Thank you Professor Lebovic for that introduction, and for hosting me here today.

As you know, I have a long association with the Elliott School, since receiving my Master’s degree here over 20 years ago. I met my wife here, have lectured in various classes here over the years, and as you know, gave the commencement address here last spring.

So I am delighted to be back again, and proud to say that this fall I will be teaching a graduate course at the Elliott school, exploring the themes I will outline this evening.

To give a quick summary of my thinking – the transatlantic community is not doing well today. We are divided over many issues and moving in opposite directions. Our institutions are floundering, our publics are at once both angry and disengaged from a wider sense of community. We are facing extraordinary security challenges – from Afghanistan to Iran to Iraq to terrorism and more – and they are not improving. And as the world changes rapidly around us, with new powers rising, the opportunity to extend a democratic, values-based international order is gradually slipping away.

It is not too late, and there are things we should do. But doing those things rests first, I believe, on that sober and honest assessment.

So this evening, I’d like to give a bit of an overview of where we have been as a transatlantic community, where we are now, and where we must go from here.

Where We’ve Been

The transatlantic community we have today was created out of the Alliance that won World War II. Having just lived through the most devastating war in the history of the world, our leaders at the time showed genuine leadership.

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They consciously thought about and put in the effort to construct an array of institutions and relationships that were designed to create a better world, based on universal human values and principles, than had existed before.

They structured the world. They created the United Nations, the Universal Declaration on Human Rights, the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (otherwise known as the World Bank), the International Monetary Fund, the Washington Treaty and NATO, the European Coal and Steel Community, which grew into the European Union, and so on.

Germany and Japan were given democratic constitutions and helped along in reconstruction and joining a new, modern world – in contrast to the harsh reparations placed on Germany after World War I. And, I might add, this was an open-ended commitment to nation-building. We didn’t set deadlines, or artificial limits on our political, economic, and security commitments – rather, we set ambitious goals based on core values, and then determinedly worked to achieve them.

By values, let me be specific – I am thinking of freedom, democracy, market economy, rule of law, and human rights. You could lengthen the list, but I think that’s the heart of it.

It was not perfect. As Western nations abandoned empires, the Soviet Union clamped down on its empire, and hundreds of millions of people were consigned to imposed communist dictatorship. China went through a harsh period of communist rule, including the cultural revolution, and extraordinary hardship before becoming the economically reforming and growing China we see today.

And the rest of the world was really seen as that – the rest of the world. Because all the capacities to shape the orientation of the world order as a whole rested for the most part in the transatlantic community.

So beginning with the Cold War, and really lasting until 1989, the principal strategic concern for the United States – not the only one, but the principal one – was the Soviet Union. And although there were rivalries played out across the globe, our principal strategic concern was anchored in the Euro-Atlantic area.

And likewise, our principal Allies and partners were also anchored in the Euro-Atlantic area. And Europeans largely shared the same basic threat perceptions, they retained the bulk of the capacities outside of the United States for sustaining a democratic world order, and we had a shared understanding on the actions we would take to protect ourselves and our values.

When the Cold War ended, this immediately began to change. Indeed, it started changing before that. But 1989 was a catalyst to rapid change.
As a matter of strategic perspective, we remained heavily focused on the Euro-Atlantic area even after 1989 – indeed, throughout the 1990’s. Practically speaking, there was a lot of clean-up to do after the Cold War.

There was the collapse of Yugoslavia and then the Soviet Union. The need to end ethnic warfare in the Balkans. The unification of Germany. The re-integration of Central and Eastern Europe into the European mainstream, including NATO and EU membership. The effort to massively reduce and control WMD materials and prevent proliferation.

To be sure, other challenges were already facing us. It was in the 1990’s, after all, that the first attempt to blow up the World Trade Center was made, that our Embassies in Africa were attacked, and so on. But these things didn’t register in our consciousness as our principal strategic challenge.

They didn’t, that is, until September 11, 2001. It is a cliché to say so, but still true – September 11 was not only a horrific event, but also a wake-up call. A call to recognize the fundamental geographic and functional shift that had taken place in the world since 1989.

Euro-Atlantic geography was no longer the epicenter of strategic concern. Conventional military calculations no longer the dominant factor in security. Failed states were more likely to be a source of threat than strong states.

And this had tremendous effects on the transatlantic community, and the role the transatlantic community had played in defining a values-based global order. Because the threats were elsewhere, the United States did not see Europe as a strategic partner in dealing with the principal challenges we were facing. If Europe could help, terrific. But if not, we’ll have to go deal with these other challenges anyway.

Though it seemed a simple and practical decision at the time – the decision not to have NATO take on the challenge in Afghanistan in 2001, even though Allies had just invoked the Article 5 commitment to collective defense for the first time in NATO’s history – turns out to have been prophetic.

We did not, at the time, see the defense and extension of democratic values – freedom, democracy, rule of law, human rights, economic opportunity – everything we had worked for throughout the Cold War, based on the foundations laid by our predecessors at the end of World War II – as the essential foundation to overcoming the new challenges of global terrorism mixed with a risk of WMD proliferation, failed states and rogue states.

And likewise, just as the United States was taking its eye off the ball, so too was Europe. European publics looked at these new strategic challenges being tackled by the United States, and did not feel they were Europe’s concern. Our
threat perceptions diverged. Europe continued cashing in on the peace dividend, focused inwardly on itself rather than outwardly on external threats, and allowed its dependency on Russia to grow just as Russia was becoming more authoritarian at home and assertive abroad.

With these trends already at work, the Iraq War threw them into overdrive. Europeans, who never much liked George Bush anyway because of style, now had a cause that propelled a rapid repudiation of the link with the United States, a justification for soft power over hard power, and a rejection of the notion of promoting democracy and democratic values abroad.

In a sense, the Bush effect in Europe was to discredit idea that global challenges mattered to Europeans, and that the transatlantic community should be tackling these challenges together, based on core democratic values.

And as this transatlantic community was coming apart, Russia was itself changing. Having gone from Soviet dictatorship to Yeltsin’s chaotic and corrupt democracy, it was now moving to Putin’s siloviki-led national authoritarianism.

To be fair, the Bush Administration adapted quickly. In 2003, it supported NATO taking over the ISAF mission in Afghanistan. It launched the Broader Middle East initiative, emphasizing development of civil society, rather than solely focusing in killing terrorists. President Bush’s second inaugural address emphasized the link between values and global order. But having already been branded in the eyes of the world, it was not possible at the time to rebuild a strong and committed transatlantic community.

**Where We Are – Not Good**

That brings us to where we are today. President Obama took office amid great popularity, especially in Europe. But in contrast to expectations on both sides of the Atlantic, the transatlantic partnership remains largely in disarray.

With a new and popular President, Americans had high expectations that Europeans would now join with the United States in tackling global challenges with real commitment and contributions.

And Europeans had high expectations that Afghanistan, and Guantanamo, and the war on terror, and Iran would all be different, and the United States would not be demanding their engagement, commitment, contributions, and support.

Well, these expectations were bound to be dashed – and indeed they were. There is now a mutual frustration on both sides of the Atlantic that have not gone away with a change in the US Administration. Americans are frustrated that Europe is not delivering on our global challenges. Europeans feel they are marginalized and not respected. Indeed, these frustrations have come into
sharper focus in part because it is no longer possible to blame them on the Bush Administration.

Indeed, as I recently argued in an article in “Europe’s World,” the “Obama effect” has been to lift the veil on a host of deep-rooted problems that go well beyond the present and previous Administrations. Just because the United States has a different president, global and transatlantic challenges have not gotten any easier – only more visible.

If I could take a moment, let me just sum up the difficulties we are facing within our transatlantic community, which are preventing us from dealing effectively with the global strategic agenda.

First, Europe itself is divided. Nations differ deeply on a range of issues, from Russia to energy to Iran to further EU enlargement to Kosovo and the Balkans to climate policy to economic management and more.

Second, and related, the EU is weak. Nations are renationalizing policy, and they have opted for non-descript leadership in the EU, rather than a strong presence.

Third, NATO is by definition also divided as well, with perhaps more disagreement on fundamentals than at anytime in its history, including:

- the importance of Afghanistan;
- the nature of our relationship with Russia;
- what constitutes an Article 5 threat;
- whether NATO is the principal venue for the security and defense of Europe;
- whether, when and how NATO should continue to enlarge;
- what “solidarity” means in the face of 21st century challenges;
- how much our societies should invest in security and defense; and
- how much NATO should focus inside the Euro-Atlantic area, versus addressing threats that arise far from its own territory.

Fourth, we are divided in our responses to the global financial and economic crisis in our own economies.

And finally, we are all acting in a disunified way, and without a strong basis of shared democratic values, in our engagement with new rising powers – whether positive democratic ones, like India, or non-democratic ones like China. And this is true in the security realm as it is in the need to promote an open, market-based international economic order.

In short, the world is changing around us, and we are divided among ourselves, acting more in a balance of power than a values-based paradigm, and failing to
take action to shape a values-based, democratic world order for the future. Our forefathers, who built the international order after World War II would be appalled.

**Where We Go – Modern Anchor to Global Partnership**

So if that is the dire diagnosis, it naturally begs the question, where do we go from here?

First, it takes some leadership within the transatlantic community. On both sides of the water, we need leaders to stand up for the notion that values matter in the world we are facing, and that our community that shares democratic values needs to work together in addressing the challenges of the 21st century.

If we are divided in our efforts, we give ground to those who would divide our community and impose a different order than one based on democratic values. If we work together, we are more than the sum of our parts. Together, we are still the community that accounts for most of the world’s wealth, political influence, and security capacity – we just need the focus and will to act together. These advantages won’t last forever. But they remain in place today, and will continue for at least some time to come. So we should act strategically now.

And working together means not just rhetoric, but also hard decisions, political will and resources to achieve real outcomes, not just a token “doing our share.”

These are not popular messages or actions. In the United States, it is increasingly fashionable to write off Europe as yesterday’s friends, now aging and feckless. And in Europe – much as the United States did before World War I, it is fashionable to preach moral purism while staying out of the messy business of conflicts in the world.

After the shocks to the transatlantic community of 1989 and 2001, we need a fresh understanding of what the transatlantic community is today – and we need our European partners to support this understanding as well. That is, that the transatlantic community is neither wholly about Europe, nor that Europe is irrelevant to the global challenges in the world – but that it is essential to the strengthening of a values-based international order for the United States and Europe to work together in addressing a global strategic agenda.

Second, in order to work together globally, Europe needs the United States to remain committed within Europe. The United States needs to continue to play the role of catalyst for European integration; to help build bridges between Western and Central Europe, and to address security challenges within Europe together with our European Allies, and to work toward the vision of a Europe whole, free and at peace.
This was our historic role after World War II, but we falsely concluded that much of this work was done after 1989. Today, it is clear that this works remains and is essential. And as part of a new transatlantic bargain, if we expect Europe to join us in tackling global challenges, we also need to provide strategic engagement and reassurance that the United States remains a European power.

But, third, alongside this transatlantic compact – of inside Europe and outside Europe – there must also be a modern understanding that the transatlantic relationship is not the only game in town – nor should it be.

We live in a world where the transatlantic community, with its wealth, influence and security capacity is being joined and sometimes challenges by other centers of power in the world. This does not mean that the transatlantic community is less relevant. Indeed, it makes it more relevant. Because we have the capacity to support, encourage, and shape the develop of the international order that emerges as more and more actors emerge. And we should be shaping this international order on the basis of the values that underpin our own societies, and the era we have just emerged from, so successfully.

And finally, to work in this direction, we need a concrete US-European agenda aimed at building a new political consensus within the transatlantic community and reaching outward in the world. Elements of this agenda should include:

- Developing a common approach to dealing with Russia
- Renewing efforts to build a Europe whole free and at peace
- Drastically reducing energy dependencies, and investing smartly in new energy production and technologies for the future
- Revamping US-EU cooperation
- Revamping NATO as the principal venue for organizing joint security efforts across a civil-military spectrum
- Putting all our collective weigh behind countering violent extremism – starting in Afghanistan and Pakistan, but also globally.
- Strengthening global efforts at positive control of WMD materials and technology.
- Designing a comprehensive approach to revamping or revitalizing values-based global institutions.
- Setting out a coherent global agenda to address non-traditional issues of global concern such as migration, disease, education, women’s empowerment.

There are many more elements that could be part of a proactive agenda. It is important to prioritize, and these are examples, but not necessarily the exact list. Indeed, that should be the product of consultation and consensus-building. What is most important is that we identify now the kinds of challenges we are facing in a rapidly changing world, and bring the full measure of our political will and resources behind a vision of a values-based international order for the future.