TRANSWORLD

THE TRANSATLANTIC RELATIONSHIP AND THE FUTURE GLOBAL GOVERNANCE

ISSN 2281-5252 WORKING PAPER 38 | SEPTEMBER 2014

Redefining the Transatlantic Security Relationship

Anne-Marie Le Gloannec and Manuel Muniz

The transatlantic security relationship is built on strong and enduring shared values. Americans and Europeans share, on the whole, similar perceptions about the nature of power, the norms that should guide relations among states, as well as a desire to promote democracy and basic human rights. The US and Europe also share most of their security objectives, this being particularly true when speaking of non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and tackling state weakness around the world. Not surprisingly, therefore, our elite survey revealed that elites across the Atlantic are supportive of each other's role in maintaining international security, and wish to remain partners through NATO. However, the partnership is exposed to a serious risk of fragmentation driven by changes in the international landscape, mainly the rise of multipolarity and the emergence of China as a major security player in East Asia, and by events with significant internal implications such as the financial crisis that started in 2007 and the subsequent Eurozone crisis and the emergence or multiplication of crises from Libya and Mali to the Middle East and Ukraine. These developments could easily pull the transatlantic partners in different directions, perhaps more so than any other change of the past half-century, creating tensions between the two, and bringing into question the usefulness of their alliance.

This project has received funding from the European Union's Seventh Framework Programme for research, technological development and demonstration under grant agreement no 612782

Redefining the Transatlantic Security Relationship

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Europe EU US Transatlantic relations Multipolarity NATO

Introduction

In two years the Transworld project has produced a large amount of findings regarding transatlantic relations. Research on transatlantic security began with the drafting of a working paper on "New and Evolving Trends in International Security", published in 2013 (Le Gloannec et al. 2013). It was followed by two papers on the adjustments undertaken by the United States (US) and Europe to adapt to changes in the security landscape of the last two decades ("adjustment papers") (Murray 2013, Weiss 2013). Additional written contributions to the security work-package included a number of one-off papers on specific security issues from researchers at the Free University of Berlin and Sabanci University, and contributions from Sciences Po (Bunde 2014, Müftüler-Baç and Cihangir-Tetik 2014). On top of these papers, elite interviews were conducted in Washington, London, Brussels, Berlin and Paris during the second half of 2013 and the first six months of 2014. Lastly, Transworld undertook a large elite survey, involving close to 300 opinion leaders, over 300 political leaders and about 1400 business leaders from the US and six European states (France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Poland and the United Kingdom).[1] The survey took place between September 2013 and February 2014, and contained numerous questions on security matters.

Not all of our findings are perfectly consistent. Records of face-to-face interviews, for example, sound markedly more pessimistic about the state of transatlantic relations than the survey findings. An American analyst in Washington, very familiar with the topic of transatlantic relations, did not hesitate to speak of "transatlantic drift" for example, despite the elite survey denying it.[2] We have attempted to be as nuanced as possible and to reflect these differences throughout this essay.

The working papers authored by Shoon Murray, from the American University, and Tomáš Weiss, from Charles University, dealing with European and American adjustments to the evolving security landscape revealed not

1 For more information, see Isernia 2014, Isernia and Basile 2014.

2 Interview, Washington, March 2014.

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only some real convergence on issues like the fight against terrorism or cyber security, but also the existence of what could be termed an enduring transatlantic security partnership built on a wide set of shared norms and objectives (Murray 2013, Weiss 2013). Indeed, on issues such as counter-terrorism, non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD), or state capacity-building around the world, transatlantic partners mainly share the same goals. Be it the desire to stop transnational criminal activity, put a halt to the proliferation of nuclear weapons, particularly to Iran, or promote effective and democratic states in the Southern Mediterranean, Europeans and Americans tend to find themselves on the same side of the fence. This is not to say that positions are always harmonious, that all Europeans themselves share an identical agenda, or that changes in the US administration or in European governments have had (or will have) no impact on the process. However, it is accurate to say that the transatlantic partnership is built on overarching norms and goals regarding international security.

The findings of the elite survey conducted by our colleagues from the University of Siena reinforce this argument. Elites across the Atlantic seem to be on the whole satisfied with the European Union (EU) and the US playing a leading role in world affairs. They also strongly support the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), with over 80 percent of US political elites and 72 percent of those in Europe defining it as "essential". There is a similar meeting of minds regarding how to deal with Iran and its nuclear programme – US elites are only slightly more willing than those in Europe to use military tools. Interestingly, the survey results show a wide consensus across the Atlantic on how international peacekeeping should be authorized by the United Nations (UN) as the single most supported arbiter in this field (around three quarters of political elites across the Atlantic believe the UN is the institution that has to decide on such matters).

The transatlantic partnership faces nonetheless a number of important challenges. Some are connected to differences in the means used by Americans and Europeans to achieve common goals, others to the priority given to certain issues and, lastly, to divergent views regarding China's rise. Americans tend to be more willing to use coercive tools in the pursuit of security, for example drones in the fight against terrorism, give more importance to security matters in their region and East Asia, and, importantly, see the rise of China as far more threatening to their security than Europeans do. The US "pivot" to Asia, with the transfer of military assets to the region and the strengthening of partnerships with regional actors, all point to a strategy of soft hedging against China, which is a significantly different strategy than that followed by most Europeans. The latter, have, on the whole, looked at the rise of China from an economic perspective and not dealt with its security implications. One should, however, be nuanced here and indicate that, as in so many other issues, the rise of China is addressed differently by different European states. Some, such as France, are perhaps more concerned with its security implications than the likes of Germany or Sweden. On the whole, however, our survey findings seem to reinforce this divergence across the Atlantic by showing that a larger proportion of American political elites see China as a military threat compared to Europeans ones.

Some of the areas of discrepancy across the Atlantic lie on the very fault lines of change in the international order. The fact that there is no US-European consensus on how to interpret or tackle the rise of China, one of the most significant strategic developments of the last few decades, might well put the relationship under severe stress. There are, for example, already tensions emerging between the EU and the US on how and what to trade with China. Americans start worrying about the sale of European dual-use technology.

Rising multipolarity will, indeed, pull the allies in somewhat different directions and make divergences in priorities a source of tension. Europeans are placing a greater emphasis on their neighbourhood, mainly on Russia to the East and on the various security threats emerging from the "arc of crises" encompassing the Maghreb, Sub-

Saharan Africa and the Mashrek. Despite the fact that there are differences across European states, some of which worry more about the EU's southern maritime border with Africa and others more about the eastern boundary with Russia and the other former Soviet republics, the overall feeling across Europe's capitals is that security tasks in these areas will have to be addressed with some American support but quite probably without American leadership – except in the Middle East where nothing will be achieved without it. Still, the threat posed by Russia to Ukraine, short of outright military invasion, has been addressed with more determination by the Obama administration than by the EU as a whole, where opinions have diverged. US strikes against ISIL forces in Iraq with European support and, less forcefully, the diplomatic role of the administration, in particular of John Kerry, to try to broker a solution to the Israeli-Hamas conflict point to the fact that the US may take a leading role, or unilaterally intervene, in the EU's neighbourhood even if Europeans consider it ever more unlikely. Although the unravelling of the Middle Eastern map is drawing the administration back to that area, Americans are nonetheless emphasizing their security concerns in East Asia, where they feel relatively neglected by their European allies. In this environment of diverging priorities, NATO's resilience will be put to the test, both regarding its capacity to enforce the mutual defence commitments undertaken under Article 5, if need be, and/or to go beyond Article 5 and intervene militarily outside the Euro-Atlantic area.

Nonetheless, and despite the fact that Europeans themselves vary in their attitudes towards the US, we see in the Atlantic relationship a partnership built on enduring shared values and goals. In a Transworld's Paper, Thomas Risse suggested a framework to assess the nature and health of the transatlantic partnership (Risse 2012). Risse laid out four dimensions along which the relationship could be evaluated. They were termed the four Is: interdependency, identity, institutions and interests. Regarding numerous security issues, there is convergence across the four Is: Europeans and Americans share values, and even identities, institutions and interests. However, the partnership is exposed to a very real risk of fragmentation. That risk arises from rising multipolarity and the unravelling of the Western order, as well as from diverging security concerns across the Atlantic.

One final note of caution should be introduced here. Leaders do matter. While we are trying to delineate evolutions and to assess their durability and their impact, another administration in Washington, other leaders in power in Paris, London or Berlin, or elsewhere in the world, might take actions that would bring about changes in these trends, for the better or for the worse. Events that are sudden and mostly unpredictable by nature might also shape the future, be it the full implosion of the Middle East, or revisionist governments in Moscow or Beijing overplaying their hand.

1. An Enduring Partnership: Shared Values and Goals

1.1 Context: Power, burden-sharing and NATO

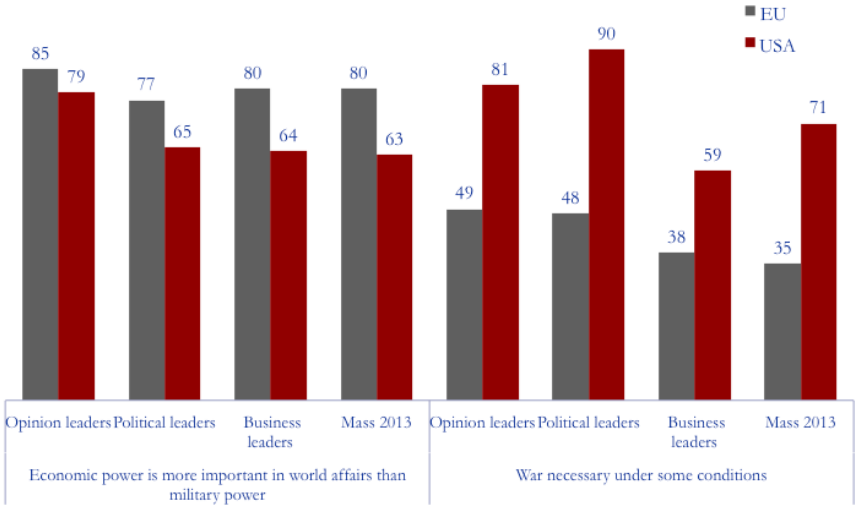
Nature and use of power

Some of the most recurring arguments about transatlantic divergences have to do with how the transatlantic partners address issues of power in the 21st century, and how they view multilateralism and global security governance. It has been said that Americans are from Mars and Europeans from Venus: the former are more prone to use force, including unilaterally, while the latter are keener to resort to economic/diplomatic tools, primarily in multilateral settings (Kagan 2004). Besides the fact that such generalizations overlook specific cases

such as France or the United Kingdom, which have not hesitated to use military force alone if deemed necessary, this research reveals that differences are more nuanced than anticipated.

Europeans and Americans tend today to agree on the nature and usefulness – or uselessness – of various types of power in the 21st century. Seventy-seven percent of European political leaders and 65 percent of their American counterparts deem economic power more important than military power in global affairs (see Figure 1 below). Americans are, however, more willing to concede that military action is sometimes necessary, while Europeans, as a whole, disagree with that statement. European survey data show, however, that there are marked differences across EU member states regarding the use of force. Both the public and elites in countries such as France, the UK and Poland are far more willing to agree with the statement that war is necessary under some conditions than their counterparts in Germany, Italy or Greece.

• Figure 1 | **Economic power vs. military power and war (%)**[3]



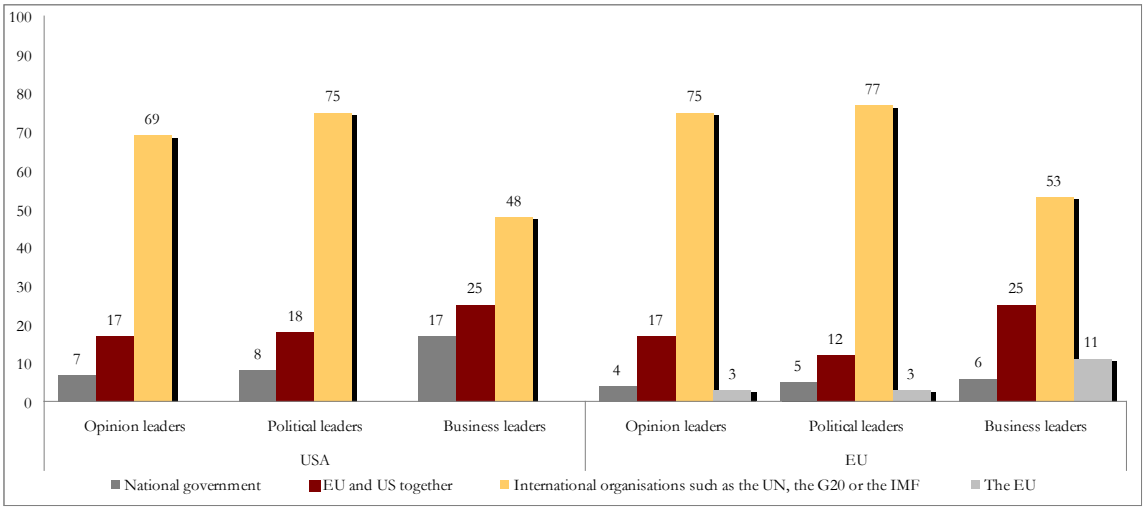
These findings are consistent with the rest of our elite survey data. Although Americans are, for example, more willing to use force to prevent nuclear proliferation or to spread democracy around the world, the differences with their European counterparts are not significant (see below). After 9/11 ushered in a period of war in Afghanistan and Iraq, Americans have mostly shed hubris and display greater caution and restraint regarding the use of force, very much in line with the Europeans – at least regarding regime-change, state-building and outright military intervention, short of drone-strikes (see below). Although Americans are on the whole more willing to resort to force than some European states, this should not become a major source of tension across the Atlantic, at least in the near future.

Similar trends can be observed regarding US attitudes towards unilateral action. Although Americans have consistently expressed their willingness to use force unilaterally if national interests are at stake, the US has been more wary of unilateralism and ready to cooperate within multilateral foreign and security frameworks since the end of President George W. Bush's presidency in early 2009. This is arguably part of the lessons drawn from the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan and the realization that, more than coalitions of the willing, the US needs enduring allies and partners to prop up its legitimacy and achieve long-lasting results in foreign and security policy

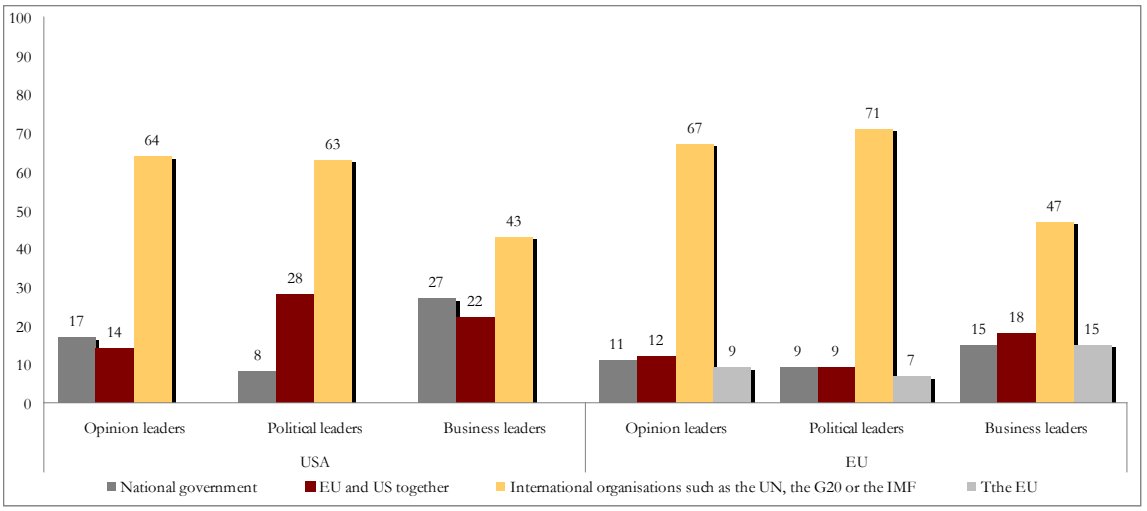
3 The authors would like to thank Pierangelo Isernia, Linda Basile and their team at Siena University for the elaboration of figures 1-10 and table 1, which they originally presented at a Transworld workshop in Rome on 10 April 2014.

issues.[4] Our colleague Shoon Murray made this point repeatedly when addressing US adjustment to evolving security trends. She referred to the US having at first overestimated its "power to reshape" world events, alone or with little support from allies (Murray 2013:4). Our elite survey findings capture this convergence: an active UN as the ultimate arbiter of international peacekeeping and the appropriate forum to promote human rights and democracy meets almost identical support on both shores of the Atlantic (see Figures 2 and 3 below).

• Figure 2 | **Preferred level of government for the management of peacekeeping (%)**



• Figure 3 | **Preferred level of government for democracy and human rights promotion (%)**



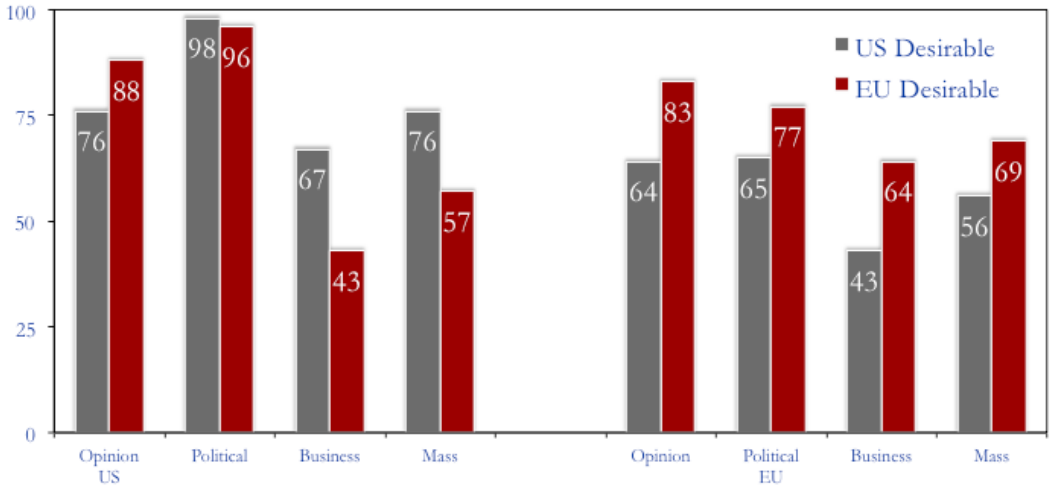
A stronger alliance? Or more independence?

So, in very broad terms, transatlantic partners seem to share similar views regarding the nature and use of power in the new century, as well as on the importance of multilateralism in the management of security. Yet, what do they think of each other? One of the very first questions our elite survey asked was: "How desirable is that the EU exerts strong leadership in world affairs?" A whopping 96 percent of American political elites, made up mostly of senior staffers to federal congressmen and senators, replied that it would be desirable (see Figure 4 below). When asked the very same question about the US, "How desirable is that the US exerts strong leadership in

4 An observer interviewed contended that the "Europeans (may be useful) proxies", arguing that Europeans raise less hostility than Americans.

world affairs?", 83 percent of European opinion leaders and 65 percent of political leaders replied affirmatively. Only business leaders seem to be more sceptical about the desirability of the other transatlantic partner playing a leading role in world affairs, with only 43 percent of both American and European business elites seeing it as positive, most probably because of the way transatlantic businesses compete with one another. What seems clear from our data, however, is that across the political strata, perhaps the most significant constituency when looking at security issues, a wide-ranging consensus is shared by Americans and Europeans alike, namely that it is desirable for the EU and the US to assume leading roles in world affairs: the very bedrock of a strong partnership.

• Figure 4 | **How desirable is it that the EU/the USA exert a strong leadership in world affairs?**



However, the findings above need to be analyzed in light of the answers to the following question: "Do you think that the partnership in security and diplomatic affairs between the EU and the US should take a more independent approach, remain about the same or become closer?" Almost none of the American political and opinion leaders who were asked that question replied that it should take a "more independent approach", compared to around 50 percent of European respondents from the same elite groups (see Table 1 below). This means, prima facie, that Europeans want a weaker partnership when it comes to foreign policy and defence, while Americans are committed to a stronger one. However, when responses from the two questions mentioned above are cross-tabulated, it becomes obvious that elites across the Atlantic have different understandings of what a "strong transatlantic partnership" means. Almost two thirds of the American elites who call for EU leadership in world affairs also want the transatlantic security partnership to be stronger, while only one third of EU elites who advocate a strong Europe also want it to be more tightly linked to the US. In other words, a stronger EU is for American elites a more reliable partner taking a greater part of the burden from US shoulders, while for Europeans, independence in the management of their security is what matters most.

• Table 1 | **EU strong leadership and EU/US partnership (% - weighted data)**

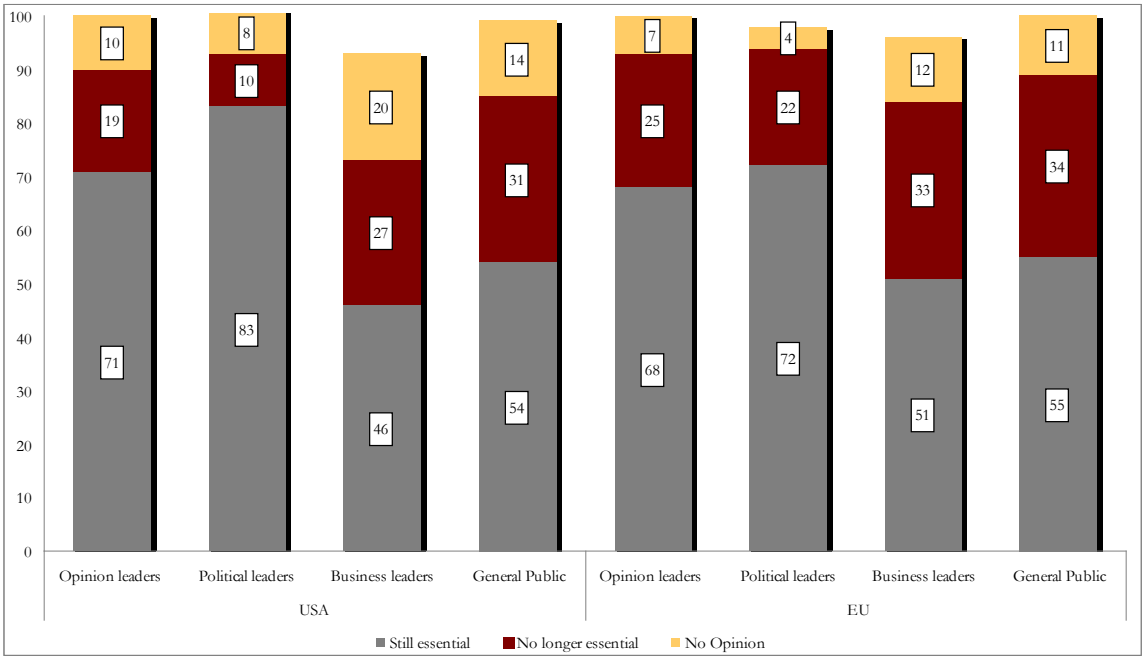
	Strong EU leadership - Desirable		Strong EU leadership - Both desirable and undesirable		Strong EU leadership - Undesirable	
	EU (N=1302)	*USA (N=205)*	*EU (N=229)*	*USA (N=28)*	*EU (N=193)*	*USA (N=25)*
Become closer	34	65	28	36	18	44
Remain about the same	22	33	26	46	26	32
Take a more independent approach	43	2	44	18	46	20

The analysis above shows that American elites view European power as almost an extension of US influence. This is consistent with the content of some of our interviews in Washington, with many American analysts expressing a desire for Europeans to take on a greater role in the "shared" management or co-management of security. A Brussels expert described this in the following terms: "The US wants the EU to act as a proxy where it cannot work anymore".[5] Europeans, on the other hand, see power as a path to some form of independence in the management of their security. This is not necessarily an expression of mistrust, as support for NATO is widespread in Europe. Indeed, 68 percent of European opinion leaders and 72 percent of political leaders believed NATO is "still essential", while 83 percent of American political elites express a similar view (see Figure 5 below). Our contention is, therefore, that Europeans are satisfied with NATO as it is, with its Article 5 commitment, and with the sharing of fundamental security responsibilities with the US, in spite of Poland's former Foreign Minister Radosław Sikorski's railing against the uselessness of NATO.[6] What Europeans seem to want is to manage security, mostly in their neighbourhood, with some autonomy. Whether this desire for autonomy is then matched by a willingness to develop the required capabilities is a different story. In certain cases, the answer is yes, for instance in the case of France regarding the development of intelligence. Whereas during the first Iraq war, the Gulf War, the French military depended essentially on American intelligence, more than twenty years later they no longer do: in 2013, when the French President decided to launch strikes on Syria (which never took place as Washington and London backed down), Paris had all the intelligence it needed (Mallet 2014). In other instances, Europeans are simply unwilling to pay the price of autonomy on defence matters.

5 Interview, Brussels, 2014.

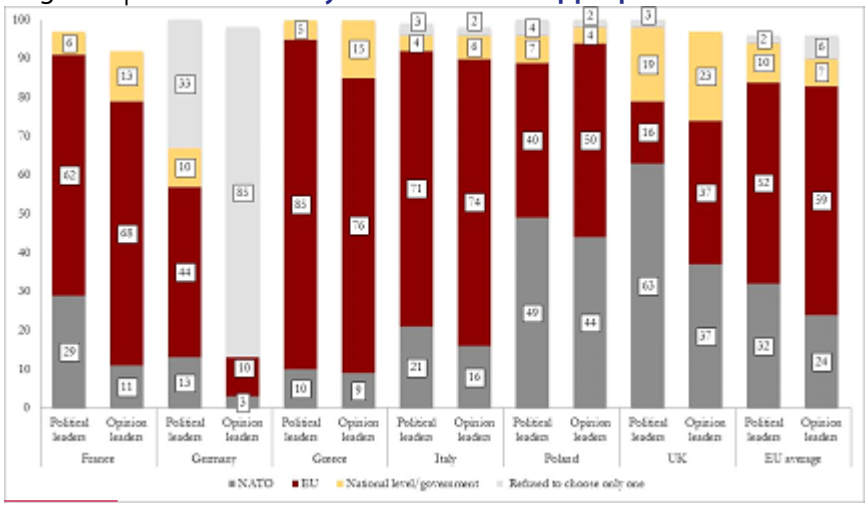
6 Comments by Sikorski leaked by Wprost. See "Polish foreign minister says country's alliance with US worthless", *The Guardian*, 22 June 2014, http://gu.com/p/3qb6h/tw.

• Figure 5 | **Do you think NATO is….? (%)**



Interestingly, and despite the widespread support for NATO shown above, a majority of European elites want European security to be managed by the EU and not the Alliance. If one looks at IntUne Mass Survey Data from 2009 the results could not be clearer.[7] From all the countries covered by the survey, only in Poland and the UK do we see NATO being preferred to the EU as the natural forum for the management of European security (see Figure 6 below with data broken down by country).[8] Eighty-five percent of German opinion leaders refused to provide only one answer to the question in what turned out to be a rare spontaneous pattern in the survey. Be that as it may, it is evident that Europeans are satisfied with NATO as a guarantee of their territorial integrity, while cherishing hopes for an independent EU security and defence. Despite ambiguities, it seems clear that European elites do not see their security interests as being in contrast to those of the US. The desire for autonomy is not driven by a willingness to oppose US security policy but rather to have an independent European one that could deal with issues that matter more to Europeans than to Americans.

• Figure 6 | **Which authority would be more appropriate to deal with European security? (%)**



7 *IntUne Mass Survey Wave 2, 2009* (ICPSR 34272), http://www.icpsr.umich.edu/icpsrweb/ICPSR/studies/34272.

8 This is also certainly the case for the Baltic States.

This general convergence on contextual issues such as the nature of power, the use of force, or multilateralism also resonates on specific security matters. Of all of the issues studied in our Transworld project, convergence is strongest in three areas: terrorism, the fight against proliferation of WMD, and cyber security. The section below looks at these three specific areas in detail.

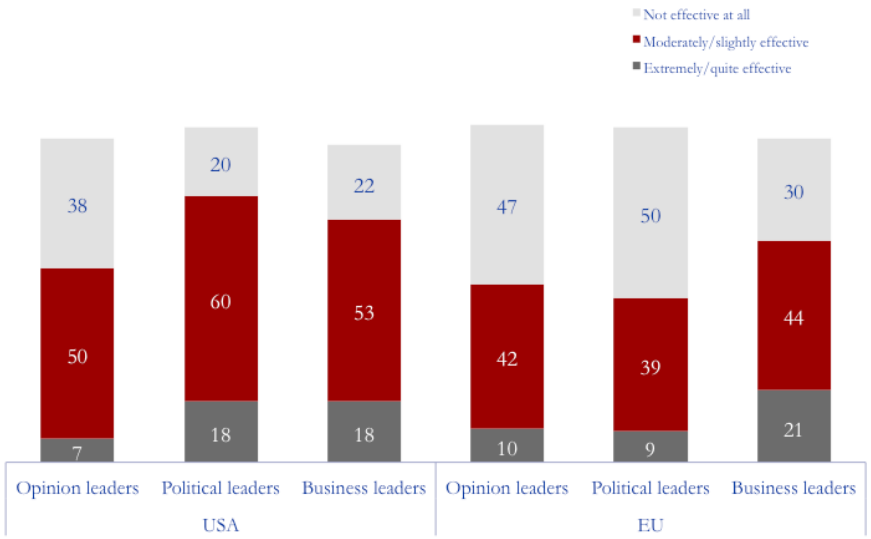
1.2 Convergence on Specific Security Issues

Terrorism

The fight against terrorism has been one of the security issues that has generated the greatest tensions across the Atlantic. The Anglo-American invasion of Iraq in 2003 and the opposition to it by a number of European governments and huge majorities of public opinion throughout the continent put transatlantic and intra-EU relations under severe strain. The "adjustment papers", authored by Murray and Weiss as part of Transworld, show however that since that time the US and Europe have markedly converged on their strategies to tackle terrorism. Indeed, the American "global war on terror" strategy that characterized the Bush Administration gave way to a broader and more rule-based approach (i.e., including civilian means) under Bush's successor, Barack Obama. This approach is close to what Europeans have supported all along and makes transatlantic cooperation much easier. As seen below, there are still significant differences in how Atlantic partners handle this issue, with Europeans viewing it more as a criminality problem and Americans still making use of many of the institutions and tactics inherited from the war on terror era such as drone strikes, which have hugely grown in number under President Obama, and special operations, but the gap has evidently narrowed. The rise of the so-called Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) certainly contributes to a further rapprochement.

The fight against terrorism and democracy promotion – or, rather, state-building – have gone hand in hand in the past decade. The wars in Iraq and Afghanistan had an important democracy and state-building component, due to the belief that democracies produce better governance and are, overall, more peaceful actors in the international arena. Given the dramatic failure to establish functioning democracies in Afghanistan and Iraq, the results of our elite survey are not surprising: regarding the effectiveness of democracy promotion by military force, European and American elites are almost on the same page. A very small percentage of European political elites (9 percent) consider it an extremely effective way of promoting democracy, while their US counterparts are not significantly more supportive (18 percent). American political elites are now much closer to Europeans, who have displayed scepticism from the start (see Figure 7 below). The current uprising in the Middle East by ISIL (widely understood to be, to some extent, produced by the general disenfranchisement of Iraqi Sunnis), and the challenging of the Afghan presidential results by the main opposition candidate Abdullah Abdullah are but two examples of the perils faced by countries in transition, particularly those that have come out of armed conflict and foreign occupation.

• Figure 7 | **Effectiveness of the use of force in promoting democracy (%**



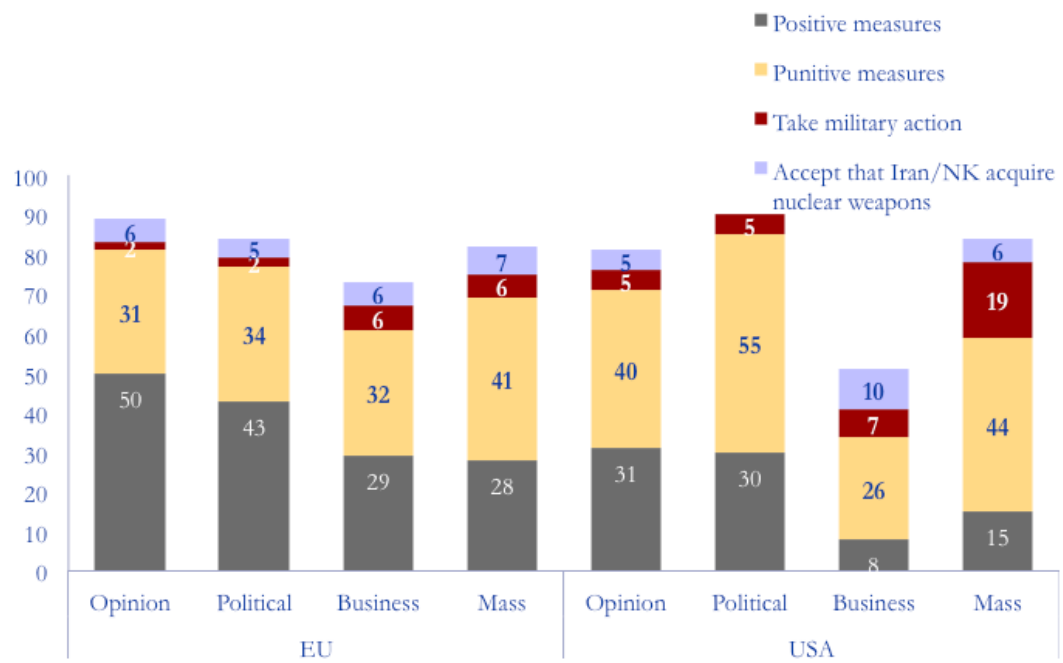
What we have witnessed in the past decade, therefore, is a clear transatlantic convergence on the goals and means of the fight against terrorism. The US has brought both the strategic and the tactical scope of its counterterrorism strategy closer to that of Europeans while some Europeans are ready to go militarily after specific targets. Although differences persist, the divide apparent in the lead-up to the Iraq war is now behind the transatlantic partners.

Non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction

The fight against the proliferation of WMD is perhaps the security policy issue where transatlantic partners have grown to work most harmoniously since the end of the Cold War. There was a time when the Europeans objected to the very notion of more forceful counter-proliferation and stuck to the notion of multilateral non-proliferation regimes such as the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). These times are gone and objectives have almost always been aligned since the early 2000s, with the persistence and strengthening of the NPT regime at their very core. Europeans and Americans share a large array of projects in this field, including multilateral initiatives such as the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI) or the Global Initiative to Combat Global Terrorism (GICGT).

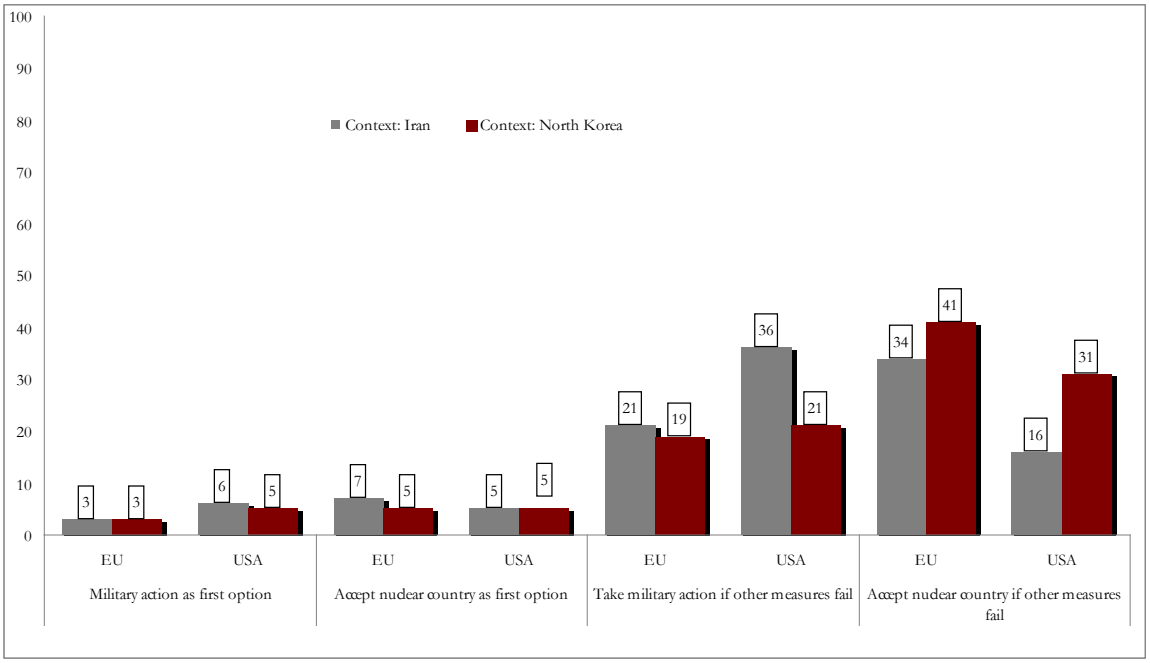
One might have expected greater divergence on the means used to prevent proliferation, with Americans more willing to use force in the preservation of the NPT. Yet, when asked about the punitive measures that could be taken to prevent nuclear proliferation in Iran, US and European elites gave surprisingly similar replies. Very small minorities across all elite groups covered by our survey seemed to favour the use of military force, for example, an issue which formerly was expected to introduce a transatlantic discrepancy (see Figure 8 below).

• Figure 8 | **Measures against nuclear proliferation in Iran / North Korea (%)**



Furthermore, European and US elites are in agreement as to what their preferred path of action would be regarding both Iran and North Korea. Indeed, very similar (and low) percentages of transatlantic elites are willing to accept a nuclear Iran. Additionally, our survey data show that US and European elite opinion is nuanced when it comes to addressing the Iranian and North Korean cases, which are quite different in nature with North Korea already possessing a nuclear capability, and that the two groups share similar opinions when moving from one case to another (see Figure 9 below).

• Figure 9 | **Paths of action preferred by US and European elites (% - weighted data)**



The joint management of Iran's nuclear ambitions through the P5+1 initiative has been underpinned by this shared agenda. So far, and pending the outcome of the current negotiations with Iran, both Atlantic partners are satisfied with the way they have come to co-operate with one another. This is what transpired from the elite interviews done as part of this project. Seen from Washington, the Europeans have been very helpful and have shown leadership, mostly through the work of the High Representative of the EU: "The Europeans still have political clout". [9]

Cyber security

Cyber security is a growing concern for both Europeans and Americans. The US and Europe share similar objectives when it comes to the governance of the Internet: they want a global and generally unregulated Internet. Both partners have tried to establish the parameters of that agenda both domestically and by devising an international discourse around this matter. The US has now issued a number of cyberspace policy reviews (2009, 2011 and 2013), and an International Strategy for Cyberspace. The latter, published in 2011, describes the US agenda in the following terms: "upholding fundamental freedoms", "respect for property", "valuing privacy", "protection from crime", "right of self-defence", "global interoperability", "network stability", "reliable access", "multi-stakeholder governance" and "cyber-security due diligence" (White House 2011:10). These goals are very similar to those of Europeans, as expressed in the EU's Cyber Security Strategy of 2013. The most important of all is perhaps "global interoperability" to counter the aims of some states, such as Russia and China, which would rather have a more fractured Internet, with national servers that can be regulated and censored.

Both sides of the Atlantic have seen the development of institutions that deal with cyber security issues. However, Americans have mostly located such mechanisms in the Pentagon, including through the creation of a US Cyber Command, while Europeans have kept this issue within the bounds of civilian institutions, such as the European Network and Information Security Agency (ENISA) or the European Cybercrime Centre within Europol. After the 2007 cyber-attack against Estonia, a cell within NATO was established, and the Europeans agreed to include cyber-security in the 2008 review of the European Security Strategy (ESS). A number of European countries put a high premium on cooperation within NATO on this matter.

Thus, on cyber-security issues a certain degree of transatlantic consensus on goals and some convergence on means have emerged. However, for the past few years a number of developments have hurt cooperation. The first has been what some European states consider violations of sovereignty and privacy by the US National Security Agency (NSA) through the wiretapping programme revealed by Edward Snowden, and the second has been a generalized loss of trust among transatlantic partners (two issues which, among others, will be explored in the following section) (Janes 2014).[10]

2. Discrepancy and Fragmentation Across the Atlantic: Trends Pointing to Future Developments

Though the findings recalled above support the case for a strong transatlantic security partnership, we see a number of issues that point to divergences and tensions between the partners. This risk of "fragmentation" emerges from both ideational and material factors.

9 Interview, Washington, March 2014.

10 Interview, Paris, March 2014.

2.1 Context: Changes in the geo-strategic environment, domestic withdrawal and ideational factors

Geo-strategic environment, its complexity and the limited efficiency of power

The post-Cold War era, characterized by the overwhelming power of the United States and the apparent triumph of democracy and the market economy, and even more so the "post-post" Cold War era, where power has become diffused and scattered between very many state and non-state actors, have radically changed the context in which transatlantic relations, fundamentally a product of World War II and the Cold War, have evolved.

The demise of the Soviet threat heralded an era of multiple and diverse risks and threats. Both the post-Cold War and the "post-post" era have given rise to a variety of perceptions regarding the relevance of such risks and threats, as well as diverging priorities, preferences and interests. In the absence of a major "overlay", as Barry Buzan dubbed the Soviet threat that pushed most other concerns and preferences into the background, centrifugal tendencies have been at work (Buzan 1991). We are certainly not complaining about the fading of a golden age that in reality never existed. Disagreements between the transatlantic partners regarding how to deal with the Soviet Union were a constant of the Cold War, and sometimes they flared up and strained transoceanic relations.[11] But the East-West conflict, due to its simple bipolar structure, was on the whole more congenial to an enduring transatlantic relation than today's increasingly confused landscape. The wars in Afghanistan and Iraq have led to a quagmire, from which neither the Middle East, nor the United States or the West at large, have fully recovered, militarily, geo-politically or financially. The Great Recession and the Eurozone crisis have severely damaged American and European economies and confidence (particularly in Europe). Non-Western countries seem now to have better economic prospects than the West. As a result of all these factors, power has become much more diffuse, in the hands of many state or non-state actors who certainly existed before but have gained in strength for different reasons (Hassner 2014a). The transatlantic relationship cannot but be affected by this shift in power, in ways that are not necessarily going to meet the desires or expectations of Western leaders.
Among these changes, one cannot help mentioning the rise of China, which is happening at a quicker pace than predicted at the beginning of the millennium. Combined with its economic ascendancy, China's military build-up and territorial claims on its surroundings have the potential to deeply impact the Asia-Pacific region and even the global balance of power. Yet, China is only one among many other important changes. Among them are the development of transnational terrorist movements, and the ever more violent sectarian tensions involving both state and non-state actors that risk revolutionizing the map of the Middle East that the Western powers had drawn during and after World War I. Also worth mentioning are: the emergence of a so-called arc of crises, from the Atlantic Ocean to the Horn of Africa, or again, in central Asia and in the northern part of the Indian sub-continent; the ambiguity of a number of new states playing on different registers (Qatar, for instance, both a major investor on the international markets and a supporter of the Muslim Brotherhood); and the waxing hackers' community, which is very diverse indeed, both in its membership (linked to state institutions or to criminal organizations) and in its targets – military, economic and social.

All these different actors resort to very different strategies, from punishment to denial and disorganization. Russia and China, in particular, have made use of a vast panoply of instruments to pursue their foreign policy objectives and resist, or oppose, Western sway. Russia has used or is using force in Georgia and Ukraine and

11 The huge pacifist demonstrations that took place in a number of European countries against the deployment of tactical nuclear weapons (in the 1950s) and of middle-range nuclear weapons (in the 1980s) epitomized the daunting task of keeping together the United States, Europe's security provider, and Europe, a possible theatre of war. "Decoupling" between the two sides of the Atlantic was a major concern.

deflected pressure from its Syrian ally with the view of regaining part of the old Soviet influence in the Middle East. China has been increasingly assertive in its territorial disputes with Vietnam and the Philippines. And both China and Russia have apparently made an extensive use of hacking to target Western military and business sectors. These actions test the West's capacity and willingness to react while remaining under a threshold which might trigger an escalation. Thus, China and Russia may disrupt or prevent smooth interactions, negatively impact domestic systems, resist the use of diplomatic or existing conventional tools, renege on international commitments and hollow out the international system of governance. To this extent, the international system has become more complex, more blurred and inherently more unstable than the bipolar system or even the unipolar one, and it diminishes the efficiency of a whole range of tested tools that the West and, in particular, the United States have developed, from military instruments to economic levers. For instance, one of the main resources that the United States possesses, the military, may be increasingly difficult to use. As President Obama put it in May 2014: "Just because we have the best hammer does not mean that every problem is a nail" (Obama 2014). In such a configuration, the transatlantic allies may have increasing difficulties to efficiently leverage power.

Moreover, as stated in the first section of this paper, the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq have fuelled widespread scepticism, including in the US, concerning the usefulness of military interventions for the populations concerned, their efficiency in creating and consolidating viable states and democratic institutions, and the eventual costs, human and financial, private and public, for the countries that have taken part in these wars. Thus, American and European elites and publics have grown closer to each other regarding the use of force (see above). This may eventually strengthen the transatlantic power base and capacity to influence and shape the international environment, and to project troops abroad, if necessary. This evolution may nonetheless have adverse, albeit indirect, consequences on the fabric of transatlantic relations.

Domestic withdrawal

In recent times, both the United States and Europe have tended to give much more attention to domestic rather than international issues. Compounded by the repercussions of the financial crisis and the neglect of public finances under Bush in particular, President Obama has stressed the reconstruction of the economic, technological, social and educational foundations of America (White House 2010). In the European Union, the complexity of the Eurozone crisis and its political repercussions have shaken the European governments into action, in particular the seventeen/eighteen members of the Eurozone, which have worked to strengthen their common economic governance. In other words, the United States and especially the European Union are engrossed in internal travails.

This inward-looking attitude may have consequences, direct and indirect, impacting the transatlantic relation. First, it limits the resources that might be committed to security and security operations. While the United States remains the primary power in terms of military spending, its reduced force structure will result in less capacity to conduct operations in multiple regions. Accordingly, the strategic guidance calls for a fresh approach to the traditional "two-war" force-sizing construct that had shaped defence planning since the end of the Cold War (US Dept of Defense 2012). On the other hand, the Europeans, as is well known, have in most instances cut their defence spending since 2008.

Second, both exercises of introspection, European and American, take place in parallel, albeit with varied approaches, some emphasizing liberalism and deregulation while others lay stress on protectionism and control – a dichotomy which does not oppose Americans and Europeans, however, but rather runs through

both continents. Were domestic issues and recovery effort on both shores of the Atlantic to pull in different directions, and in particular if the Tea Party or a greater part of the Republicans in the United States, or anti-EU parties such as the National Front in France, were to play a greater role, this might further gnaw at the strength and substance of American-European relations, or again of the relations between the United States and individual EU member states.

Ideas, values and norms

The ideas, values and norms that Americans and Europeans share, nourished by generations of intercourse and dialogue – though one should not underestimate the persistence of lingering anti-Americanism in Europe – constitute the normative bedrock of the transatlantic relationship. This common ideational background has also been affected by recent developments.

Certainly, the United States and Europe cherish and further democracy more often than not.[12] They share similar concerns for democracy and the respect of minorities, the rule of law and the spread of the market economy, which constitute the normative bedrock of the transatlantic relationship. Yet, these values and norms may take on different meanings on both sides of the Atlantic. Besides the fact, underlined above, that Americans and Europeans are torn, to a lesser or greater degree, between free-trade and protectionism, a whole range of issues oppose them: the death penalty, the right to bear weapons, the willingness or the unwillingness to limit sovereignty through international covenants such as the International Criminal Court. Furthermore, whereas American National Security Strategies hail freedom, the European Security Strategy puts an emphasis on good governance (European Council 2003).

In recent times, three types of debate or disagreement have given rise to concerns about the endurance of the transatlantic normative background. A first issue revolves around trust. Recent developments, notably the NSA's wiretapping programme, have eroded America's credibility in Europe. Events like those are reminiscent of past crises across the Atlantic, such as the disagreements about the deployment to Europe of US nuclear weapons in the 1950s and particularly in the 1980s. In all these instances, Germany was more vociferously critical of American policies, verging sometimes on anti-Americanism – though these two stances should not be confused. Currently, German reactions towards the extent of NSA surveillance programmes differ starkly from French ones. Visiting Washington in February 2014, French President François Hollande declared the file closed (White House 2014). German Chancellor Angela Merkel, by contrast, who grew up in the German Democratic Republic where surveillance was massive, considered the NSA scandal a major breach of trust, an opinion shared by many of her fellow citizens.[13] Merkel was of course further incensed because of the revelation that the NSA had even tapped her private mobile phone. She suggested a US-German no-spy agreement, but was rebuffed by the US.

In part, the dispute has historical roots. In Germany, greater parts of public opinion have little understanding of the necessity for secret services, including the German Bundesnachrichtendienst. As a German official put it: "What the French, the British and the Americans do not understand is that the Cold War took place in Germany and we were spied on".[14] This is compounded by the lingering sentiment, including among the German military

12 This is not to belittle either the breaches and lapses of Americans and Europeans in previous decades and centuries or the existence of democratic traditions and open debates in other civilizations, as Amartya Sen rightly points out (Sen 2005a and 2005b).

13 According to a poll published in the German weekly *Der Spiegel*, 69 percent of Germans contend that their trust in the US has been recently badly damaged (Feldenkirchen et al. 2014).

14 Interviews, Berlin, February 2014. As far as German officials and public are concerned, the main point now concerns allies spying on allies. As Chancellor Merkel put it on 10 July 2014, it is a "waste of time" (German Government 2014). Chancellor Merkel suggested a

and civilian establishment, of being treated as a junior partner by the US.[15] It is also worth noting that the French have a strong reputation in gathering intelligence, on allies and enemies alike. France belongs to a so-called "second circle", just a step below its "Five Eyes" partners (US, UK, Australia, Canada and New Zealand) among whom information is shared more comprehensively. Germany, by contrast, is only in the third circle. Nonetheless, it should be underlined that the outcry is partly hypocritical, as Europeans proceed to similar breaches inside and outside their countries. Yet, incidents like the NSA scandal nurture distrust across the Atlantic, at a time when the "Soviet overlay" has melted away.

Linked with the issue of trust is the confidence in the other's ability to lead and deliver results. Here the question is one of reciprocity and, to some extent, harks back to the decade-old problem of burden sharing. It concerns both the US capacity to exercise global leadership and the Europeans' ability to deliver on security matters. On the one hand, American officials (such as former Defence Secretary Robert Gates, for instance) have repeatedly lashed at the lack of will of Europeans to increase their military spending (Gates 2011).[16] Some mention a "deep level of frustration" *vis-à-vis* the EU.[17] On the other hand, doubts have increased in Europe, but also in the United States, as to President Obama's resolve to steer global affairs, especially after he backtracked on his promise to strike Syria's government forces for the alleged use of chemical weapons against civilians.[18] We contend here that both elements, mutual trust and confidence in each other's capacity to contribute to the partnership, are today very much central.

There is a last ideational issue of significance when studying transatlantic security affairs, notably the moral rectitude of partners' behaviour. In the 1990s, the US and its European partners agreed on a certain number of issues, from the promotion and extension of democracy and stability in Europe, to interventions in the Balkans, in Sudan and Somalia, to support for democratic transitions (for instance in Cambodia) and independence movements (in East Timor). Yet, certain other issues came to the fore, portending some of the questions troubling the European public and elites in the 2000s. In particular, besides very practical implications, the morality of "no boots on the ground" was raised during the intervention in Yugoslavia. It has come back with the drone-strikes on Al Qaida affiliates in Pakistan or Yemen, where the use of drones further de-materializes or de-humanizes strikes and wars – a process which has been going on for centuries now (d'Aboville 2013). The imprisonment of suspected terrorists without due process and the practice of extraordinary renditions, whereby suspects are illegally transferred to countries where they are subjected to extremely harsh interrogation techniques, provide further examples of diverging judgments and values, even though some European countries, like Poland, provided help regarding rendition.

These ideational differences, while they affect Europeans and Americans in very different ways, also divide Europeans. For instance, the issue of trust is, as indicated above, much more sensitive in Germany than it is in France. Seen from Paris, the major issue is not one of trust but of American disengagement.[19] Seen from Washington, the EU inspires little trust as a security provider, yet the US administration appreciates that some EU countries, such as France and the UK, are willing to take action and even show leadership.[20] In other words,

no-spy agreement that the US administration turned down.

15 Interviews, Berlin, February 2014 and July 2014.

16 Only the UK, France, Estonia and Greece reach the threshold of 2 percent of GDP spent on defence as stipulated by NATO.

17 Interview, Brussels, January 2014.

18 See, e.g., President Hollande's press conference (White House 2014). On American criticisms of President Obama's policy in Syria, cf. Slaughter 2014.

19 Interview, Paris, 2014.

20 Interview, Washington, 2013 and 2014.

it is far too simplistic to speak of transatlantic relations and to lump the Europeans together. The Europeans are very much divided in their attitudes towards the United States, in their analysis and, as we will further see, on a number of specific issues. And their approaches to the United States and, in particular, to the current administration's policies, are extremely varied.

German-American relations are under strain, to the extent that the German public apparently strives for a kind of "equidistance" between the US and Russia.[21] The French, on the other hand, have become immune to American dominance, through years of Gaullism, and cultivate pride in their military, as one of the last remnants of glory in a country in decline. As for the United Kingdom, its relationship with the US has been ambiguous for a long time and, paradoxically enough, anti-Americanism is strongly established in that country (Rigoulot 2004). Furthermore, President Obama has made public his concern that US-UK relations would suffer if the UK were to leave the EU.

These developments impact the nature of the transatlantic relation in three different ways, corresponding to what Tocci and Alcaro (2014) call the conditioning factors within, between and beyond the transatlantic relationship.

- These developments alter the international system in which the transatlantic relationship, born out of necessity in a bygone international context, is embedded;
- They re-order domestic priorities within countries, in the United States and in Europe; and
- They reorient the international concerns of American administrations and those of the EU – or rather, of individual national governments.

This does not mean that international concerns, domestic priorities and the views and values of the members of the Atlantic alliances are necessarily going to diverge. They may converge or coincide, but probably in a more contingent way than was the case when a structural overlay papered over differences.

2.2 Discrepancies over Specific Security Issues

Due to the new, complex, confusing, multi-layered and unstable nature of the international system, the limited use of power as a currency, the need to turn to domestic issues and to reconstruct the fabric of Western societies, and the changes in perception of "the other", the members of the Atlantic Alliance have a limited attention span and limited means and choose to concentrate on certain issues which they deem more pressing than others. This is particularly obvious when one looks at the geo-political concerns that one side of the Atlantic chooses to emphasize, compared to what the other side focuses on.

Rising Powers

Successive American administrations have directed their attention to the arc of crises stretching from Central Asia to South Asia, assessing the rise of China and its geostrategic implications for its neighbours as well as for the US. Implicit in the 1990s Clinton administration's heralding of the "era of the Pacific", or even in the Bush administration's early 2000s notion of a Greater Middle East, the pivot away from Europe is today even more palpable. The Obama administration's "pivot to Asia" indicates that not only the current administration but probably also future ones will concentrate on the challenges emanating from what is to become a super power, in spite of major vulnerabilities. Undoubtedly, China is going to test the limit of US power in Asia (White 2013).

21 TNS Emnid and Allensbach polls, April 2014, quoted by Lehming (2014).

A key issue for American foreign policy, the rise of China is in Europe rarely looked at through a security lens. There are few Europeans who share this concern. Certainly, there are some sparkles of interest. In France's 2013 White Book, the rise of China is referred to as a development that is going to affect France's strategic planning (French Government 2013). The same applies to the UK (2010). The UK is somewhat involved through its membership in the Five Eyes agreement and has a warship in Japan; the French are present in Caledonia and in the Gulf. Since 2013 the EU has had a security and defence dialogue with China (Pawlak 2012). This amounts, however, to little. The Germans, for instance, focus on economic issues, wary of confronting the Chinese, even on such matters as intellectual property or hacking. In a 2011 poll, a majority of Germans said they considered China primarily as an economic partner, while expressing the hope that prosperity will eventually bring about the democratization of the Asian power (TNS Emnid and Körber Foundation 2011).

Additionally, there seems to be no transatlantic debate on China, in stark contrast to the Cold War period when Americans and Europeans exchanged views, changed positions and even quarrelled, pondering what to do with the Soviet Union: to "socialize" it, or "to do regime-change". As a British observer puts it, "What is missing is the fundamental assessment on the dichotomy between economic rise and confrontational policy".[22] Apart from the security forum launched by Swedish Foreign Minister Carl Bildt or the regular conferences held by scholars David Shambaugh and François Godement, there are practically no fora on or with China. The Europeans are struggling to think about ways of finding common ground with the US on China: at the July 2012 ASEAN Regional Forum in Phnom Pen, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and the High Representative of the EU, Catherine Ashton, issued a joint statement on EU-US coordination and cooperation in Asia-Pacific Affairs (US Dept of State 2012). At the same time, as an observer of the Brussels scene puts it, EU member states are viewed as undermining what the EU does, a number of heads of state and government bypassing Brussels to go to Beijing.[23] What is more, American efforts to mildly contain China's rise by reiterating its commitments to Asian allies and by reinforcing its presence in this part of the world are a possible source of tension in East Asia, considered with suspicion in Europe.[24]

The data from the Transworld elite survey confirm what the literature and our interviews point out: Europeans and American have different takes on the importance of Asia. American elites, overall, believe that East Asian countries such as China, Japan and South Korea will be the most important countries for their national interests. Around 60 percent of American opinion leaders and 56 percent of business leaders agree with that assessment, while their European counterparts see the US as the most important country for them by a wide margin. Around 65 percent of European opinion and political leaders continue to regard the US as the most important country for their national interests. This shows an asymmetrical relationship, with one partner looking East and the other looking West.

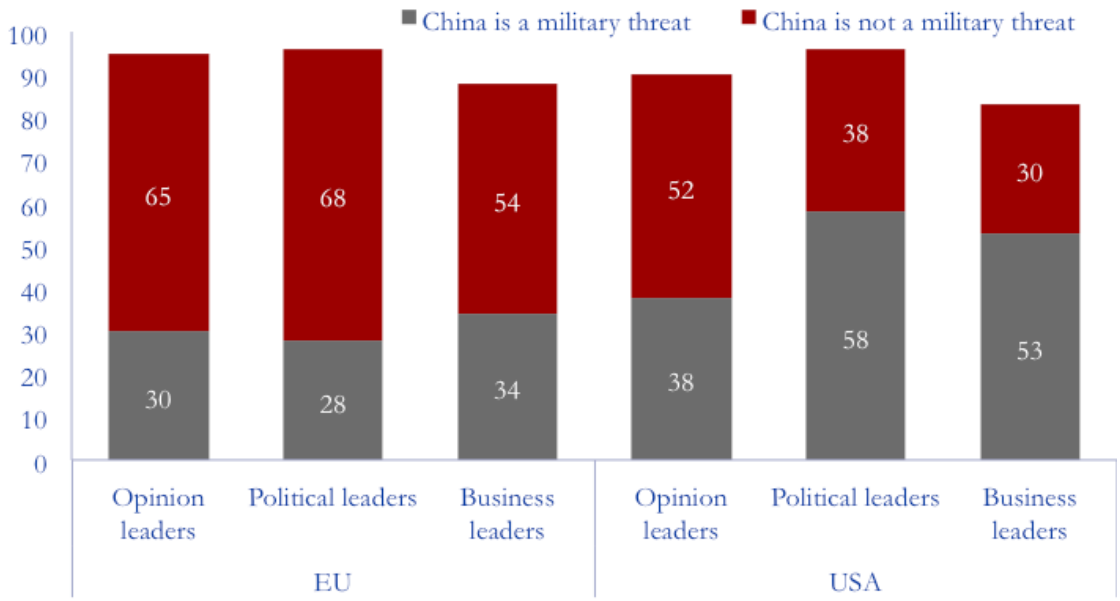
Interestingly, elites across the Atlantic agree that China will be very influential by 2020 but only American elites see the Chinese rise as a military threat. In the survey done, 28 percent of European political elites considered China a military threat, compared to 58 percent of their American counterparts. This means that close to two thirds of US politicians and senior staffers interviewed as part of Transworld were willing to catalogue China as a security threat. Fifty-three percent of American business leaders agreed with them (see Figure 10).

22 Interview, London, May 2014.

23 Interview, Brussels, January 2014.

24 Various interviews.

• Figure 10 | **Is China a military threat? (%)**



Europeans and Americans seem to be more aligned when it comes to assessing China's rise from an economic angle. Both display similar levels of worry on this score, although, once again, Americans seem to be somewhat more concerned. Sixty-one percent of the American general public and 42 percent of business leaders feel economically threatened by China's rise, higher figures than for Europeans. In other words, the transatlantic partners are in disagreement regarding how to interpret China's rise, whether as opportunity or threat, and, above all, whether it has security and military implications or not.[25]

Furthermore, it should be underlined that while the Americans are "pivoting to Asia", Europeans either recoil from getting involved in conflicts beyond the continent's borders or again, when they are willing to project force overseas, like the French and the British, tend to focus on Europe's vicinity, i.e., in Africa or even the Middle East (see below the section on terrorism). One question repeatedly asked in interviews, as to how Europeans would react in case of a war "by accident" in South East Asia involving China and the US, revealed that this is a non-topic – even though, as one security expert in Brussels underlines, the EU might contribute in areas such as protection of sea-lanes, cyber-security and confidence-building measures.[26] Diverse and even divided as they are, the Europeans tend to stress the dangers posed by instabilities in their surroundings: the Swedes and Finns, the Baltic states, the Poles and the Romanians are worried by the resurgence of a Russian threat, a concern which the German, French and British governments share only to some extent, while neither the Hungarian, Bulgarian or Cypriot governments and/or populations do. Italy, Spain, France and the UK are more concerned by the chaos and instability in North Africa and the Middle East.

25 It needs to be pointed out here that fear about China's rise is a concern for American elites more than a matter of general public opinion. The American public has held very similar views about China over the past two decades, despite its economic rise. According to our colleague Shoon Murray and to relatively consistent mass polling data coming out of the US, although Americans are "aware of China's economic growth, critical of its trade policies, and wary of its potential military strength […] there is little indication that [they] perceive China with increased hostility or fear" (Murray 2012).

26 Interview, Brussels, January 2014.

Russia's greater assertiveness lays bare a divide internal to the EU more than between the EU and the US. There are huge differences between Europeans as to how they view Russia and the way Russia should be dealt with. The American government has been more determined and forceful in resorting to sanctions while the Europeans remain at odds with one another – from the Austrian, Hungarian, Bulgarian and Cypriot governments which entertain good or very good relations with the Kremlin to the Swedish, Polish, Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian governments which criticize Russian policies and advocate a strong reaction. Following the 17 June 2014 downing of MH 17, a civilian flight that overflew Ukraine and was most probably shot down by Russia-armed and -trained rebels, the European Council finally agreed on 29 June on a third series of sanctions, targeting the financial, energy and defence sectors. President Putin was, however, received by Austrian President Fischer and Austria's energy company OMV signed a contract with Gazprom, on 24 June 2014, an opening which Swedish Foreign Minister Bildt strongly criticized.[27] Different economic entanglements partly explain the differences. While the US and Russia are much less interdependent economically than Russia and Europe, the EU members states depend to various degrees and with varying consequences on Russia as a supplier and as a market. Total dependency on Gazprom's deliveries does not imply closeness to the Russian regime, though. The most vocal opponents to sanctioning Russia are those countries that entertain an intensive and often multifarious relation with Russia, Italy and Austria in particular. Germany, whose economy is most interlinked with Russia's, is divided, though the Chancellor is trying to embrace all these different factions, taking in the Poles and the French to increase her clout, while squaring the circle of a German public opinion which is largely wary of Vladimir Putin's intentions, yet fearful of confronting Russia, and businessmen, some of whom are very close to the Russian regime (though the President of the BDI publicly supported the German Chancellor's tougher line).

Military retaliation, however, is not in the picture. Certainly, Russia is a security threat to both EU and US, especially since 2014. Yet, having acted in multiple and often covert ways short, so far, of outright military invasion (except in 2008 in Georgia), the Russian government has skilfully avoided provoking a strong US-EU reaction, though it may be overplaying its hand in Ukraine, meeting increasingly strong sanctions while its economy bears the brunt of uncertainty. However, it is far from obvious that the Kremlin's actions in eastern Ukraine will strengthen NATO around its core task, article 5, as a number of commentators thought, at the Brussels Forum in March for instance. Chancellor Merkel opposes the stationing of NATO troops in the Baltic states, as some advocate, since it would contravene the NATO-Russia agreement of 1997.

Terrorism

For both the US and European countries, terrorism in the guise of Islam is a major challenge. As a security expert in Brussels has put it, "If the core interest is terrorism, that changes the game".[28] From Pakistan and Afghanistan to Iraq in the latter part of the last decade and in the 2010s, successive American administrations have defined their vital interest in waging wars against terrorists in that area. In the past few years since the election of Barack Obama, the US has attempted to leave a lighter footprint, resorting to drone strikes because a war is not winnable, and public opinion is growing wary of putting men on the ground. The perimeter of drone strikes against terrorists has, however, widened in the past years, to include Yemen and Somalia. Here lies a major difference between Europeans and Americans. Though Europeans certainly never discarded the importance of Afghanistan (but were torn on the question of Iraq), the war there was hardly a European priority – aside, perhaps, from the United Kingdom. For the other Europeans, the defence of Europe did not start at the Hindu Kush. In Afghanistan, the Europeans' presence served basically to support and legitimize the American operation and to complement the wider US strategy. It sometimes paved the way towards changes in Washington's discourse

27 "Update 3-Austria signs Russian pipeline deal, hosts rare Putin visit", *Reuters*, 24 June 2014, http://reut.rs/1plJEsO.

28 Interview, Brussels, January 2014.

(advocating early on negotiations with the Taliban) and helped to develop, together with the Americans, albeit messily, NATO Training Missions.[29]

But whereas Afghanistan was not a priority for the Europeans, one may wonder whether there are other theatres of terrorist activity which may harm European interests. The EU and its member states certainly feel more threatened by the alienated young men that the ESS mentioned in 2003 than the US administration does: the ESS points at Europe as a vanguard of and a backyard to terrorism. The Europeans – or rather, some Europeans, the French in particular – are deeply worried by, and involved in, North Africa and Saharan and sub-Saharan Africa, alert to the spread of weapons from Libya to Mali, the boost it gave to rebellions in sub-Saharan Africa and the proliferation of extremist groups, as well as the radicalization of individuals with European passports, including those in or coming back from Syria (see below). The French White Books of 2008 and 2013, for instance, draw attention to this arc of crises spanning the Atlantic, the Sahel, the Horn of Africa and the Gulf. Here again, one can only underline differences between Europeans.[30] While some German officials call for more intervention, nothing has happened so far; and while the French sent troops to Mali, it seems that the British government is putting greater emphasis on purely intelligence and police operations.

Does this difference in regional concerns point at divergences between Americans and (some) Europeans? First, the United States remains a global power, while, as the European Security Strategy published in 2003 and cosmetically revised in 2008 subliminally puts it, the European Union is, first and foremost, a regional power, though it admits to having some global interests (European Council 2003). The US certainly is concerned with security in Africa: the United States Africa Command was created in 2007, a major shift in US policy towards Africa and an indication that the US is concerned with terrorism on that continent. Second, would the United States support the EU's regional interests? In Libya, the United States led from behind, putting means at the Europeans' disposal and yet shunning major involvement. In Mali, where France intervened in early 2013 to stem the offensive of a coalition of separatists and extremist Islamists that threaten to top the central government, the United States provided some logistical support, albeit reluctantly. The French did not get the material they asked for, and support came in only two weeks after Paris's request.[31] Third, the EU's actions and its member-states' interventions bring the United States some relief in its fight against terrorism. France's intervention in Mali has certainly been helpful, as interviews in Washington underlined. Moreover, a senior EU official confirmed that the Americans are happy to talk to the EU regarding operations in Africa, like Atalanta or EUTM Somalia, where the Union is helping fight piracy and train Somali security forces: "Here we communicate with the Americans" and "they [the Americans] are interested in what we do."[32]

Eventually, this demonstrates a kind of division of labour, mostly concerted, between the United States and some Europeans, but not between Europeans.[33] The main area where European and American interests overlap is the Middle East, with the post-World War I order falling apart, borders vanishing, transnational migrations on the rise, the desire of jihadist groups such as ISIL to create a caliphate straddling Iraq, Syria and Lebanon, and the involvement of major states which have the power to prevent, foil, foster and shape events, such as Iran and Russia. The Middle East limits the magnitude of the US pivot, while by virtue of being at the EU's doorstep, it is an area of major concern for Europeans. Hence the American strikes against ISIL in Iraq and the decision taken by the European Council in August 2014 to arm the Kurdish Peshmerga, a decision the implementation of which is

29 This point was made by Nicolas Escharek (SciencesPo) in his contribution to this report.

30 Interview, London, May 2014.

31 Interview, Paris, March 2014. Also President Obama's sudden turnaround on strikes against Syria was not discussed with the French President who advocated them.

32 Interview, Brussels, April 2014.

33 Various interviews.

left to individual states, the United Kingdom, France and Germany in particular (European Council 2014). France has launched military strikes against ISIL in Iraq on 19 September 2014.[34]

Conclusion

Our research has shed light on numerous aspects of the transatlantic security relationship. We find the partnership to be overall an enduring one, particularly in terms of shared values and a number of objectives, though not all. However, not only different approaches to the methods used to attain certain goals, but also divergent goals and the extremely fragmented nature of the international system – which is difficult to decipher, where threats are numerous, and where the use of force might be very difficult – might drive a wedge between the Europeans, or some Europeans, and the Americans. This is the case not only in the fight against terrorism, or the approach towards the rise of China, but also regarding Russia. As underlined in the paper, the fight against terrorism is an objective shared by all on both sides of the Atlantic. Yet, questions arise as to the morality of drones. More importantly however, Americans and Europeans do not share the same concern for the same geographical areas. This may not lead to divergences and opposition, if an implicit or explicit division of labour takes place with the US supporting European (French) interventions in Africa. However, Europeans seem more passive in supporting Americans, from Iraq to Afghanistan and Pakistan, though Iraq and the Middle East is a source of concern for all.

The rise of China may lead to even greater divergences. This issue might prove to be one of the greatest challenges for the Atlantic partnership: Americans and Europeans might part ways. Particularly, this might be the case on a policy of containment of China if the US is entangled in a conflict in Asia, due to its alliances in the region. For any American administration, China will be a major source of concern, while Europeans tend to adopt a very low profile. In case of major contingencies, it is far from certain that a division of labour might take place with Europeans relieving the United States, in the Strait of Hormuz for instance.

Last but not least, it is not certain that Russia's policy of fomenting dissent in eastern Ukraine will re-invigorate NATO and breathe new life into article 5, considering the fact that the Kremlin has avoided so far any blatant military intervention (or that, in the case of Georgia in 2008, the Georgian leader had started the war, certainly after many provocations). In any case, it underlines that nuclear weapons do not put a brake on interventions – as they sometimes did during the Cold War, in Berlin but not in Budapest nor Prague – but rather buttress authoritarian regimes which defy the Western-defined rules of international order.

The notions of structural drift, functional partnership or enduring partnership may not fully capture the essence of future US/EU/European relations. A number of reasons account for this: a) the tendency in both the US and in Europe to focus on domestic issues; b) the absence of any alternative leadership apart from the US, and the pressure it puts on the US to remain, perhaps unwillingly, the global *gendarme*, while some Europeans will fill in some gaps (mainly the British and the French in Africa); and c) the security challenges the Europeans themselves face and their inability to turn their common defence arrangements (CSDP in particular) into a credible alliance.

Where does this lead us, and is NATO, as the cornerstone of the Atlantic Alliance, still a relevant and crucial embodiment of a resilient transatlantic relation? Opinions here fluctuate, notably concerning the consequences

34 French Presidency, Déclaration du président au sujet de l'Irak, 19 September 2014, http://www.elysee.fr/declarations/article/declaration-du-president-au-sujet-de-l-irak.

of the Afghanistan campaign, stabilization and state-building undertakings.[35] Some American observers have argued that NATO greatly helped improve the war effort in Afghanistan, reducing incoherence, particularly in training (Chayes 2007). Russia's infringement on Ukrainian sovereignty enticed many in the transatlantic community to believe that "we are back to territorial defence".[36] Since then, enthusiasm, if one may call it that, has cooled down. As a French analyst puts it, NATO may essentially fulfil two purposes, firstly to reassure the Balts and the Poles – in which case, as Sikorski pithily remarked, the goal is partly missed – and secondly to help the French strengthen interoperability.[37] Generally speaking, NATO remains a very useful tool and accumulates experience. For instance, it has been able to learn immensely, and this is most visible in the NATO Training Mission-Afghanistan (NTM-A).[38]

One of the most enduring features in this changing landscape might therefore be NATO, which could remain a useful tool-kit for sporadic (and maybe modest) military actions, and a framework for the preservation of ties and the fostering of some level of cooperation across the Atlantic. However, as seen above, NATO is undergoing a number of strains, linked to its "globalization" as well as to the re-activation of its initial purpose, to contain Russia and defend Europe. We have seen that the burden of waging wars in Afghanistan and Iraq and their dramatic lack of efficiency have dented the willingness of the Allies to use military force. Furthermore, the means that the Russian regime resorts to in Ukraine do not boost NATO's standing and legitimacy, including among its new members, as it is not able to match the multifarious actions of militias, mercenaries, spies, propagandists and weapon providers backed by the Kremlin in eastern Ukraine. Furthermore, the German Chancellor opposes the deployment of NATO troops in the Baltic States. Hence, competitive trends will decide the future of NATO, between, on the one hand, the necessity to keep it alive, the framework of political cooperation it offers, its usefulness in providing logistical support and inter-operability etc., and on the other, the doubts concerning its efficiency in meeting future challenges.

The developments noted above point to a world of mostly ad hoc coalitions, between the US, the UK, France and others – like Israel for instance – around specific security issues in an amorphous, "liquid" world. It might well be the case that we see a certain division of labour within the partnership. Europeans will certainly focus more on their surroundings while Americans will be more concerned about East Asia and other areas. Transworld elite survey results underpin this conclusion while, at the same time, underlining a certain willingness on the part of the Europeans to assume greater responsibility (and autonomy) in international affairs – or at least on the part of some Europeans, the French in particular but the British also, while the Germans have still a way to go. The development of some specific and autonomous capacities, in the case of intelligence in particular, contributes to a strong type of cooperation in this area. However, it will not be enough to sustain global security governance in a world undermined by different types of actors who challenge Western-written rules.

35 This point was also made by Nicolas Fescharek (SciencesPo) in his contribution to this report.

36 Interview, Washington, March 2014.

37 Interview, Paris, March 2014.

38 Interview, Brussels, April 2014.

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The Project

In an era of global flux, emerging powers and growing interconnectedness, transatlantic relations appear to have lost their bearings. As the international system fragments into different constellations of state and non-state powers across different policy domains, the US and the EU can no longer claim exclusive leadership in global governance. Traditional paradigms to understand the transatlantic relationship are thus wanting. A new approach is needed to pinpoint the direction transatlantic relations are taking. TRANSWORLD provides such an approach by a) ascertaining, differentiating among four policy domains (economic, security, environment, and human rights/democracy), whether transatlantic relations are drifting apart, adapting along an ad hoc cooperation-based pattern, or evolving into a different but resilient special partnership; b) assessing the role of a re-defined transatlantic relationship in the global governance architecture; c) providing tested policy recommendations on how the US and the EU could best cooperate to enhance the viability, effectiveness, and accountability of governance structures.

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Mainly funded under the European Commission's 7th Framework Programme, TRANSWORLD is carried out by a consortium of 13 academic and research centres from the EU, the US and Turkey:
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