

The Future Foreign Policy of Germany

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How can our country's interests be best protected under the conditions of globalization, of ever more rapid and far-reaching world-wide changes, bringing a wealth of new opportunities, but also dangerous risks? This question currently demands that all European countries take fundamental positions. In Germany, because of the elections, it goes to the heart of future government policy.

The analysis of the Christian Democratic Union (CDU) and its sister party, the Christian Social Union (CSU), is clear: To preserve peace, freedom and security in Europe, the success of the European unification process and a functioning trans-Atlantic partnership are of paramount importance. There are no realistic and responsible alternatives—neither going it alone as a nation, nor special relationships, nor politics in exclusive groups can lead in the long run to anything close to a justifiable level of stability.

Our guideline must thus be the strengthening of partnerships in our foreign and security policies and to avoid everything that could weaken trust. This way we'll aim to correct the wrong maneuvers of the Schröder government, which have contributed greatly to the fact that Europe and the trans-Atlantic relationship are today experiencing their deepest crisis. The policy Mr. Schröder calls the "German path" was meant to suggest that reliability in foreign policy could be replaced by the demonstration of a kind of new national self-confidence. The disastrous consequence is a severe loss of trust among smaller and newer EU members, especially among Germany's eastern neighbors. The attempt to put Washington in its place, so to speak, by cultivating a Paris-Berlin-Moscow axis and missing no chance to ride the waves of anti-American sentiment has worsened Europe's division. Mr. Schröder ignored the fact that our new EU partners, in particular, will not allow themselves to be forced to choose between European and Atlantic solidarity. There is also a contradiction in his policies: on the one hand rightly demanding legitimacy for international action through multilateralism; on the other, however, acting unilaterally himself and taking positions on significant issues in a premature fashion that thwarts any joint decision-making process. Just take the question of lifting the weapons embargo on China. That Mr. Schröder is loudly proclaiming in his campaign that "German foreign policy is decided in Berlin and nowhere else" is emblematic of his foreign policy concept, fixated solely on domestic effect.

A federal government led by the CDU/CSU would put an end to such separate national paths and false axes. Germany will pursue policies that see European integration and the Atlantic partnership not as artificial opposites, but as two sides of the same coin. It will restore trans-Atlantic

relations to a foundation of fundamental trust, not out of submissiveness toward Washington, but because we are linked by a common set of values, as well as by the most heavily interconnected economic market in the world, and because we are equally affected by the threats of transnational terrorism, weapons of mass destruction that could fall into the wrong hands, failing states, world-wide poverty and underdevelopment, and because we can best overcome these challenges if we develop common Euro-Atlantic positions. The coordinated action against Iran's nuclear program should serve as an example.

Because European and Atlantic security cannot be separated, we want to strengthen NATO as the primary instrument of our security and defense policy. And we will act to increase the EU's capabilities and options, in order to strengthen the European pillar of the Atlantic security partnership. At the same time, we have a great interest in good relations with Russia, but not over the heads of our eastern neighbors and not by keeping silent about the problematic developments regarding the rule of law in Russia. Characterizing President Vladimir Putin, as Mr. Schröder did, as a "flawless democrat" harms the credibility of European policy toward Russia more than it helps it.

At the same time, it is important to free ourselves of old ways of thinking in the goals of our Russia policy as well as in the development of our relationships with other regions of the world; constellations oriented toward confrontation or competing poles will be unable to stand up to the actual challenges of the future. We Europeans must take Asia seriously in terms of its political and economic importance, and we must develop a long-term strategy of partnership with China, India and others without speculating upon rivalries and power shifts in regard to American efforts. Our future will depend in great part on the extent to which we succeed in using strategic partnerships to find effective policies to assist regions of the world currently mired in hopelessness. This defines a common responsibility for the poor and for the preservation of our natural resources, which will help fighting global dangers. For security, development and human rights go hand-in-hand, and together they will determine the long-term stability of our continent.

The wealth of tasks that we must master in order to protect our interests in a globalized world demand from us Europeans, above all, close cohesion and efforts to combat signs of economic sclerosis and restore dynamism, innovation and optimism. To remain relevant in tomorrow's world, we must strengthen the European integration process. We must use the current crisis in the EU as a chance to restore credibility to European politics and win back the support of the people. Europe needs to concentrate on the essentials, the effort to find the right balance both within and without. This requires a clear division of responsibilities among the EU, the member states, and the regions, and a certain rollback in the thicket of excessive European regulation, so that growth and dynamism are not suffocated by bureaucracy. And it is also necessary to take care that the borders of the EU are not stretched too far and that we do not ask too much of the people of Europe—that the standard for future expansions is its absorption

capacity; concretely, that our security goal of a positive development and permanent western linkage of Turkey should be achieved through a privileged partnership with the EU and not through full membership. In all this, close German-French cooperation will particularly important.

If we succeed in strengthening Europe's cohesion, achieving common Euro-Atlantic positions, and binding Russia, China and others into a system of cooperative international responsibility, then we will also face down the greatest challenge for our future: to credibly convince the non-Western world that the West does not stand against them.

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