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**The New Challenges to the Euro-
American Relationship:
Russia and the Middle East**

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*The example of a great nation
in which the rights of man are respected
is useful to all other nations, irrespective of the
differences in climate, customs and constitutions*
Condorcet (referring to the USA), 1786

We have not reached the “end of history”, but this is one of its crossroads, a hinge, like Westphalia in 1648, Vienna in 1815, Versailles in 1919, San Francisco in 1945 (or the soon forgotten Paris in 1990). We are all, in other words, once again ‘present at the creation’. Not much further than the square one that Roosevelt and Truman established seventy years ago. The “winds of change” that Harold MacMillan detected in 1956¹ are blowing anew.

International relations have to cope with unprecedented situations, in what is essentially a systemic transition from traditional power-politics to global cooperative endeavors. Having discovered that military might is not decisive anymore, that deterrence cannot apply to non-state troublemakers and terrorists, and that, both regionally and globally, self-protective instincts prevail over international solidarity. While borders do not mean much anymore, state sovereignty makes a comeback. A mixture of inherent contradictions, that only a new international paradigm can cope with, and that only ‘the West’ appears able, if less willing, to provide.

The Euro-American relationship² is sickly, out of prolonged neglect, acquired bad habits and the resulting indifference. In the ‘old continent’, the anti-American syndrome of many a leftist group in the Sixties and Seventies has turned into a more pervasive annoyance with Washington doing either too much or too little in Europe’s stead: a resentment without emancipation, as it were. Similarly, across the Atlantic, the usual criticism resurfaces about Europe not carrying its fair share of the international burden, not only militarily, but also in political and economic terms. A situation that even the financial crisis, President Obama’s ‘disengagement’ or Putin’s Crimean grab have so far proved unable to traumatize back into shape. A state of affairs that cannot be allowed to linger, as it spreads the impression that the transatlantic relationship has lost its original vision and its very inner identity, thus becoming internationally irrelevant. Oswald Spengler’s century-old ‘decline of the West’ prediction is again upon us, apparently sapping the political energy out of its leaders and public opinion alike. Prematurely, as we will try to argue. Which is what the Americans and Europeans should jointly demonstrate.

When the Wall fell, a re-invigorated West hailed the dawn of a ‘new world order’, which was not actually new, as it implied in essence reverting to the UN

¹ At the time of Suez and Budapest; which ushered in decolonization.

² Throughout the text, I will use the terms ‘trans-Atlantic’ whenever the Atlantic Alliance is implied, and ‘Euro-American’ when referring to the broader relationship.

Charter³. Starting with the reintegration of a Europe “whole and free”, a process that involved initially the support and cooperation of Gorbachev’s Russia, through the NATO-Russia Council and a EU ‘strategic partnership’, in the broader framework of the OSCE. Abruptly, ‘nine/eleven’ changed all that, tearing the international fabric apart. Since then, we all learned that military might has become obsolete, i.e. ineffective, inconclusive. After a couple of decades of muddling through, and Putin’s Russia changing course, the developments in Syria, Ukraine and Mesopotamia are again straining and discrediting a West that could not prevent or intervene adequately in them. Yet, when the predicaments become extreme, it is always to ‘the West’ that the world’s attention turns to, expecting it to come to the rescue. In spite of President Obama’s proclaimed intention to have America take a step back, the US remains the ‘indispensable nation’ in the steadying of international situations. Hopefully, with the Europeans in tow.

Increasingly dramatic world events challenge not only the integrated military structure of NATO, but also the underlying political texture of the Atlantic Alliance. After half a century of European free-riding, followed by ‘ad hoc’ expeditionary operations, the transatlantic partnership is presently reminded of its original political and operational purpose, albeit in quite different international circumstances. It must now demonstrate, not so much its ability to respond, but rather its enduring willingness to continue in its attempt to steer the future world prospects. The nature of the issues that need to be addressed hasn’t changed, but there are no clear-cut answers on how best to ensure some measure of world governance.

“America is alone in the world”⁴

The Euro-American relationship has always been a “troubled partnership”, as Kissinger described it as far back as 1965⁵: a house divided, geographically, structurally, functionally; yet indispensable to this very day, not only for world stability but also for the cohesiveness of an enlarged Europe. The end of the Cold War was supposed to send it out of business; it went instead ‘out of area’, beyond its territorial purview, with mixed results and further inner stress, while its European component failed to come up with a consistent political and military contribution of its own. Which resulted in anti-Americanism and anti-Europeanism bouncing off the respective shores.

As a wit appropriately summed it up, after the fall of the Wall (‘eleven/nine’) ‘we all went shopping’: assuming that things would take care of themselves. The enlargements of both NATO and the EU occurred as a logical result,

³ in “the resumption of the pursuit of ends which the use of Soviet force had interrupted”, as Acheson lamented when ‘present at the (previous) creation’ (*A Democrat looks at his Party*”, Harper & Bros, New York, 1955).

⁴ the title of a book that Luigi Barzini Jr (mostly famous in the US for his 1964 *The Italians*) published in Italy with Mondadori in 1952 and the following year in the States, with Random Ho.

⁵ In *The Troubled partnership: a reappraisal of the Western Alliance*”, McGraw Hill, New York, 1965. Which is what Pres. Kennedy had also tried to remedy to, suggesting a ‘twin pillar’ that never came to fruition

automatically, almost absent-mindedly. Until New York's terrible wake-up call ('nine/eleven') shook the world's conscience and led to the 'war on terror', with the ensuing knee-jerk, one-sided interventions in Afghanistan, in Iraq, etc. etc. The international stability and security having apparently spun out of control, NATO was called back into action, as the only operational tool-box available. Which resulted in its political significance being gradually lost. The UK tried to restore its 'special relationship' with Washington (producing an unexpected backlash on both Blair and Bush junior); France, under Chirac, found it expedient to reassert its 'special status' (until Sarkozy, and now Hollande, reversed course); reunited Germany became America's main 'phone number' while clinging to its own *sonderweg* (in order to shirk responsibilities in military matters); Italy remains in mid-stream (inclining towards the US whenever it loses its grip on Europe).

The transatlantic relationship managed nevertheless to prove its mettle during the European institutional enlargement, a demand- rather than supply-driven process, requiring NATO's security guarantees to open the way for the EU's economic follow-up. A result that Gorbachev embraced and Putin now reneges, which is what deprives the West of wider and more conclusive results, adding to the distorted impression that the Atlantic alliance is in shambles, unable to cope with the new global challenges.

America's assertive ('together when we can, alone if we must') approach has run into many shortcomings and counterproductive results, leading to President Obama's election on a platform of 'retrenchment' from direct international involvement, with the ensuing 'don't do stupid stuff' and 'lead from behind' shorthand labels. The White House, not without many a dispute with the Republican opposition, has reached out beyond its traditional allies, extending its hand to new 'partners' in the Arab world, even to Iran, trying to 'reset' the relationship with Moscow, 'pivoting' to Asia in seeking a more productive relationship with China. The response has not been very encouraging, turning even tragically negative as evildoers took advantage of what was wrongly perceived as a strategic void that a retreating US was leaving in its wake. As a result, the Crimean 'coup' and the 'caliphate' folly have put the Euro-American relationship back center-stage. In the never-ending pendulum of international relations.

Post-modern security

The new security environment, ambiguously labeled as 'post-modern'⁶, with the new transnational challenges that result from it, calls upon the Euro-American partnership to reassess its inner conviction and sense of purpose. The West cannot prove decisive any more, but it still retains the critical mass needed to encourage others to follow suit, as the UN Charter would have it. It's the underlying intentions, rather than precise contingency plans hard to define in such a confused world scene, which must be revisited and narrated anew, as a backdrop to a hopefully broader, even if

⁶ i.e. the post-balance of power, cooperative security system underpinning Francis Fukuyama's *End of History* and John Ikenberry's *Liberal Leviathan*.

diversified, international involvement in concurring endeavors. The new strains surfacing in the Atlantic Alliance should not obfuscate the corresponding new opportunities. The tasks are unprecedented and therefore need to be argued out, both domestically and internationally, as they are woven into any joint operational texture.

Fundamentally, the reintegration of the international system is the overriding reason that requires 'the West' to continue taking the initiative: if not as the pivot of a new world order it has contributed so much to bring about, at least as a stabilizing factor, much as the graphite rod that controls the nuclear fuel cycle. The American role remains essential in keeping the world focused on the 'international liberalism' that Woodrow Wilson's 'fourteen points' invoked. Such a prospect requires however not so much the resolve of single-minded allies, as the concurring, even if not always up-front, involvement of an increasing number of like-minded partners⁷. It should of course be primarily up to Europe to pick up the slack, contributing its soft/smart power to the more coherent and visible carrot-and-stick, civil/military combination that global circumstances nowadays require.

In the new world scenarios, deterrence is obviously not as effective as during the good-old MAD days; worse, the US 'globocop' has repeatedly let it be known that it is sick and tired of pulling every chestnut out of the fire⁸. Still, many an international actor, even if 'otherwise engaged' (Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Iran, apart from Russia and China) relies upon the West intervening, in the pursuit of different national advantages. A 'softening' of the American profile, which Europe should contribute to, could therefore prove quite useful not only in the enduring situations where the balance of power still reigns supreme, but also in the many circumstances where cooperative, normative networks develop, i.e., in the trade, environment, energy negotiations.

Mars and Venus

Reconciling the double-face 'indispensable' versus 'reluctant sheriff' nation implies reducing America's overextended involvement while nudging the Europeans forward. Essentially reverting to the 'ethical realism' approach, i.e. the combination of the longer-term ideal goal with shorter-term ad hoc, pragmatic actions, that Niebuhr called for in the similar transitional situation towards the end of the second world war. In the appropriate mix of dissuasion and persuasion, firmness and willingness to compromise: internationally, the new civilian-military approach to crisis management and conflict settlement nowadays requires it; domestically, the hiatus in international matters, between the American retrenchment and the European integration process, is

⁷ Jurgen Habermas speaks of "the ability to promote common actions without predetermining the result we would like them to achieve" (in his *The Divided West*). Echoing what Acheson maintained in 1955: "the task of leadership in a free coalition is the task of obtaining and maintaining consent to common policies and programs" (op.cit. in note 1).

⁸ As far back as Baker's 'no dog in this fight', when the Balkans started to blow apart (having to backtrack when things went out of control, and the European 'fine moment' came and went).

narrowing⁹. In other words, as many a Renaissance painter has illustrated, Mars and Venus can become the best of companions (possibly with Athena, the Wise, in attendance)¹⁰.

When all is said and done, world events certify that the center of gravity is still in Europe. At least as long as Putin's attitude remains a stumbling block on the road to the reintegration of the continent and, consequently, of the international system as a whole. The West should not, maybe, continue to boast that it has been and still is the benevolent master of a universe it has contributed to democratize along the lines drawn up decades ago in San Francisco. But it can (and must) still constitute its engine, as events world-wide prove that it constitutes the only international actor willing to carry water to the mill of history. Its defining contribution is pluralism (the brand of democracy) in the direction of a global *agora*, wherein a more accurate redefinition of international relationships can best occur. Starting, possibly, with Europe's own back-yard and proximate neighborhood.

Indeed, the least that can be said is that neither the Arab states nor Russia¹¹ are adapting well to globalization. The general thrust of the EU's 'neighborhood policies', addressed simultaneously to the Eastern European successor states of the USSR, to the Western Balkans and to the Mediterranean partners, does not discriminate between them, in that it expresses its willingness to engage in incremental cooperative endeavors with all of them, not leading necessarily to full membership. The EU's gravitational pull has thus proven to be the alternative to a military clout it does not have, nor seeks¹². The parallel tracks followed by NATO and the EU enlargements have however provided Putin with the pretext to turn ostensibly its back on the 'strategic partnership' that Brussels had suggested and that Moscow has consistently shunned, rejecting the implicit 'aggressive' impact of its conditionalities, declaredly incompatible with the traditions of Russian civilization. Thus raising another clash-of-civilisations issue, openly contradicting Gorbaciov's *perestroika*'s emphatic statement that ideological confrontation was over, and that a more equal relationships between Europe, America and Russia would benefit the common interests of the continent and of the world at large.

The turmoil in the Mediterranean basin must also be addressed jointly, in its quite separate origins and components between its Middle-Eastern and Northern-African components. The way-out common to both can nevertheless only be in the

⁹ Even in social and economic policies, domestically, as the US becomes more welfare-oriented and Europe more laissez-faire.

¹⁰ Robert Kagan, who came up with that simile, now argues, together with his Brookings colleague Martin Indik (in the *New York Times International*), that "everything the United States wants to accomplish in the world can be better accomplished with the help of and cooperation of our allies". Vice-President Biden, at the *Wehrkunde* of 2013 put it even more forcefully: "Europe is the cornerstone of our commitment with the rest of the world ... the catalyzer of our global cooperation".

¹¹ Both of them relying on their oil, rather than on shared markets.

¹² Apart from the fact that, as Zbigniew Brzezinsky maintained in an article entitled *A Geostategy for Eurasia*, on the September/October 1997 issue of *Foreign Affairs*, "any expansion of the EU's political scope is automatically an expansion of American influence".

gradual establishment of a comprehensive inter-Arab approach (benefiting also sub-Saharan Africa), with outside political encouragement and negotiating assistance. Post-war history has demonstrated that Europe and America cannot suffice, as the influence of the whole international community, particularly of Russia as a Permanent Member of the UN Security Council, should be brought to bear (which could also occasionally divert the Kremlin's mind off its Ukrainian obsession).

So far, in Bosnia, Kosovo, Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, Libya, Iraq again (apart from here and there in Africa), and now with respect to Ukraine and the ISIS, the Euro-American track record has been hesitant, at times confused and confusing, when not openly divergent; and the results widely disputed all around, the exit strategies as conscience-wrenching as the decision to intervene, both of them always unilaterally.

The road ahead

What then does the road ahead look like? Lest it loses its very soul and identity, even in the absence of interlocutors, especially in the Security Council, with whom to share its concerns and intentions, the West cannot disavow its determination to try and remedy the most serious shortcomings of a world in transition, while keeping an eye, of course, on the mirror of an always critical public opinion, domestic and foreign. If unable to steer events, the Euro-American relationship's added-value in terms of political influence or negotiating weight, can still be relied upon, if only to contain them¹³.

Putin's behavior in Ukraine resulted in restoring NATO's core business, political rather than merely securitarian. Washington and Brussels should link arms in rejecting the argument that their enlargement policies have military implications against Russia. On the other hand, it should be kept in mind that, even in Europe, the many critical circumstances (and 'hybrid wars') might not always require a military 'trip-wire' strategy. 'Out-of-area' tasks should be undertaken as needed, although in the form of last-resort, possibly 'over-the-horizon' expeditionary operations, enlisting in the process any like-minded, converging fellow-traveller, in result-oriented, ad-hoc coalitions which would gradually increase the number of stake-holders in a more stable, predictable, world; regardless of their 'human rights record', which should not be considered a prerequisite, but may instead become an additional result. Which could allow for the convergence of security and stabilization responsibility-taking, sedimenting a participatory, plural albeit rules-based international system. Given the current blockage of the Security Council, the multilateral process promoted by the UN would thus be revived from the outside, through actions that, even when not strictly legal by the book, are legitimate to the extent that respect its spirit of the Charter and increase international consensus.

¹³ thus keeping alive Kennan containment theory's prescription to apply pressure not across the boards, but especially at critical junctions.

Once again ‘at the creation’, the Euro-American ‘West’, with its Australian, New Zealanders, Japanese and assorted other associates, must of course engage in a renewed, improved narrative¹⁴; mostly, in order to describe its intentions, restate and revive the principles that underpin them, solicit and enlist multilateral, albeit diversified, participation. The pattern should not lead to uniform performances, but rather in the concurrent compatibility of individual behaviors, much like the gyroscope in an airplane. Democracy cannot and should not be exported, being quite able to export itself nowadays in the public squares of the world: not in a one-size-fits-all model, as it consists in a participatory pluralism. Post-modernity would thereby establish its trade-mark in the spontaneous transition of international relations from the traditional intergovernmental balance of forces into a cooperative (i.e., convergent) and comprehensive (i.e., multi-faceted) security network, that many a ‘rogue’ may violently and spectacularly object to, but cannot force to reverse course. In an incremental approach that allows for the occasional parting of ways, providing that they do not result in cross-purposes.

A vision or a strategy?

More than a decade ago, in December 2003, the then High Representative of the EU, Javier Solana (a former Secretary General of NATO) came up, under his own authority, with a ‘European Security Strategy’. Its basic tenets were not far removed from the then just revised US strategy: stressing the need for threat prevention and force projection, and identifying ‘failed states’ as the overriding concern¹⁵. Not much of a blueprint for the EU to act upon, but an important recognition nevertheless that Europe had finally realized, alongside the US and NATO, the need to pull its act together, in order to achieve what was described as “effective multilateralism”. Since then, as the world scene became much more intricate, with the addition of global financial woes, Middle-Eastern instability and Russia reverting to Soviet-style obstructionism, Brussels did not cover much more conceptual, political or operational ground. Rightly so, some argue, as a more articulated and assertive European security agenda, in the absence of a more coherent trans-Atlantic relationship, would have been scorned as ‘a mouse that roars’¹⁶.

In any case, one should admit that the European Common Security and Defense Policy (CSDP) will never rise above an improved coherence and coordination of national policies with respect to shifting international contingencies, which will need to be addressed with different interstate combinations (‘variable geometries’, ‘reinforced structured cooperations’). In any case, a more credible

¹⁴ “We don’t even tell our story very well, these days”, was one of Hillary Clinton’s comments as she relinquished the Department of State.

¹⁵ Its most forceful statement was: “We need to develop a strategic culture that fosters early, rapid and, when necessary, robust intervention ... We need to be able to act before countries around us deteriorate, when signs of proliferation are detected, and before humanitarian emergencies arise”.

¹⁶ Yet, both the EU and President Obama have, almost concurrently, been awarded the Nobel Peace Prize, an indication of the expectations they raised rather than their achievements.

European influence in world affairs will not stem from an overwhelming military might (which the EU is in any case genetically unwilling to wield or contribute to), but rather from a demonstrable ability to generate the appropriate combination of military reassurance, economic sanctions or inducements, and diplomatic persuasion. With respect, in particular, to the 'belt of instability', of 'frozen conflicts', that still divide our continent. An unfinished business, which Putin's Russia is clearly unwilling to tackle as, in the footsteps of the 2008 events in Georgia, they provide the 'foot in the door' that Moscow wants to maintain. An issue which the EU cannot address single-handedly: quite apart from the supposed division between 'old' and 'new' Europe, it's a matter of working out with America not so much a common front, as much as a shared, albeit diversified, strategy. A double pronged approach which Russia may eventually decide to relate to.

The relevant decalogue was drawn up long ago, with the Helsinki CSCE Final Act agreed upon in 1975 by every European state, that proved instrumental for Moscow's eventual acceptance, under Gorbachev, of the need for a 'common European house'. A commitment that Putin blatantly reneged, blocking the road (just as Stalin in 1945) to a common pan-European engagement.

World-wide, when all is said and done, the nagging question, remains (as an *Economist's* cover recently put it): "What would America fight for?"; indicating the nagging anxiety that it might simply not turn up when and as expected. It is not so much a matter, as some fear, of the 'old continent' having to fend off for itself as America disengages, resetting and pivoting its relations with the rest of the world; but rather of rearranging the furniture in our trans-Atlantic home. Making it more inhabitable as a political center of gravity, the linchpin as it were, for the reintegration of the entire system of international relations.

The unending issue of 'burden-sharing' has become much more than a matter of defense budgets, implying instead a closer coordination of strategic agendas, from which the military expenditures would derive. It implies also more decision-sharing. The answer to the above question, therefore, should first and foremost be addressed in a more thorough, systematic, Euro-American consultative process, according to art. IV of the Washington Treaty: much further upstream than has so far been the case: i.e., usually at the very last minute, in emergency situations, for operative, not political coordination purposes¹⁷. With the aim to address the broader and longer-term strategic backdrop to the otherwise maddening day-to-day events: i.e., identifying jointly the relevant issues, analyzing their components, assessing the threat they constitute, establishing the priorities, and distributing the respective tasks as needed, much before the requirement arises of deciding on the respective, coordinated actions that may be required. In the appropriate mixture of Europe's preventive, persuasive, soft role, and the US' prescriptive, admonishing, hard attitude. With a sprinkle of smart power, for both of them.

¹⁷ A requirement that has been felt from the very beginning of the Western association. As far back as 1950, Luigi Salvatorelli, observing that "American public opinion has long been displeased with Europe", urged the novel allies to "talk to each other with the utmost frankness".

The US should still be instrumental, also, to ensure the political coherence and operational cohesion among its European partners. The European center of gravity having already moved eastwards, the ‘new-Europeans’¹⁸ have acquired more visibility, and a better hearing, in Washington than the ‘old’ ones, that appear skeptical and cynical (until, that is, they suddenly spring into action, particularly France and Britain, members of the Security Council; without always bothering to weave their policies into the European fabric, as they should). For the foreseeable future, America will therefore remain the ‘external federative factor’, the glue that keeps its allies together (if not always in line) in the recurring times of need.

Provisional final thoughts

The West should concentrate its attention on enhancing the integrity of the international system that it has so much contributed to establish (and that Russia now prominently contributes to destabilize). No other overwhelming challenge is in sight. The ‘rise of the Rest’ is part and parcel of what the West has been working on since the end of the Second World War in the assumption, recorded in the Charter of the United Nations, that it would produce a more coherent and caring world community. The intention hasn’t faded away. The BRICS have now joined forces in order to acquire a more prominent status in world affairs; but their geo-political situations and ambitions are quite dissimilar, and they seem unwilling or unable to undertake the corresponding responsibilities on a world scale. Instead, they seem bent upon achieving a multipolar world; which would imply a new division in spheres of influence writ-large!

The West has long taken a different course. It was the West (the assorted members of the family) that, during the whole last century, determined the shape the world has taken, ushering in a cooperative rather than balance-of-forces security system: promoting democratization throughout the international system, particularly with the decolonization and ‘state-building’ process (which Islamic fundamentalists now object to and fight against); engineering the globalization of trade, financial flows and communications (an achievement that a reappearance of tribalism now disputes); in other words, spreading pluralism, the defining element of democracy, in a rules-based world system for one and all, big and small, to partake in; with, of course, all the promises, unintended consequences and drawbacks that it entails; but with the transparency of intentions that cannot be denied and should not be misinterpreted.

In present international circumstances, after muddling through for too long, the only possible ‘grand strategy’, the shared political vision, should be to re-invigorate multilateralism throughout the system of international relations, restore the norms and standards of behavior conducive to the ‘international liberalism’ originally invoked by Wilson and then revived by FDR and Truman; only to be stopped in its tracks then by Stalin (and now Putin?). That is indeed the direction in which President Obama is steering America away from unilateralism, matching the EU’s

¹⁸ To whom Pres. Obama has assured “rock support” against Putin’s aggressive attitude.

proclaimed commitment to 'effective multilateralism'. America's impatience about decisive results and Europe's attachment to painstaking cooperative processes should not be, nor be seen, as contradictory, but instead as possibly complementary approaches, in a combination of their respective hard and soft (smart?) components. The 'organizing principle' for the 'new transatlantic bargain' that some call for should be anchored in a shared global political vision of common interests, besides the shared, but always hard to define, ideal values.

Which requires no redrafting or reinterpreting of the Washington Treaty, the political relevance of which is still adequate to present European and world circumstances. NATO's 2010 'Strategic concept' has spelled out the three objectives, borne out by present international circumstances: preserve collective defense, prevent and manage crises, and provide "security cooperation with neighbors and more distant partners" (i.e., adopting common approaches to international security). Which must translate, as events have shown, in the appropriate mix of 'cooperative security capabilities', for a tighter interoperability of expeditionary missions and post-conflict civilian support, in cooperation with other regional organizations. In other words, the transatlantic relationship should evolve into a force multiplier, politically and operationally, energizing the whole international system back to life. And providing the EU with the terms of reference necessary to develop a proper defense policy (and procurement) of its own; which cannot emerge in the abstract.

Speaking to Chancellor Merkel over Ukraine, Obama observed that "we are not perfectly aligned yet, but we share the same values and the same concerns". It is only by walking side by side, with their obviously different characteristics, that the EU and the US will be able to sharpen their shared international visibility, credibility, attractiveness, and thereby both their separate and joint effectiveness on the world scene. Dispelling their apparent lack of resolve, and their confused (confusing) chain of leadership. Which should not become a test of their ability to wield military power, impose legality, achieve compromise, but rather of their capability to influence the course of events in the wide-open marketplace that the world has become and that modern communications foster. In which a Carnegie-inspired ability to win friends and influence people may show the way to the more promising socio-economic future that the many expressions of popular discontent, everywhere, yearn for¹⁹.

After many a disappointment, Washington admits nowadays that it is not only up to its European partners to put their act together. Europe is not without international leverage, both economic and political, but cannot go it alone: it has always been demand-driven ('more for more'), rarely taking the lead, but always supportive of the initiatives that others may take. Conversely, the Europeans should take a 'harder' look at America. At the end of the war, while grumbling at FDR over his attitude towards the USSR, Churchill sighed that "the Americans are what they

¹⁹ Since 1979, when Khomeini changed the course of Middle Eastern history, the population of Iran, Egypt and other Arab countries more than doubled. The issue is thus more about social and economic opportunities, than ideology or religion.

are, but they are the only Americans we have". With whom, after over half a century of a subordinate (and comfortable) position, the Europeans should now try to establish a more equal relationship, to the benefit of both, and of the world at large.

The Monnet roundabout economic approach towards European integration has finally set the foundations of a political union, which must now be built and find its allotted place on the world scene. The time has therefore come when the Euro-American relationship should stand on its two-legs. Which, with the addition of a free-trade area, could then be extended to the Latin American and African countries of the Southern hemisphere, establishing a wider 'Atlantic community'²⁰. But that is another story.

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

²⁰Addressing the TTIP issue, the German *Die Welt* argues that "the power of states and alliances is not only about numbers, but also perceptions; a successful deal is one important way to tell the world that the West is alive and ready to shape the global order, and that it stands united in that effort".

Ambassador (ret.) GUIDO LENZI

Born in 1941 in Bucarest, the son of a diplomat, Guido Lenzi has lived abroad for most of his life. He was educated in French and American Schools before graduating in law at the University of Florence.

He joined the Foreign Service in 1964. His professional life has taken him successively in Algiers, Lausanne, London and Moscow, before involving him for over twenty years in a series of multilateral diplomatic tasks, as head of the NATO Desk at the Foreign Ministry, Minister Counsellor at the Italian Mission to the UN, Director of the WEU (now EU) Institute for Security Studies in Paris and finally Permanent Representative to the OSCE in Vienna.

Guido Lenzi has also served as Diplomatic Advisor to the Minister of Defence, Deputy Chief of Cabinet to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Policy Advisor to the President of the Senate, and as Diplomatic Advisor to Ministers of Interior.

Before, during and after his tenure as Director of the Paris Institute, Guido Lenzi has regularly published numerous essays and articles in English, French and Italian, and engaged in research on matters such as East-West relations, multilateralism, national and international institution-building, and European integration. His experience with OSCE has further familiarised him with the issues of political and insitutional transition, as well as with the process of political consensus building at European and world-wide levels.

After retiring from active public service, he has been publishing extensively in Italian foreign policy magazines and giving lectures in various Italian and foreign academic environments. He has held the chair of International Relations at the University of Valle d'Aosta, and presently teaches "Diplomatic practice" at the University of Bologna.

He has published a book in Italian on the present international environment ("Internazionalismo Liberale: attori e scenari del mondo globale", Rubbettino, 2014).

Guido Lenzi is fluent in English and French, both spoken and written, and has a good knowledge of Spanish.

He is married, has two children and three grand-children. He enjoys classical music, opera, reading, writing, walking and traveling.

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