

This article first appeared in Statewatch bulletin vol 6 no 1 (Jan-Feb 1996)

EU-US Summit, Madrid, 3 December 1995: "the New Transatlantic Agenda and the Joint EU-US Action Plan"

The Joint EU-US Action Plan, signed by President Clinton and Felipe Gonzalez, President of the European Union, is an attempt to redefine the "Atlantic Alliance" in the post-Cold War era. The Plan, drawn up by the EU-US Senior Officials Group is an insight into the global ambitions of the two power blocks (it does not cover defence or propose a transatlantic free trade area).

One of the four main areas set out, "Responding to global challenges" says:

"We are determined to take new steps in our common battle against the scourges of international crime, drug trafficking and terrorism. We commit ourselves to active, practical cooperation between the US and the future European Police Office, EUROPOL. We will jointly support and contribute to ongoing training programmes and institutions for crimefighting officials in Central and Eastern Europe, Russia, Ukraine, other new independent states and other parts of the globe."

The full-text of this section of the Plan is reproduced below.

It is subsequent meetings and reports which show that cooperation between the EU and the US on "third pillar" issues may be more than rhetoric and pose substantial questions of accountability.

New P8 group declaration, Ottawa, 12 December 1995

The P8 Ministerial meeting in Ottawa on 12 December agreed a Joint Declaration to combat international terrorism following parallel meetings of Ministers and officials. This new group takes its name from the G8 group which meets to discuss economic issues. G8 is described as "the Group of seven most industrialised nations - USA, Canada, UK, France, Germany, Italy and Japan - plus Russia." The "P" of P8 denoting the political rather than economic nature of the meetings. The meeting was also attended by the EU represented by Mr Belloch for the Spanish Presidency.

The declaration says the group had agreed to step up cooperation against terrorism in the following areas:

- *the international and domestic legal framework*
- *the exchange of expertise and information*

- *the taking of hostages*
- *new terrorist threats*
- *preventing the movement of terrorists*
- *transportation security*
- *the protection of public facilities*
- *terrorist fundraising*

Home Office Minister, David Maclean, proposed that "Centre of Excellence" (following in the footsteps of Mr Howard's similar proposal to the Council of Justice and Home Affairs Ministers in November 1995) to combat terrorism should be created and: "immediately offered to share British expertise by training other countries in":

- *bomb searches*
- *the handling of continuing terrorist incidents - such as hostage taking and hijackings*
- *fraudulent document detection*
- *border control techniques*
- *video surveillance"*

Mr Maclean said: "the specialist skills could then be made available on request to relevant organisations in other P8 countries." The UK's response to the problem he told the meeting included the forthcoming review of counter-terrorist legislation and the importance of frontier controls.

According to the communique on the meeting the French officials called for the expansion of Europol to cover terrorism and for legislation to deal with "those who made propaganda calling for violence". The latter statement sounded very similar to UK's concern at the meeting:

"not just about those engaged in terrorist activities but about other political activists who promoted unconstitutional change or destroyed the good relations enjoyed by the UK with other governments."

JOINT EU/US ACTION PLAN

This Action Plan for expanding and deepening EU-US relations reflects a framework with four shared goals:

- *Promoting peace and stability, democracy and development around the world; Responding to global challenges; - Contributing to the expansion of world trade and closer economic relations; Building bridges across the Atlantic.*

II. RESPONDING TO GLOBAL CHALLENGES

We are determined to take new steps in our common battle against the scourges of international crime, drug trafficking and terrorism. We commit ourselves to active, practical cooperation between the US and the future European Police Office, EUROPOL. We will jointly support and contribute to ongoing training programmes and institutions for crimefighting officials in Central and Eastern Europe, Russia, Ukraine, other new independent states and other parts of the globe.

We share a common concern to address in an effective manner new global challenges which, without respect for national boundaries, present a serious threat to quality of life and which neither of us can overcome alone. We pledge our actions and resources to meet together the challenges of international crime, terrorism and drug trafficking, mass migration, the degradation of the environment, and nuclear safety and disease. Together we can make a difference.

1. Fight against organised crime, terrorism and drug trafficking

We will cooperate in the fight against illegal drug trafficking, money laundering, terrorism, organised crime and illicit trade in nuclear materials.

We will enhance bilateral cooperation and institutional contacts.

We will also enhance the capabilities of criminal justice and investigative systems and promote the rule of law through international training programmes at regional institutions such as the International Law Enforcement Academy in Budapest, the Italian Judicial Training Centre, the Middle and East European Police Academy and a similar administration of justice institution for the Western Hemisphere.

We will take steps to establish an information exchange mechanism on cooperation between US and the EU and its member States in the law enforcement and criminal justice fields, especially regarding activities in providing training, technical assistance and equipment to other nations.

We will foster the exchange of law enforcement and criminal justice expertise between the US and the EU in three areas:

- *scientific and technological developments;*
- *exchanges of experts and observers between appropriate*

institutes and agencies;

- *the sharing of information such as studies and analyses of emerging trends in international criminal activity.*

When mutually agreed, we will jointly prepare reports to include recommended courses of action.

We will discuss the possibility of establishing interim cooperative measures between competent US authorities and the European Drugs Unit and begin implementing the possibilities provided for in the convention on EUROPOL, to facilitate relations between EUROPOL and the US Government.

We will examine possibilities for cooperation in support of the UN Drug Control Programme marine interdiction initiatives. We will coordinate alternative development programmes to counter drug production.

We will jointly support the establishment of cooperative links between appropriate EU institutions such as the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction and the Comisión Interamericana para el Control del Abuso de Drogas.

We will coordinate our counter-narcotics assistance programmes and projects in the Caribbean. We will take action to strengthen the Dublin Group by reinforcing and supporting its members' counter-narcotic measures.

We will work to conclude an agreement in order to exchange, among other things, sensitive information for the pre-clearance of shipments of essential and precursor chemicals used in the production of illegal drugs and cooperate in joint training programmes in chemical diversion control.

We will cooperate on assessing and responding to terrorist threats.

2. Immigration and asylum

We will:

- *strengthen information exchanges on illegal immigration and on asylum taking into account, inter alia, the work of the Geneva Intergovernmental Consultative Group;*
- *cooperate in the fight against the traffic in illegal immigrants;*
- *cooperate in the fight against the traffic in women;*
- *exchange information on asylum trends and on successful asylum system reform;*

- *establish common responses to refugee crisis situations, notably by early-warning mechanisms and coordination;*
- *develop a common stance on temporary protection in United Nations High Commission for Refugees;*
- *coordinate positions on the Conference on Refugees and Migrants in the Commonwealth of Independent States;*
- *improve existing arrangements and exchanges of intelligence in areas of mutual concern, for example, forged identity documents and transport carriers' liability;*
- *convene seminars in 1996 and compare the results of our respective studies on migration flows both into the US and into the EU.*

3. Legal and Judicial Cooperation

We will:

- identify means of strengthening international judicial assistance and cooperation in the obtaining of evidence and other relevant information;
- cooperate on judicial seizure and forfeiture of assets;
- identify means to strengthen and improve international mechanisms for extradition, deportation, mutual legal assistance and other cooperative action to ensure that international fugitives have "nowhere to hide";
- cooperate in promoting the work of the Hague Conference on Private International Law and the International Institute for Unification of Private Law (UNIDROIT).

Sources

European Council, ref: 10979/2/95, REV 2, Restricted, CORDROGUE 46, 22.11.95; *The Transatlantic Agenda (and Joint Action Plan)*, European Council, 3.12.95; *Guardian*, 2.12.95; *Presidency Conclusions, Madrid European Council*, 15 and 16 December 1995, ref: SN 400/95; *Euro-Mediterranean Conference, Barcelona Declaration, Final Version 2*, 28.11.95, European Commission; *European*, 30.11.95; *Home Office*, press release 12.12.95; *Final communique*, Ottawa meeting; *Independent*, 28.11.95; *Interregional Framework Cooperation*.

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