



Foreword

Canada and Transatlantic Relations after Iraq

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This volume of the *European Foreign Affairs Review* comes at a crucial time. The conflict in Iraq has tested transatlantic ties, divided Europe, and raised tensions within our North American community. The ideal of common security is also facing acute challenges at the end of the immediate post-cold war era, now that globalization has radically changed the terrain of international security. Populations are increasingly targets of attack; intrastate conflict is growing; and violent non-state actors threaten to wield chemical, biological or nuclear weapons.

Against the background of these new threats, the old system of collective security underpinning the NATO alliance has been increasingly supplanted by temporary coalitions of opportunity focused on specific issues. While forming new ties with former members of the East Bloc, the USA has recently had tense relations with some of its longstanding NATO allies. Such changes have been accompanied by a tendency toward unilateral action, pre-emptive defence, and a backing away from major international treaties.

Yet through all these changes, there endures a bedrock of shared values and interests. Europe and North America continue to share the commitment to democracy and human rights that NATO was created to protect. NATO itself is responding to international changes both by expanding the Alliance and by extending its operations into new areas, while working to make its capabilities more flexible and relevant. These changes are reflected in NATO's recent assumption of command, coordination and political direction of the International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan, as well as in its evolving relationship with the EU.

While shared economic interests across the North Atlantic will ensure continuing cooperation between NAFTA and the EU, continental integration in North America means that Canada's economic and hence political interests are intertwined more closely than ever with those of the USA. Over the past months I have had the privilege of engaging with Canadians in a Dialogue on Foreign Policy, and from these consultations have learned that while

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Canadians recognize the need for a well-managed relationship with the USA, they would also like to see diversification of our economic ties. Given that Canadians are like Europeans in favouring social democracy, rules-based institutions and multilateralism, these values are ones that can be used to work with our trans-Atlantic allies in promoting shared global policy objectives.

The complexity of this environment will require the Government of Canada to pursue sophisticated new directions in international policy. With only modest hard power resources at hand, we have already begun to embrace strategies such as joint ventures with civil society, partnerships with like-minded countries on issues of shared concern, leveraging private sector activity, and promoting culture and education. Canada's decision to uphold our national principles by abstaining from the war in Iraq was widely respected in Europe, giving us new reserves of credibility and legitimacy to draw on in advancing our interests abroad.

While Canada is very much part of North America, we do not see the need to choose between friends. In terms of shared values and interests we remain a natural partner of both Europe and the USA. I am confident that the present volume of the *European Foreign Affairs Review* will help to advance our understanding of the issues at stake in these relationships.