



TPN

TRANSATLANTIC POLICY NETWORK

NEWSLETTER

May 2021

This month we feature an opinion piece by Bruce Stokes entitled

“Towards Transatlantic Partnership: Building New EU/US Foundations”.

He is Executive Director, Transatlantic Task Force, German Marshall Fund of the United States.

We have had a very full calendar of events during April and more are planned for the month of May.

Should you wish to contribute your thoughts about how to strengthen the transatlantic institutional ‘glue’ in ways that can hold firm in bad times as well as good, please do be in contact with us. We would like to hear your views.

Vivien Haig and the TPN Team

Email: tpnoffice@tpnonline.org | Twitter: [@TPNOnline](https://twitter.com/TPNOnline) | Website: <https://www.tponline.org>



TPN OPINION

“TOWARDS TRANSATLANTIC PARTNERSHIP: BUILDING NEW EU – US FOUNDATIONS”

Amid the high hopes for a revived transatlantic relationship in the wake of the election of Joe Biden as the U.S. President, one thing is missing: how to turn grand schemes into sustainable reality.

Biden has recommitted the United States to closer cooperation with Europe. The European Commission has proposed its own new transatlantic agenda. The challenge will be to turn such ambitions into progress toward a deeper integration of the transatlantic marketplace and closer cooperation on the challenges we both face.

As Jean Monnet observed more than half a century ago: “Nothing is possible without men, but nothing lasts without institutions”. Institutions are the skeleton for any strategic, diplomatic, or economic cooperation. They are the repositories of experience and ensure continuity given the notoriously short attention span of both politicians and publics. As Rosa Balfour, director of Carnegie Europe, has written, they are needed now “to fireproof transatlantic relations from a return of Trumpism—or indeed from victories of the European far right.” And that requires new US/EU institutions that can anchor the relationship to weather turbulent political times: key ideas suggested below by 2024.

AN ANNUAL SUMMIT

The annual U.S. - EU summit needs to be restored, this time with a dedicated staff to prepare the agenda and implement decisions. The agenda should be narrowly defined, strategic in nature and worked out ahead of time. There should be provision for the participation of other countries or international organizations should the agenda require it.

A TRANSATLANTIC TRADE AND TECHNOLOGY COUNCIL

The Biden Administration has expressed an interest in working with Europe on technology issues. The European Commission has proposed creating a Transatlantic Trade and Technology Council composed of economic policy principals on both sides, chaired at the Vice President level. Its mandate should be to align European and American technology policy regarding broadband cellular networks, artificial intelligence, big data analytics, biotechnology, and nanotechnology. This might also include developing parallel approaches to investment screening and export controls, regulatory standardization, and unfair trading practices.

A DIALOGUE TO ASSIST DEEPENED COOPERATION ON CHINA

Over the next decade, the rise of China will provide a real challenge to the West as it grows potentially to be the world's largest economic power by 2030. An appropriate framework should be created where along with the already agreed US and EU high level dialogue, the political communities should also be connected to coordinate China-related legislative initiatives.

A TRANSATLANTIC ASSEMBLY

For six decades, the North Atlantic Assembly has brought together legislators to provide an ongoing link between NATO and parliaments of member nations that must ultimately approve funding for their armed forces.

But increasingly the challenges facing the European Union and the United States are nonmilitary in nature—climate change, the digital economy, food health and safety—that require Congressional and parliamentary rule making and budgetary support.

To that end, the EU and the U.S. should create an annual Transatlantic Assembly, based on the existing Transatlantic Legislators' Dialogue, founded in 1999. This would be a consultative forum, not a rulemaking body, of members of Congress and the European Parliament, to share legislative initiatives, political constraints and possible cooperative action based on a focused agenda of priorities.

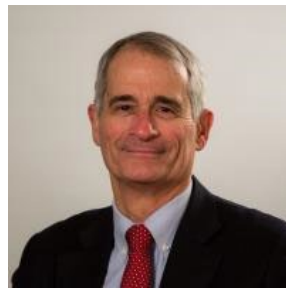
Over time, the Assembly would help facilitate greater transatlantic legislative engagement during the year. Such interaction is now easy to organize and can be done without costly and time-consuming travel. For example, Members of the European Parliament should be called to testify regularly before Congress on issues of shared interest. Similarly, Members of Congress should testify before the European Parliament.

A CONGRESSIONAL OFFICE IN BRUSSELS

Congressional-Parliamentary interaction is likely to be more consistent and impactful anchored in an institution. The European Parliament has long had an office in Washington. A U.S. Congressional office in Brussels to provide a parallel legislative coordination pillar is long overdue. Stationing a Republican and a Democratic staff member in Brussels would facilitate tracking of EP actions likely to impact the U.S., coordination of interaction of Members of Congress and MEPs and foster professional relationships that can provide continuity between the political and substantive specialists on Capitol Hill with their counterparts in the European Parliament.

CONCLUSION

In a populist era, institution-building has an establishment odor. And while Europeans are process-driven, Americans often disparage process in favor of action. But no actions are sustainable—be it on climate or China or economic recovery—without institutions to support the initiative. And if the Biden-era is to be one of renewed transatlantic cooperation on issues of mutual concern, then America and Europe need new institutions to drive that collaboration. As they deepen and thrive, ways to link such a new framework to existing institutions will need to be discussed and agreed.



Bruce Stokes



UPCOMING EVENTS – MAY CONFIRMED

- **10 May** **Andreas Schwab MEP, The Honorable Suzan DelBene, and Martin Jetter**, Chairman, IBM Europe and Chairman of the Supervisory Board of Deutsche Boerse Group.

“Priorities for Transatlantic Digital Co-Operation”

“The panel will take the opportunity to take stock of the state of affairs with the transatlantic digital economy, particularly to focus on realistic ambitions and opportunities, and finding solutions to problems and ways of working around obstacles”

- **SAVE THE DATE: TPN TA week July 19-23 2021 – DC Brussels online – see www.tpnonline.org**



PAST EVENTS APRIL

- **15 April** **Margaritis Schinas**, Vice President, European Commissioner for Promoting the European Way of Life

“Perspectives for EU/US Cooperation”. The signs are good for renewed transatlantic collaboration, in particular through recovery from the pandemic, the shared digital agenda and foreign policy and multilateral cooperation. The opportunity is above all values driven. We have tended to underestimate the value of projecting the way of life and the principles we stand for.

- **16 April** **Peter Harrell**, Senior Director for International Economics and Competitiveness on the White House National Security Council (NSC)

“Economic priorities for the Biden Administration”. The world including Europe is still worrying that the US has shifted permanently towards being more insular notwithstanding Biden’s election. But at this stage the new Administration is evidencing its intentions by consulting widely internationally and listening. The ‘listening’ inevitably feeds into considerations for policy making.

- **20 April** **John Boehner**, 53rd Speaker of the United States House of Representatives

“On the House – A Washington Memoir”. A memorable occasion as he recounted some key learnings from his life with forward looking insights as to the state, potential and priorities for EU US relations. Looking ahead, many issues remain unclear. What will happen to the Republican Party as it recalibrates following the Trump defeat ? What will Trump himself be able to do with his time and political capabilities ? When will another potential leader emerge ? Nevertheless, a focus on core Republican principles including free trade is the right path ahead.

- **21 April** **Klaus Welle**, Secretary General of the European Parliament

“Transatlantic Partnership: Strategic Autonomy and Global Interdependence”

The opportunity is there – encouraged at this moment and validated in history - to move ahead now with the transatlantic partnership with an Administration and President that is speaking the same language as the EU. President Biden speaking again to the EP, perhaps while in Europe to attend NATO business could only boost already increasing levels of optimism and goodwill.

- **29 April** **Rep. Jim Costa**, Member of Congress

“Priorities for Transatlantic Partnership” President Biden and his administration are now taking shape and making clear their focus on rebuilding the US domestic economy while reaching out to allies to collaborate on an expansive internationalist agenda. There need to be steps taken to strengthen the links between the US and the EU, in particular between the US Congress and the European Parliament. Some interesting ideas are beginning to be discussed. The question is then, “If not now, when?”