



HR/VP SPEECHES

Speech by High Representative/Vice-President Federica Mogherini at the Harvard Kennedy School Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs

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Check against delivery!

Thank you so much.

It's really a pleasure to be here.

Thank you Nick [Nicholas Burns, Faculty Chair of the Project on Europe and the Transatlantic Relationship at the Harvard Kennedy School] for the invitation, for the warm hospitality, and for this opportunity we have to discuss our common, not only past, but also present and future, across the Atlantic.

But even more, thank you for all you have done for our partnership and for setting up, with the Belfer Center, the Project on Europe and the Transatlantic Relationship. I really believe these are the times where we need to nourish the skeleton of our partnership and cooperation.

There are good times, there are times that a little bit more difficult, but friendship and partnership across the Atlantic are based on strong evidence, but also strong personal ties. Our peoples are the same. If you look at the surnames of families in the United States, you easily realise how Europe and United States are connected, deeply in our roots and our identity. I think this needs sometimes to be looked at and not to be taken for granted. A little bit of investment in what we call the 'people-to-people' work, that

starts from places like this, is vital especially in these times. I am really grateful for the work you are doing and for this possibility we have to spend this time together.

I am glad that you feel the need to invest in the friendship between Europe and America through research and dialogue because this is not only natural but also because the world needs Europe and America to work together as we have done over seventy years.

I believe that the transatlantic partnership will continue to be central in shaping world politics and any kind of international order. I say "any" because you can tell me what kind of order or disorder you are going through, or what kind of order we might aspire to realistically in these times.

During the weekend, [we were all saddened by the news that President \[of the United States of America, George H. W.\] Bush Senior passed away](#) and I could not help thinking, first of all, of you that worked so closely with him, but also about the hopes and the aspirations of the early 1990's, after the fall of the Berlin Wall.

President [George H. W.] Bush used to talk about a new world order, based on shared rules and on cooperation among free nations. I was at high school at the time, and I remember perfectly well the sense of hope and of opening that one could breathe in Europe over these years.

He imagined - and I quote - "a world where the rule of law supplants the role of the jungle; a world in which nations recognise their shared responsibility for freedom and justice; a world where the strong respect the rights of the weak."

My generation believed in this vision, believed in the possibility for this vision to turn into reality, to become true, especially in Europe - a continent divided by the Cold War. We hoped that after the Cold War a more cooperative world order would indeed be possible and indeed be built.

Today, I am afraid we have to admit that such a new world order has never truly materialised and worse, there is a real risk today that the rule of the jungle replaces the rule of law. The same international treaties - so many in which we are together - that ended the Cold War are today put into question.

Instead of building a new order, we have to today invest a huge part of our energy in preventing the current rules from being dismantled piece by piece.

I know that there has been a lively debate here at Harvard, on how to preserve the international liberal order, and I would be very interested in not only hearing and answering your questions, but also in getting a little bit of flavour of your debate here, because this can bring inspiration also on the other side of the Atlantic.

But I have always believed that guarding the status quo is simply not an option in this moment in history. The aspiration to a more cooperative world order has never fully

turned into reality - that is clear today. But I believe that it should still drive our action, and it has definitely driven our work on European foreign policy in these last four years.

If we want to preserve the multilateral system, I believe we must invest in changing it. What does it deliver today? What could it better deliver in the future? How we can make the difference, making it more efficient, more representative of a multipolar reality? Maybe after 70 years, this is time for raising some questions. Is it really representing the reality of power or of the population of the world today?

It is, I guess an American saying, though originally it was Greek, that every crisis is an opportunity. Maybe this is also an opportunity to ask ourselves some questions about how we can reform the international order so that it better serves the democratic aspirations of the people around the world.

If we want to preserve the multilateral system we must invest in reforming it. I believe that such change can only be driven if Europe and America work together. There is no other way forward if we want to try to shape some sort of order in the world.

For the European Union, multilateralism is not just part of our foreign policy: it is part of who we are; it is our DNA. The European Union was born as a multilateral project after World War II - after thousands of years of wars inside the European continent. We realised that we not only share an interest in stopping war, but we realised that it was simply more convenient for all of us to cooperate, starting from something very basic like steel and coal. That simply made more sense rather than making war with each other. So we started what is today the most advanced, the most successful living multilateral project in human history. So, multilateralism is our DNA.

We realised back then something else that is difficult to focus on today: that our national interests are better served when we work with one and another instead of fighting against each other.

Today we see a great tendency to focus on national interests versus multilateralism. In Europe we have experienced the biggest economic growth and the longest period of peace exactly because we understood back then - and I hope we renew this understanding as Europeans in these months and in these years - that our national interests are better served - and sometimes are served only - through multilateral approaches and cooperation.

We replaced the fight for hegemony, which had destroyed our continent and the world with a patient search for win-win solutions that could benefit all the peoples of Europe. And for decades the United States have been the ones accompanying and supporting us in our path towards European unity. Generations of Americans and of American leaders have understood that the United States could only benefit from having a strong Europe, a strong friend and partner on the other side of the Atlantic.

It was here in Harvard that George Marshall announced his plan for Europe's economic

recovery just over 70 years ago and he explained that the United States were willing - and I quote: "to face up to the vast responsibility which history has clearly placed upon our country." So I believe that Marshall realised that a weak Europe would make America weaker, while a strong Europe could contribute to America's strength. And for over 70 years he has been proven right.

In spite of any disagreements we may have, Europe and America still share the same interests - including in global affairs. I know this is one of the most surreal sentences you might hear these days, but it is really my conviction that this is the case. If you look at the files we have in front of us, if we look at the different crises we are facing, if we look at the economy and investments, at trade, you realise that we are on the same side, regardless of the political rhetoric that sometimes we hear from here or there.

We share the same interest in peace, security and reconciliation for instance in the Balkans, but also on the Korean peninsula, in Syria, in Iraq, in Yemen, in Libya, in Afghanistan and the list could continue. We share the same interest in discussing China's role in global trade, facing some of the challenges it puts to both America and Europe alike in the framework of the World Trade Organisation - because we Europeans still are attached to the idea that rules are the best guarantee for all and not a restraint for some.

We have seen in these very weeks that we share the same interest in addressing Russia's violation of Ukraine's territorial integrity: only together can Europe and America face the challenges that Russia poses on European soil, but also elsewhere. Since the illegal annexation of Crimea we have both stated constantly that borders must not and cannot be changed by military force and that when this basic principle is violated we are all less secure. And the [current events in the Sea of Azov](#) are somehow - I would not say the inevitable consequence, because things like that should always be avoidable but - the direct consequence of a clear violation of the basic rules of peaceful co-existence on European territory. Europe and America have been together in pointing out these violations and also in responding to them.

Europe and America are still on the same side on the vast majority of the most delicate issues of our times. And compared to the days of the Marshall Plan the difference is that Europe today is much stronger and a much more reliable partner for the United States. We have grown up, also thanks to American support. We are an economic power of the same size of the United States. I understand that this might create some anxieties somewhere, but having a friend that is strong makes you stronger. Investing in the weakness of your friend is never a good idea, because then you might have others that are not such friends and who are stronger than your friends. And this is a risk you should not test.

We are a continent that is reunited. We Europeans invest today in development cooperation - which is an investment in security, because it is an investment in the prevention of conflicts - more than the rest of the world combined. And our contribution

to global peace and security is quite unique with a distinct mix of hard and soft power. Very few know that the European Union currently has 17 military and civilian missions all around the world - mainly in Africa, but also in the Middle East and Europe itself, in Eastern Europe and the Balkans. This military presence is valuable because it is bridging military and civilian capacities in a unique way that responds very well, as far as we see, to the demands and the needs of our partners that are facing security challenges.

So Europe has grown up and I know that this would have not been possible without the United States and everything that the United States has done for us in these 70 years and continues to do. Europe is now strong because America took responsibility for helping us to become strong. This is something no European will ever forget and cannot forget.

Precisely for this, we are now taking our part of responsibility for global peace, security and development. We are doing it as the first economic contributor to the UN system and in peace processes all around the world: think of Colombia but also in Afghanistan today. And we are doing this also on the military side - I will come to that in a moment.

Joseph Nye wrote about it recently. On issues like climate change, free and fair trade, or better regulation on privacy and data protection - but I would also add trying to regulate the unknown field of artificial intelligence - the European Union has already taken the lead globally, but we are also taking greater responsibility for our own security and defence. This has been a central part of my work in these four years, because one part of the work I have tried to develop more than in the past is the work on European defence, exactly because there is nothing that the European Union can do to determine how much national governments or national parliaments decide to spend on their national defence budgets, but there is something the European Union can do to incentivise European Union Member States to work together on defence and in this way have an impact on the economy of scale of our investments. Basically, we cannot determine the amount of money spent - the 2 percent story is not for the European Union to tackle -, but we can help the output to be higher than it is today.

Taken together, European countries have the second largest defence budget in the world after the United States. But it is true that at the moment we still spend this budget in a fragmented way and not as effectively as it could be. So we have worked in these last two years in particular to help Member States join forces, research together the technologies of tomorrow, invest in common projects in the military field, train our forces together, and act together on the ground.

I believe that military power today is not just about the size of an army. Security challenges are much more complex than that. It is about satellite systems; cyber defence; training the police forces of a partner country after civil war; investing in reconciliation processes so that a war cannot start again; and also intervening fast and effectively after a natural disaster - and I'm proud to say that Europeans have helped the United States on many occasions when a natural disaster happened on this side of

the Atlantic.

Today we are working so that Europe can take full responsibility for all of these tasks in full partnership and full complementarity with our friends at NATO [the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation]. I am proud that the European Union and NATO have been working closer than ever before in these past years.

This is what we mean when we talk about "European strategic autonomy", which I know is a terminology that brings us immediately to a military doctrine. But for us it is a political necessity: it's the necessity to stand when we believe there are things on which it is right to stand.

But we always prefer to avoid going it alone; this is never the European spirit. We are, together, 28 Member States – 27 in the future – still the biggest market in the world. But we believe that going it alone would be pointless and wrong.

Strategic autonomy for us is about responsibility. It's about being grown-ups and stating what we believe is right, what we believe in is in the interest of Europeans but also of our transatlantic friends, and it is and it will always continue to be about co-operative autonomy when NATO remains the pillar of our collective defence.

In the European [Union] treaties we clearly state that NATO is the pillar of our collective defence. I don't think that NATO is recognised in this manner in any other treaty anywhere in the world. So there is no doubt about that. In fact, our cooperation with NATO as I said has never been closer than today and I'm grateful to my friend, Jens Stoltenberg [NATO Secretary General] for the excellent work we've done together in these years.

I know that many people here in America, including in Washington D.C., understand this perfectly well: that our security is tied; that our destinies are connected more closely than we often admit.

So, I don't want to underplay the breadth and the depth of our disagreements with the current U.S. administration: they're there and they're self-evident. Sometimes they are so self-evident that they hide all the rest and this is a shame.

But it is true that on Iran or on Jerusalem we believe that this administration has taken decisions that run counter to our collective interest and to our collective security: our European one but also the US' interest and security. And I know that these are issues for debate inside the United States as is normal.

We continue to believe that a great country like America should not see international rules and multilateral structures as a constraint or even as an obstacle to remove. Multilateralism for us is a guarantee for global peace and security, and as such it is the best tool that we have to advance our national interests, including, I believe, American interests.

Yet beyond these disagreements, our cooperation with the United States continues to be very close on most files. No other world powers are as close as we are. Close your eyes for a moment and think of it. Europe is immensely closer to the United States. No one can have any doubt about it. Think of China, Russia, others. We need not even ask the question.

This is only natural. The European Union is America's largest trading partner, is the largest foreign investor in the American economy, and, beyond that, there is much more that unites us than divides us. But the economy is a good basis to start on.

For 70 years we've been proud to be one transatlantic community. We've been part of the same history and the same destiny. We have shared the same aspiration to those four freedoms that Franklin Roosevelt described in the darkest moments of World War Two: freedom of speech; freedom of religion; freedom from fear; and freedom from want.

Roosevelt too spoke of a new world order based on the cooperation of free countries, and his four freedoms - I believe - are still a platform to drive our action in the present days.

So let me conclude by saying that the idea of the four freedoms is rooted in the best part of our common history. It is rooted in those principles and aspirations that have made America great through the decades, through the centuries. Those hopes and dreams that made me personally fall in love with America many years ago. I continue to love this country as if it were my own country and sometimes even more - it depends on the times.

America to me is the idea that all human beings are entitled to the same rights beyond faith, ethnicity, gender and social background.

The first time I came here on a fellowship I asked one of the speakers we were meeting "What would you define as the main difference between societies in Europe and in America?". He told me something that remained in my heart for a long time. He said: "In America what counts is not who you are, it's what you do. In Europe, it's always who you are. What you do is less relevant."

I think this tells a lot about why I love the country because what you do is something that depends on you. Who you are is something that gets put on your shoulders when you're born and then you take it with you. You can change it, but the identity is something you hardly change. Your actions are what you are free to determine - not always, you have boundaries - but it's a sense of responsibility that makes you relevant for your community, for your society, for the history of the country. This is the power of the American dream that I believe is still the American strength.

America is the idea that among those rights is the pursuit of happiness and the promise that everyone would be given the opportunity they deserve, which is the only country in

the world that recognises this. I think it is revolutionary.

America is the possibility of change and individual responsibility. In Europe if you say "anything can happen", people run away because normally we intend it to mean something bad. Here, if you say "anything can happen", it's for good.

These values make America the extraordinary place it still is. And they make America unique. At the same time, they are part of our shared identities, share heritage and shared values.

All this tells me that Europe and America's future are one and that it is in our hands to make sure that transatlantic relations - even at this time being at a rather critical juncture - can again be the point of strength for both sides of the Atlantic in the future.

We will continue - I am sure about this - to be the closest partners and friends on earth and this can only happen if we do our part: if we invest in people on both sides of the Atlantic that understand how close and how relevant we are for each other, and are ready - in both difficult and in good times - to invest in this partnership, cooperation and friendship, not only for the sake of Americans and Europeans but I'm convinced also for the sake of the rest of the world.

Thank you very much.

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