controls on dual-use goods, early identification of conflicts, preventive diplomacy and the monitoring of human rights and minority problems; 2) foreign policy: joint projects should be drawn up in the fields of human rights, nuclear safety, assistance to the Palestinians etc. and cooperation should be strengthened in the field of humanitarian and development assistance; 3) economy and trade: - at multilateral level, an ambitious programme of liberalization and deregulation of trade should be established. The parties must pursue the task of building up the WTO by developing a new programme of work for it and moving towards the inclusion of Russia and China. At the same time, the EU must oppose any unilateral action by the USA and ensure that new regional agreements are compatible with WTO rules; - at bilateral level, discussions must focus on the possibility of creating a transatlantic economic area, including a free trade zone. Cooperation in the fields of competition policy and services must continue. Concerning macroeconomic issues, there must be ministerial-level dialogue between the US Treasury and the ECOFIN Council and the Commission (particularly on the effects of EMU in international terms); 4) other areas of cooperation: the main questions relate to: - environment: strengthening regulatory cooperation, new joint programmes, extending cooperation on the subject of chemicals and biotechnology and introducing comparable emission standards for vehicles; - information society and telecommunications: strengthening cooperation in the satellite sector and in the fields of standards and research; - social policy and employment: more systematic exchange of information; - justice and home affairs: increased cooperation in the fight against organized crime and drugs, as well as on immigration and the right of asylum; - science and technology: global cooperation agreement in this sector; - education and training: implementation of the agreement on cooperation in higher education and vocational training; - transport; - information and culture; - urban decay; 5) at institutional level, the Commission advocates consolidating links between the European Parliament, national parliaments and the US Congress with a view to developing the dialogue.?

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The report by Dominique SOUCHET (I-EN, F) was adopted at a meeting of the Committee. The report says that the strengthening of relations between Europe and the United States remains crucial to the stability of the international community but that this must be preceded by a "rebalancing" of relations in order to create a genuine partnership. With this in mind, the rapporteur advocates the development of joint initiatives in the international sphere, provided that they respect the balance between the partners and that, in particular, the European Union and the Member States are not involved in them solely as paymasters. The report also calls for greater Euro-American cooperation over the management of crisis situations and the deployment of peacekeeping forces in sensitive areas. In addition, says the committee, there is a need for dialogue and cooperation to be strengthened and deepened in a number of priority areas which constitute new challenges to

international stability, in particular the fight against terrorism and large-scale organized crime, trafficking in drugs and fissile material, trade in human beings and the sexual exploitation of children, global environmental issues and illegal immigration. On the subject of trade relations, the report calls on the Commission to defend European interests clearly and vigilantly, taking care above all, when negotiating with the United States, to ensure strict reciprocity of concessions as well as "symmetry" in the granting of advantages. Noting the recent increase in trade disputes between Europe and the United States, it condemns the desire to give extraterritorial application to certain domestic US legislation, such as the Helms-Burton and Amato-Kennedy Acts, and emphasises the need for Europeans, following the example of the Americans, to have a legal mechanism which permits the use of credible threats of reprisals - the aim being to reach compromises which genuinely take account of European concerns and interests. However, the report acknowledges the importance of preventing Euro-American crises and urges the competent bodies within the European Parliament, the national parliaments of the Member States and the American Congress to work towards this end by making the most of the various channels of communication and opportunities for meeting available to them. Lastly, the committee welcomes the conclusion of the agreements concerning the New Transatlantic Agenda and the Joint Action Plan. It hopes that these two institutional frameworks will allow the development of wider cooperation and deeper dialogue between Europeans and Americans and contribute to the renewal of the transatlantic link, which must continue to make an important contribution to peace and international stability. ?

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In adopting the report by Mr Dominique SOUCHET (I-EDN, F) on Europe's relations with the USA, the European Parliament welcomed the New Transatlantic Agenda and the Joint Action Plan. It considered that strengthening relations between Europe and the United States would enhance the stability of the international community. However, it took the view that this must be achieved by striking a new balance in relations between the parties in order to attain genuine partnership. It expressed itself in favour of the adoption of joint international political initiatives on condition that balance between the partners was respected and that the Union and its Member States were not associated with them solely in the capacity of paymasters. It wished the current dialogue to be enhanced and deepened, particularly with regard to terrorism and organized crime, trafficking in human beings and drugs, trafficking in fissile material, illegal immigration and the environment. In this respect it condemned the USA's retrograde position on leghold traps. It called for greater Euro-American cooperation within international organizations, in managing crises and deploying peace-keeping forces in sensitive regions. It called on the Union, the Member States and the USA to continue and coordinate their development aid efforts to enable the funds available to be put to the best possible use. At the same time, Parliament called on the Commission to defend European interests in the sphere of external trade relations firmly and vigilantly, taking care in particular, when negotiating with the United States, to ensure the strict reciprocity of concessions, symmetry in the granting of advantages, and linkage (globalization) of negotiations, especially with regard to WTO panels. On this subject, Parliament again called on the Commission to ensure openness in its handling of negotiations with the USA, keeping Parliament informed of the guidelines it intended to follow (e.g. the multilateral agreement on investment). It again condemned the extraterritorial application of the Helms-Burton and D'Amato-Kennedy Acts to transatlantic trade relations, hoped that dialogue would make it possible to attain more flexible positions on the part of the Americans, and called on the Union to adopt equivalent instruments to enable it to defend its interests better. In passing, it recalled its full endorsement of the action taken by the Union in connection with the WTO with a view to settling the dispute and expressed the view that if the arrangement of April 1997 between the EU and the USA did not result in a valid solution, the Union should again resort to the WTO trade panel procedure. Parliament condemned the recent initiatives by certain US federal states with extraterritorial repercussions in the form of barriers to trade (e.g. the Buy American Act). It called on national parliaments and Congress to do everything possible to help prevent Euro-American crises, notably by explaining to American Congressmen that the same political objectives (e.g. the fight against terrorism) could be pursued by different means. It called for cooperation between the Union and the USA in external affairs to be stepped up. Similarly, the EU and the USA should coordinate their arms export policies. Parliament called on the Union to draw the USA's attention to consumer protection and health standards, and called for imports into Europe of bovine meat containing hormones to be banned. It called on the Union to increase its representation in certain states of the USA (e.g. California). On another point, Parliament called on the USA to abolish the death penalty and called for the ban on landmines (Ottawa Declaration) to be placed on the agenda for the transatlantic dialogue.?