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**GERMAN PERSPECTIVES
ON THE NEW STRATEGIC LANDSCAPE
AFTER SEPTEMBER 11**

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(DGAP)

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INTRODUCTION

Europeans and Americans, slowly recovering from the shock of the terrorist attacks of September 11, are now pondering what these events mean for the further evolution of the international system, their impact on the central institutions that have guided us through the second half of the last century, and what they will mean for the new century.

By way of introduction, let me argue that this new phenomenon results from the combination of four factors. The first factor is the elimination of the basic premise of deterrence, that the risk calculation of a potential adversary gives highest priority to the preservation of his own life. In other words, the system has made a qualitative jump from what we know from previous civil wars and ethnic conflict to the virtual absence of rules concerning the use of force.

Second, the meta-political motivation of the use of force has been enormously strengthened, embodied for example in the notion of a holy war used by Bin Laden, deliberately aiming in a Nihilistic fashion at the killing of thousands of people. With weapons of mass destruction as the dark heritage of the cold war around the corner, this can still be escalated to proportions that have never been seen in human history.

The third and the fourth factors basically reflect the dark side of modern societies: the abuse of the vulnerability of modern interdependence and of the openness of societies that we have created in the second half of the last century. It had been a major task of politics to remove barriers and, of course, they have been not only been removed for multinational corporations, individuals and ideas, but also for terrorists, now acting in a network of globalized terrorism.

THE IMPACT ON THE UNITED STATES, SEEN FROM EUROPE

The posture of the United States as the only surviving superpower inevitably acts as a defining element in the new international system. Everything the United States does defines structures and new procedures in the system. Whatever now comes out in phase two or three of the anti-terrorist struggle will therefore have a tremendous impact on the evolution of the international system in the new century.

What is striking from a European and German perspective is that the behavior of the Bush Administration deviated considerably from what many Europeans were expecting, based on the experience with the new Administration during its first months. A very different American government emerged after September 11, as a result of leadership and the examination of the issues at stake.

The first development is the victory of *Realpolitik* and pragmatism over ideology and knee-jerk reaction, which so many people expected after September 11. Instead, a careful analysis of what the new situation meant was undertaken, resulting in the definition of a strategy that was then followed by action. If there is one quote which is indicative of this approach, it is President Bush's assertion that, "We need a patient accumulation of

success,” i.e., an attitude quite different from the quick-fix approach that Europeans expected.

The second element was a rediscovery of multilateralism, which pleased the Europeans and the entire world. An analysis of the situation and the security interests of the United States quickly resulted in the conclusion that success is only possible with the help of others, both old allies and with new allies, adding Russia, China, Pakistan and Arab countries, as well as the United Nations, with which the United States, in the preceding period, has had a relatively difficult and conflict-ridden relationship.

The third element of U.S. strategy that was striking from a European perspective was, to use President Bush’s own words, its “multi-dimensional character.” The strategy, although initially focusing primarily on military action, was clearly multi-dimensional from the beginning, even identifying such “progressive” notions like “nation-building with the help of the U.N.” as a goal of the United States.

A fourth factor could be added in passing, namely, what could be called the “Europeanization” of the United States in the sense that America rediscovered the role of the state with surprising rapidity, particularly for those who still remember the “anti-big government” ideology of the Reagan era.

THE IMPACT ON NATO

NATO has been marginalized by the events of September 11. First, despite NATO’s New Strategic Concept of 1999, which does mention terrorism and uses the notion of “global danger,” NATO is badly suited for the kind of operation that has now been undertaken. To be sure, there are AWACS planes now circling over the United States, including German troops, which is of great symbolic importance. Apart from that operation, NATO is relatively unsuited, because its structure and operational planning focus on other types of scenarios.

Second, the anti terror strategy needed now must be broad in character, including non-military elements such as political and economic factors, development and culture. The NATO Council or the NATO committees in their present configuration are badly prepared to review, discuss and decide on anti-terrorist policies and actions. The U.S. action, as it was undertaken, would have been hampered had it really used the NATO mechanisms since to be effective actions had to be fast, involving just American and a few British forces. As John Vinocur put it astutely, “It’s the we’ll-call-you-if-we-need-you war.”

Third, power went “back to the capitals,” to use a formulation by the *Financial Times*. In this crisis situation, governments, particularly those of the big countries, re-emerged as the key actors. People tend to turn to the state when there is danger to security, both in the United States and in Europe.

Fourth, Article 5 of the NATO-Treaty was activated for the first time but was not used for what it was originally meant. It was evoked as an act of welcome solidarity. Its main message was political, a sort of oath of allegiance expressed by all members. It legitimized the use of force, which was very important for the domestic debate, particularly in countries where the use of military force always poses great political problems, including Germany. In this sense the measure was very helpful. But this is not

the old NATO, for which Article 5 was the means either to deter or fight a large-scale aggression by the Soviet Union.

Fifth, the crisis moves American, and indeed general security attention, away from European problems to Asia, the Middle East, Africa and to global issues. What meaning will the Balkans have in the context of such a security perception of the world? Do the Balkans still matter to Washington?

Sixth, under the new circumstances, a different role emerges for Russia, once the cause for the creation of NATO. This former adversary is turning into a major ally in the anti-terror strategy. New forms of cooperation are being sought. The relationship between the United States and Russia is being strengthened as a result of bilateral talks despite continuing disagreements on missile defense. Chechnya appears in a different light, making it easier to redefine relations between Moscow and Washington. A different relationship in NATO is emerging, where Russia is one of the twenty states and no longer, as in the past, a Russia facing nineteen states who previously have agreed on their positions and then discussed them with the Russians. These developments must inevitably added to the changed character of NATO.

THE IMPACT ON THE EUROPEAN UNION

There has been a noticeable absence of the European Union in this crisis. Certain circumstances played a role. One factor was that a small country, which has neither the means nor the standing compared to a big country like the United States, had the presidency. Another factor was that Prodi, as Commission president, did not properly seize this opportunity to exercise leadership.

What has been said with regard to NATO was equally true for the EU: politics went back to the capitals, particularly since security was the main issue. The U.K., France, and Germany became the key actors in Europe, with all three of them trying to play some role in what the United States was doing.

The fact of the matter is that European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP), which the EU resolved to create and which is in the making, does not exist yet. There is no EU capacity to act with forces of its own. In fact, it will take quite a few years to acquire all the elements of such a force, in particular, the transport capacity and the intelligence infrastructure. ESDP was activated, but only politically in an act of solidarity. The European Union made all the proclamations that could be expected of it in this situation. But when it came to action, the three capitals were more important.

Nevertheless, the European Union (EU) remains vital to the anti-terrorist strategy. It is crucial in coordinating the internal policy towards terrorism. The European Union is an internally open system. Therefore, all domestic measures have to be coordinated: e.g. migration policy, asylum policy, police cooperation, Europol, or a European arrest warrant. All of these things are being developed within the Union. The nation-states contribute, but the Union has to agree on common procedures. In this sense, the Union has become a major actor in areas pertinent to anti-terrorist strategy. It remains doubtful, however, whether the United States and the European Union are adequately coordinating their policies across the Atlantic.

Large resources for phases two and three of the future anti-terrorist policy exist inside the Union. The EU will be indispensable as a provider of resources in the non-military

elements of a counter-terrorism strategy: humanitarian and development aid. The Union provides five times as much development aid as the United States. Moreover, liberalization of trade was, for example, granted to Pakistan to get the support of its government. In these fields, the Union is already an indispensable partner, and will be increasingly so as the policy moves from the military to the non-military elements of this strategy.

The Union's impact on supporting actions remains important as well as vital, for example, to the Middle East peace process, either through activities of individual states, like Foreign Minister Fischer's actions, which were coordinated with the EU, or through the involvement of the High Representative, or the conditions laid out for the Palestinian Authority

Finally, in a post-September 11 world, the EU, along with the United States and Japan, remains a key actor in maintaining globalization as the basis of prosperity. World trade is the only area where the European Union has real collective power and the capacity to act: The EU is an indispensable partner in maintaining the global trade system and, indeed, in redefining the relationship between openness and control. One of the consequences of September 11 on globalization has been, so to speak, to impose a kind of tax. International transactions are slightly more expensive, take more time, are more difficult and must be better controlled. But as the system deals with these consequences, we must watch out that its essential characteristic, of openness as the basis of prosperity, is preserved.

THE IMPACT ON GERMANY

September 11 had a profound impact on Germany. The irony of history provided that a Red-Green government was at the head of Germany when, for the first time since World War II, the use of force had to be decided by a democratically elected German government during the Kosovo war. The events of September 11 have added a new dimension: The third great reorientation of post-war Germany; the first "Western integration" having taken place under Adenauer, the second under Willy Brandt with *Ostpolitik*. During this third reorientation, Germany is assuming responsibility in the context of global strategies.

In the past, Western integration and *Ostpolitik* were contested between government and opposition. This present reorientation is not contested, though there is some disagreement by a small minority, including the PDS and some elements of the Green Party and a few in the SPD. The broad support owes a great deal to the firm leadership that Chancellor Gerhard Schröder and Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer have exercised on these issues. As a result Germany, not unlike Japan, is at last stepping out of the shadows of World War II and assuming its role as a functioning democracy with global responsibilities.

In the immediate aftermath of the terror attacks, in particular in the speech before Parliament of October 11, Chancellor Schröder surprised many by the iron resolve with which he stated that these events had "irrevocably" changed Germany's position; that Germany could no longer take part in international efforts to protect freedom, justice and stability with mere "secondary measures of assistance" such as financial contributions; that the country was now called upon to fulfill its responsibilities in an all-encompassing

way including participation in military operations to defend freedom, human rights and to restore stability and security; that “such a role was called for by its position as an important European and transatlantic partner, but also as a strong democracy and vital economy in the heart of Europe.”

Although his demand for “unrestricted solidarity” with the United States met with approval throughout Parliament, the government coalition suddenly began to lose the necessary support in its own parliamentary jury ranks when in November Parliament was called to endorse the deployment of German troops to Macedonia to assist in the disarmament of the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA).

This opposition showed a degree of residual pacifist sentiment that was stronger than many people had assumed after Germany had so successfully managed the Kosovo operation. By tying this issue to a vote of confidence, the Schröder government forced the dissidents in the SPD and in the Greens to face squarely the responsibility of a party in power and the resulting vote on deploying German troops to the peacekeeping force in Afghanistan was successful and strengthened the ruling coalition. The government had no difficulty in receiving a parliamentary endorsement.

LOOKING AHEAD

As for the future of NATO, it must be remembered that NATO was always more than an alliance against the Soviet threat—it was also a means to integrate Germany in the Western community and to prevent the re-nationalization of security policy. Moreover, NATO was part of a strategy that also included the unification of Europe. Those original aims are still relevant. Although NATO in its present form was not well suited to play a major role in the anti-Taliban campaign, its preservation as the basis of the transatlantic relationship remains crucial for the future. Since the new century is likely to be characterized by a great amount of instability and many crises, it is important that like-minded countries, the great coalition of democracies, work together in an organized framework.

While aggression is unlikely to threaten its members at the present time, Article 5 of NATO remains vital as the oath of allegiance of a community of countries that are close to one another. It will remain relevant, since crises could erupt on the periphery of Europe, notably in Northern Africa and the Middle East. In such cases, NATO might be called upon to act, and if NATO does not act as an organization some of its members could do so, using its assets and procedures of cooperation. In any case, NATO will continue to play a major role in the Balkans for a long time to come. For these reasons it would be very short-sighted to weaken or give it up the Alliance.

The enlargement of NATO is likely to continue, but it will take place in another context: more as part of a collective security system than a collective defense arrangement providing primarily the protection of Article 5.

It remains imperative to prevent the withdrawal of the United States from Europe, even if only a small contingent remains. In the context of the U.S. global military posture the U.S. deployment in Europe is not very large, but in the context of European politics and of the future orientation of NATO it remains of overwhelming importance. It would be fatal if the American military were to withdraw, causing NATO to become an

“alliance” where the United States focuses on the problems of world, and the Europeans take care of Europe. In other words, NATO must remain transatlantic.

The events of September 11 offer an opportunity to seek a new relationship with Russia. The West has been given a second chance, and it is necessary that we pursue it since the West did not manage very well in the early 1990s. President Putin’s willingness to join the West, supported by large parts of the Russian elite, should be met by a sympathetic efforts to help them. A new working arrangement with NATO, a group of twenty placing Russia on an equal footing with the other members, will help in this endeavor and take the sting out of possible future enlargement.

Above all, it is necessary to strengthen the ESDP as a part of NATO, despite continued American skepticism. The buildup of a European pillar, including the development of appropriate military capabilities, is the precondition for a survival of NATO as a transatlantic institution.

The European Union should, first of all, redefine the Petersberg Tasks to include counter-terrorism. When Schröder, Chirac, and Blair raised the issue, there was already opposition from some smaller countries in the Union. Nevertheless, such efforts should be continued. Moreover, ESDP must be developed further and receive the necessary means, including the military instruments as well as the budgetary support. In addition, the European Union must become the main partner of the United States in developing the non-military elements of a counter-terrorism strategy, a field where, as mentioned earlier, the Europeans have a lot to offer.

In the future, the European Union will have to solve the difficult problem of managing the relationship between large and small member countries. The Union is now enlarging from fifteen to possibly twenty-five. Obviously the small countries should be carried along as the EU develops a security policy, but it is impossible to arrive at a security policy capable of quick action with twenty-five members. Given their enormously divergent views, the large countries already have enough difficulties reaching agreement: here, consensus is necessary, since these large countries will carry the main burden of action. Once the smaller countries come in with a veto power, paralysis could be the consequence unless the EU is able to reconcile the inevitable and indispensable role of the larger states with the development of a European approach to security policy that allows room for the views of the small states. This requires great negotiating skills on the part of the large members and a recognition by the small states that certain things cannot be done by twenty-five or by fifteen.

NATO and EU as the central Western institutions of security and cooperation will, of course, play a major role in a future strategy to fight terrorism, by adapting structures, delegating tasks and providing adequate means for dealing with these challenges. A future multidimensional strategy must go beyond but still include the military element and must integrate approaches to deal with the underdeveloped and the Muslim world. If military action becomes necessary, a future EU, with an active ESDP equipped with the proper means, and NATO would have to play a proper role. In each of these cases, if the group is unable to act as a whole, a “coalition of the willing,” using the assets of NATO or of the EU’s ESDP would undertake the necessary action.

Because an appropriate anti-terror strategy must include elements of development policy, cultural dialogue, and the involvement of non-members, an institutional framework for discussing these strategies must be found in addition to the EU and

NATO. A G-8 group enlarged by China could become an appropriate place to discuss action-oriented strategies of global scope. Some countries will play a particularly important role in a future strategy. Turkey, given its geo-strategic location, will have to play a major role in this context. The remaining disagreements between NATO and ESDP approaches that have been blocked by disagreements with Turkey must, therefore, be settled.

In fighting terrorism, we must develop intelligent, non-military approaches to the societies where terrorism originates. A serious inter-religious dialogue will be necessary in order to convince Muslim leaders to adopt a modernized and non-violent Islam. Given the closed nature of most Muslim societies, this requires a major and sustained effort.

Since failing states become dangerous hot spots from which terrorists could operate, they can no longer be ignored as they were in the past. Consequently the extraordinarily difficult tasks of trying to reestablish a minimum of governance and order in such regions will be a shared task. The same is true for overcoming growing poverty and the disparity between the developed and underdeveloped parts of the world, since the chances for defeating terrorism remain dim if a large part of humanity remains in crisis and poverty-ridden while the modern means of communication project the images of the affluent North into their societies.

As the United States and Europe attempt to deal with the problems of terrorism, they must not forget that many of the old problems for which they developed common institutions and policies still remain. The security and development of Europe as a whole, and of its periphery in the Middle East and North Africa, will remain a common task. Terrorism and its potential link to weapons of mass destruction have only added more dimensions to pre-existing dangers. What is different is the global character of the challenge and the necessity of both Europeans and Americans to act globally even though their respective means and roles may vary. What matters most in the forthcoming era of twenty-first century instabilities is that the precious degree of cooperation of likeminded democracies built up in the post-war period be preserved and that the most powerful country in the world remembers that its global responsibilities are best served by cooperating with like-minded countries.