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THE PUBLIC AFFAIRS SECTION / EMBASSY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

**Remarks by Secretary of State Colin L. Powell
Foreign Policy Association's Annual Dinner**

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(8:55 p.m. EDT)

SECRETARY POWELL: Thank you so very much, ladies and gentlemen, for that warm welcome, and I thank you, John Whitehead, my old friend and colleague from the Reagan years, for your warm, kind and generous introduction. It is a special honor to be introduced by such a distinguished public servant as John, who served in the State Department at one time and I think is on every non-profit board in New York City. (Laughter and Applause.)

It is a great pleasure to be here with the premier of Quebec, and we have had a nice conversation, and other distinguished guests, and especially the Foreign Minister of Romania who is here, my dear friend Mircea Geoana. Good to see you, Mr. Foreign Minister. Welcome. (Applause.)

And it is always a joy to see these wonderful young people in front of me, students in the course of the evening, but please give a special hello to these West Point cadets in front of us with their -- (Applause.) I don't know why I did that. They didn't let me in West Point. (Laughter.) They said I was Christmas help. (Laughter.)

I really want to express my thanks to the Foreign Policy Association for providing me this opportunity before such a distinguished audience to offer some thoughts to you this evening about U.S.-European relations. I am especially pleased to do it in the presence of a good friend of mine, and someone who will share honors with me this evening, Javier Solana. (Applause.)

Henry Kissinger once lamented that he did not have a number he could call when he wanted to speak to Europe. That's not my problem. (Laughter.) I have Javier's number.

I also have many other numbers in Europe, Lord Robertson and so many others, and they all have my number. In fact, my European counterparts and I spend a good part of every day talking to one other, staying in touch, in constant touch, and there is no European leader that I spend more time talking to, and whose advice I value more highly than that of Javier.

Though the United States is not a member of the European Union, he and I can attest to how closely we work together almost every day, and very often well into the night in world affairs. Not only interests and institutions matter, people with ideas, people with talent and people with energy matter -- people like Javier. He is both a visionary and a pragmatist. He solves problems, he doesn't make them. He identifies needs and he delivers results. He won't sacrifice concrete achievements for airy theories. There is no stronger or more able an advocate for both the European Union and the NATO Alliance, those two great organizations that we work so closely with, than my friend Javier Solana. No one understands their strengths and shortcomings better. And no one has worked harder or more effectively than he has to help these vitally important organizations adapt to meet 21st century challenges. So, Javier, I am very, very pleased to be with you and to share this honor with you. (Applause.)

For more than 50 years, the ties between the United States and our allies and friends in Europe have been the sinews of security, democracy and prosperity in the transatlantic region. They are the stuff with which President Bush's vision of "a Europe whole, free and at peace" is being built. And in our increasingly globalized age, strong Euro-Atlantic partnerships will be key to security, good governance and growth not only in the transatlantic region but worldwide.

Time and again for more than a decade, with great drama, pundits and analysts have predicted the demise of NATO, growing tensions between the Alliance and the European Union, and crises in the transatlantic relationships. Time and again, I've had to listen to charges of "wither NATO". I have had to listen to people say, "Well, the Warsaw Pact is over, it is gone. Why isn't NATO over and gone?" I don't know how many former Soviet generals I have spoken to who kept saying to me, "Well, Colin, since we no longer need an alliance, why do you need an alliance called NATO?" And time and time again, they have not understood the reality at all. Time and time again, pundits have been wrong. What we have seen instead of the demise of NATO and other half-century old institutions, we are seeing them rapidly and successfully evolving and expanding and changing to meet profound geostrategic challenges. They have changed as the changes have come to them. We have gone through it all -- the collapse of Soviet communism, the consolidation of new democracies, and the chilling dawn of a post-September 11 world.

Despite the dire prognostications, NATO shows absolutely no signs of shutting down. Why would it? Why should it? You don't close a club that people keep lining up to get in to. A few weeks ago, I warmly congratulated the European Union, when in Athens ten more countries signed their accession treaty for membership in the Union. And I know that tomorrow Javier will heartily greet the expected vote in the U.S. Senate for NATO's further enlargement - seven more countries and Minister Geoana will be with us in Washington tomorrow and I hope can deliver that to you tomorrow, my friend.

As President Bush has said:

"All of Europe's democracies from the Baltic to the Black Sea and all that lie between should have the same chance for security and freedom and the same chance to join the institutions of Europe."

Not only is NATO welcoming new members, it has also seized an historic opportunity to support Russia's desire for greater integration into the Euro-Atlantic community and it has done so by establishing a NATO-Russia Council. That, too, is part of the transformation of the Alliance. Our vision for Europe encompasses all of NATO's new partners, including Ukraine and countries in the Caucasus and Central Asia.

We are helping them advance the political, economic, and military reforms that will allow them to succeed, allow them to thrive in a 21st century world. At the same time, a strong and growing European Union is also good for the transatlantic Alliance. A strong and growing NATO is good for the European Union. And both are good for the United States, for the nations of Europe and for the world beyond our Euro-Atlantic community. There is a great deal of work ahead.

To cite only one example, we are committed to seeing through all the efforts that we have made in southeastern Europe. Throughout the region, new institutions are being shaped, economies rebuilt and war criminals are being brought to justice. Just a few weeks ago, the European Union took over NATO's stabilization mission in Macedonia - one great organization handing off to another. And to show you how complicated it can be and how tricky it can be, the European Union's mission now in NATO involved 27 countries putting together a force of 330 soldiers. Now this is a challenge for a battalion commander. (Laughter.) But it was done and it showed how everyone wanted to be a part of it. Everyone wanted to play a role. Everyone wanted to be part of this effort to bring peace and stability and a sense of calm and a sense of hope to this nation, Macedonia, that has had such difficulty and still needs the help of friends elsewhere in Europe, whether they come under NATO flag or an EU flag. The point is that they come and they come to help and they come in peace. Whatever the division of labor, all of us know that the hopes we have created in the region will not become realities without our continued involvement and cooperation.

Just last week, I visited Tirana, Albania and took part in the signing of a new Adriatic charter with Albania, Croatia and Macedonia. They were adamant that the fourth signatory in that charter should be the United States of America - not the EU in this case, not NATO in this case, but the United States and we were proud to do it. I was proud to be there representing the American people aligning themselves with these Adriatic nations who wanted this connection to the United States as well as integration into the European community and into, eventually, NATO.

Now, we are not just a transatlantic partner, we are also a trans-Adriatic partner. The Adriatic charter will serve as a path to Euro-Atlantic integration for the three emerging, struggling nations. And the charter will serve as a guide to full membership in NATO and other European institutions for them. Not so very long ago, the slogan was "out of area for NATO and even EU or out of business." You either learn to expand your presence and the missions you perform outside of the traditional NATO area or you won't be relevant. NATO stepped up to that challenge. The EU has stepped up to that challenge. Business is booming, and the concept of "out of area" has shifted so radically.

It used to mean the Balkans. And those of you who have experience will think back just five or eight years ago about how difficult it was to convince parliaments to just send troops to another

part of Europe, into the Balkans, the peacekeeping operations. But in today's post-September 11 world, "out of area" extends far beyond the Balkans. It goes from Kosovo to Kabul in Afghanistan and Kirkuk in Iraq may not be far behind. Both NATO and the European Union are very much engaged "out of area." And because of their willingness to engage in places far away from Europe they have retained their relevance to world stability and security. And they are thriving, living dynamic organizations. They are involved "out of area" not to prove their relevance alone or impose their influence, but because so many of the 21st century security concerns that affect us originate elsewhere and are best dealt with on a cross-regional or worldwide basis.

For example, just last week, the United States, the European Union, together with our other two Quartet partners, the United Nations and Russia, came together and presented the Israelis and Palestinians with a plan, a roadmap, to help them back onto the road that will lead to a lasting Middle East peace. Working together, we help them do that. Both NATO and the European Union continue to play important roles in the campaign against terrorism, in Afghanistan and across the world.

Every day, U.S. and European experts are arresting terrorists, breaking up their networks, blocking their money, impeding their movement, denying them safe haven and otherwise defeating those who would do grievous harm to our free societies. As my friend, Foreign Minister Geoana, can attest, many aspirants to NATO and European Union membership have gone "out of area" with us as active participants in the global anti-terror effort.

Romania, for example, has provided a 400-man infantry battalion and a military police platoon to support the efforts of the coalition in Afghanistan. American and European diplomats worked hand-in-hand at the Bonn conference last year to help the Afghans establish the most representative leadership in form of government in all of Afghanistan's long history. We and our humanitarian and development agencies are spearheading the international recovery and reconstruction efforts in Afghanistan. And this coming August, NATO will take over the International Security Assistance Force in Kabul from the current Dutch and German command.

Beyond our collaborative efforts in Afghanistan, all members of the Alliance are now talking about a possible peacekeeping role in Iraq. So when I look at the NATO Alliance and I look at our relationship with the European Union, I see two very vibrant institutions made up of dynamic democracies, tackling some of the most challenging issues of the day. Sometimes agreeing, sometimes disagreeing, but when disagreeing it is mostly over means not ends. We argue, we make up, we move on but always, always we are held together and driven forward by common values. With the big changes going on in the world and the complexity of the problems we confront, it would be remarkable if we weren't in disagreement from time to time. If there weren't frictions among us. By definition, the consensus that our democracies seek must be forged in honest, open, rigorous debate. We are all free and sovereign nations entitled to our own opinion. We should never seek agreement for agreement's sake and our goal should always be greater than a lowest common denominator. Each of us brings to any discussion our own experiences, our own perspectives, our history, and our own domestic politics.

Independent actions and internal pressures are not unheard of within the United States or among the states of Europe. And so I do not rush to call every contre temps a crisis. (Laughter and applause.) I do believe, however, that the concerns of Europeans and of Americans about our transatlantic relationship should never be expressed lightly or taken lightly.

The issues are too important and the stakes are too high to posture for effect. The point is to be effective. Asserting the Europeans' prerogative to disagree with the United States, my good friend High Commissioner Chris Patten, the European Union's External Affairs Commissioner, once recalled Winston Churchill's observation that: "in working with allies, it sometimes happens that they develop opinions of their own." (Laughter.) This is unfortunate, but it is true. He is right. Our European allies have opinions and we have opinions, too. And it's true all around.

Many long-serving, long-standing members of the Alliance supported our position on Iraq, as did many of the newly invited members of NATO who chose to stand up and speak their minds rather than sit back, be intimidated and be silent. But if many of our allies and friends in Europe took part in the liberation of Iraq, and other friends and allies in Europe did not support our efforts, that is all behind us now. Now we have to come together again. Now, all of us, can come together to help the Iraqi people take their place in the world, take their place in the world as a free, stable, self-governing country.

Some important tasks, like stabilization, will be for military forces. Others tasks, such as humanitarian assistance, are tasks for aid agencies, non-governmental organizations.

There are roles for governments and NGOs alike in political reconstruction that needs to take place to help the Iraqi people achieve their human and democratic rights.

The United Nations can be of great help in all of these areas. Later this week, we will present a new draft Security Council resolution to the Security Council that would ask the United Nations to play a vital role and that would lift the sanctions burden from the Iraqi people so that they now can engage in normal commerce with the world. More importantly, it will be a resolution that can bring us all together, to give the Iraqi people a better life and hope for a much brighter future. I am confident that all of our colleagues in the Security Council will work with determination and an earnestness to see if we can quickly come to agreement on a resolution that does not fight old battles but serves the interests of the Iraqi people as we put in place new government, founded on democratic principles and committed to live in peace with its neighbors. The United States has every expectation that the United Nations will play a vital role, but we as democracies, all of the nations represented in the Council and in NATO and the EU have a special role to defend liberty and open opportunity in Iraq, in Afghanistan and in other areas around the world that are a challenge to the international community. How well we perform that role of reaching out and helping is how we ultimately shall be judged, not by this or that passing dispute within our Euro-Atlantic family of democracies. In this great effort, we must bring every tool of statecraft to bear: political, economic, intelligence, technical, cultural, diplomatic, and, when necessary, the use of military force. Not every country has to make the same kind of contribution.

Europe doesn't want to be considered only a checkbook, and the United States doesn't want to be seen as just a juggernaut. We do not have to work together the same way every time. Americans and Europeans can, and do, work together, work together very effectively through NATO and the European Union. We can, and do, work together through informal coalitions of the willing, sometimes forged with non-European and American participants as well. Whether it's combating terrorism and proliferation, creating conditions for sustainable development, stemming infectious disease, such as HIV/AIDS, the greatest weapon of mass destruction on the face of the earth today, or promoting good governance, none of us can hope to meet these complex challenges by working alone.

General George C. Marshall, author of the plan for European recovery, is a great and personal hero of mine. Everyone in this room remembers the Marshall Plan. What people don't remember is that the purpose of the plan wasn't just Europe's economic revival.

The plan aimed higher and farther than that. It was designed, "to permit the emergence of political and social conditions in which free institutions can exist." Just as the Marshall Plan was about more than Europe's economy, the founders of the NATO Alliance knew that the Alliance was about more than containing communism.

And Monnet, Schuman and Adenauer knew that the European coal and steel community was about more than coal and steel. So, too, President Bush and the other leaders of our Euro-Atlantic community know that our efforts were, and are, about making, making absolutely real a hopeful vision of the world of the future -- a world free from the grip of fear and misery. A prosperous, peaceful world where the democratic values we all cherish can thrive.

Thanks in great measure to the concerted efforts of Americans and Europeans, efforts that have gone on for the past half century, we are much closer to that vision, much closer that world we dream of today. The spread of democratic and economic freedoms that together we have done so much to secure and engender, have opened unprecedented opportunities to help better the lives of millions on every continent. And the hope for realizing that great potential still rests to a great degree on strong and enduring partnerships between Europe and the United States. My good partner Javier and I still have a lot of work to do together. Don't forget my phone number, Javier.