



“Signal from St. Louis”

XXXI German-American Young Leaders Conference of Atlantik-Brücke
August 23 to 28, 2009 in St. Louis, Missouri, USA

Looking beyond the Crisis: New Factors Shaping Transatlantic Relations

Our leaders must deal with the outcome of the financial crisis and new international security threats. We, the participants of the XXXI German and American Young Leaders Conference of Atlantik-Brücke (Berlin), held in St. Louis, Missouri from August 23 to 28, 2009, believe that new challenges bring new opportunities to the transatlantic alliance. The alliance has a history of success underpinned by the acknowledgement that partners may have different opinions on certain issues but are driven by the strong desire to find common solutions. We believe that understanding this history should be the basis for future transatlantic action, emphasizing the following: (i) communication and engagement, (ii) transparency and availability of information, (iii) adaptation of existing regulatory frameworks to a more complex world, and (iv) fair, honest, and efficient mitigation of trade-offs. Given these basic principles, the XXXI German and American Young Leaders Conference has identified the following priorities for global leaders:

1. Free Trade

- Exercise strong political commitment to the Doha Round, facilitating phased agricultural subsidies reduction in exchange for significant phased liberalization of services and non-agricultural market access by redirecting subsidy funds to in-country trade adjustment and delivering an immediate and significant increase in trade-related aid to developing countries.
- Avoid excessive trade enforcement actions that may undermine the WTO and pro-trade sentiment, instead dealing value-laden issues like genetically modified organisms outside formal trade enforcement channels with.

2. Energy & Climate

- The US and Europe should jointly lead in reaching an agreement on the successor treaty to the Kyoto Protocol and strive to create a transatlantic carbon trading system in the medium term, seeking to design the system in a manner that generates innovation and economic growth.

- The US and Europe should work vigorously to expand membership of the International Energy Agency to China and India to improve understanding, stability and security in the global energy market.

3. Development

- Poverty must be understood as a threat to global security.
- We must strengthen and professionalize civil society, which plays an essential role that is distinct from the roles of the state and the private sector. Means to achieve this goal include increasing assistance and enhancing donor coordination.
- To address the problem of two-thirds of the world's population having limited or no access to clean, affordable fresh water, we recommend: (i) raising awareness of the water footprint of products; (ii) promoting efficiency in the highest-impact field of agriculture by investing in and adopting innovation and education; and (iii) increasing the amount of accessible fresh water by supporting R&D for desalination

4. Manufacturing

- Pressures on the low-skilled labor market are driven by both increased automation and increased outsourcing of labor-intensive production activities to low-wage countries, which result in aggregate economic gains. We must revitalize the potential of low-skilled laborers as contributors to societies, including through implementation of portable social security and health care systems in the United States and facilitation of entrepreneurial risk-taking in Europe through reforms of bankruptcy laws and removal of legal constraints.

5. Multilateral Cooperation

- The current G8 should build a regular G13 with the emerging economies of the G5, as co-equal partners. Only such an expanded group can adequately address today's global challenges.
- We must engage China and other developing economies to jointly reform and modernize the global institutions which were developed for the post-World War II international system (e.g. IMF, World Bank, UN Security Council) so that we may effectively tackle the 21st century's most pressing global problems, including economic stability, climate change, resource allocation, international conflicts, and weapons proliferation.

6. NATO

- The security of Europe and America remains inextricably linked, and the NATO Alliance and the ESDP are the two essential instruments to ensure transatlantic security.
- NATO should coordinate with the EU to develop civilian response forces capable of assuming post-conflict security responsibilities in out-of-area operations.
- NATO members should contribute critical enabling capabilities in Afghanistan to maximize the in-theater impact of contingents from appropriate allied nations.

7. Middle East Conflict

- Recognize that Palestine's economic development is essential to improvement of the security situation.
- In order to rejuvenate the peace process in the Middle East, we need to implement a new Marshall Plan for Palestine. The facilitation of transportation, energy, and communication infrastructure improvements will lead to increased prosperity and, in turn, encourage more reliable leadership in Palestine.

28. August 2009