Speech by the High Representative / Vice-President Federica Mogherini at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace

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First of all thank you very much for this opportunity to address such a high-level audience. As you know, I was particularly eager to introduce our new Global Strategy here in Washington, and here in Carnegie in particular.

Carnegie has been involved very, very closely in the preparation of the Strategy. You have hosted a number of events and contributed actively to our experts’ consultation. As you know very well, the drafting of this Strategy has been a very open process. Of course our European institutions and our Member States have played a crucial role. But the whole process wasn’t simply at government level, and it never happened behind closed doors. This is a Strategy for all our European citizens, and it is a Strategy that speaks to our partners in the world. You had to be involved. And you will have to be involved in the next stages of this process – so I am particularly grateful for your comments, and I look forward to our discussion tonight.

But I also wanted to discuss the Strategy here in the United States, because our transatlantic bond is an essential element not only of this document, but of our policies and our daily work. Our friendship with the United States will be crucial to turning our vision into action both in Europe and here in America, and especially when you look at regional and global governance.

In fact, the key principles of the Strategy match perfectly the work we have been doing together with the US administration over the past few years. I can speak only for the last year and a half, almost two years, in office. But just two days ago John Kerry was in Brussels, we were commenting together what was happening in Turkey and I am sure we will have the occasion to discuss this in the Q&A session so I will not stop on that particularly issue at the moment. But with his presence in Brussels on Monday – we had the Foreign Affairs Council meeting ongoing – he became the first ever Secretary of State of the United States to join our EU Foreign Affairs Council. This tells you something. When you look at the Global Strategy, and read about “partnership,” this is exactly what it means: that we need each other. I know this should be taken for granted, but maybe it is not, in these days.

None of us – neither our European Union nor the United States – could deal with our common challenges alone and it is a long list of common challenges unfortunately. No super-power could solve the crisis in Syria or in Libya alone. None of us, alone, could bring peace between Israel and the Palestinians, or ensure that the nuclear deal with Iran – that we concluded just
exactly one year ago – is strictly implemented. None of us, alone, can counter Da’esh and prevent radicalization effectively. And by the way, this is the reason I am me in DC today for a very important ministerial meeting of the global coalition to counter Da’esh and the strength of this work is exactly in partnership and cooperation across the Atlantic and further beyond the Atlantic.

So we need each other. That’s the main message that is also the core of the Strategy. We need each other, Europe and the United States, and we need all global and regional powers to play their role.

We need to invest in partnerships. Partnership means also that we need to invest in the strength of our partners. Sometimes we believe that having a weak interlocutor, a week partner on the other side of the sea – in some cases the Mediterranean, in the European case – could have been easier for Europe. I think we have learnt the lesson and we know today that the strength of our neighbors is our own strength. But we also need to invest in new formats for regional and global cooperation and engagement.

Think of the International Syria Support Group: it was only last year, just few months after the Iran deal, that we managed to gather all the relevant powers around the same table – the United States, Russia, Europe, Saudi Arabia, Iran... We all know how difficult this process is. But there is simply no other way to bring peace in Syria other than working together, even if it is very difficult. Actually through the difficulties we face around the table, we understand better the difficulties we face on the ground. And such possibility for peace would not exist without our deal with Iran, and without the close cooperation between Europe and America which made it possible.

John Kerry and I sit together in quite an impressive number of different formats. Together we decided to revitalize the Middle East Quartet. The report we have come up with just a few weeks ago cannot be underestimated. For the first time ever, the US, the EU, Russia and the United Nations have agreed on a clear analysis of the situation on the ground, and also more importantly on recommendations on the way forward to turn the two states solution into reality.

Together we have also agreed to engage more regularly with the key Arab states such as Saudi Arabia – the initiator of the Arab Peace Initiative – Egypt – for obvious reasons – and Jordan – for its role in the Holy places.

Diplomacy these days – and these are only few examples – requires a good dose of determination, consistency and also creativity – you were mentioning that, maybe being Italian here brings a bit of added value. But Europe can be a driving force when it comes to that: to a certain extent resilience but also creativity. As you all know, we are 28, we have complicated institutions and our complexity makes it maybe easier for us to understand the others’ complexity and deal with that. And already negotiating among us at 28 is a good training for negotiating with other’s around the world.

In all these formats, the US and Europe are the backbone, essential partners. And beyond that, we have seen how crucial our cooperation is on the global stage. Together we have made the Paris agreement on climate change possible; together also last year we have steered the negotiations towards the Sustainable Development Goals.
And I really look forward to the two summits on migration this coming September at the margins of the UN General Assembly. Because never have so many people been on the move in the world. We have perceived the migratory and refugee crisis very much as a European crisis in the past year. Actually I think it is high time for us to move to a different kind of concept and realise that people are on the move in the world. And we need to face a global phenomenon in a global way with a global partnership – and this is what we can do in September. Together I think we have the tools, resources, and the strength to govern this phenomenon in a spirit of partnership. And I am glad that President Obama shares the same vision – for globally shared responsibilities, a global framework for cooperation on migrations, and a stronger international protection of refugees. This is the European way, and I see this is the American way as well.

You know, I remember well the very night President Obama was elected – you know very well in Europe we were quite excited. He got on stage in Chicago and talked about “alliances to repair”. Eight years on, our alliance could not be in a better shape – and I can only hope that the next President of the United States will share his same commitment to our transatlantic cooperation and friendship.

Our partnership, and global partnerships, are the only way to face our common challenges, but also to seize the opportunities of our times. Many have noted – including here at Carnegie – that the Global Strategy builds on a much more realistic assessment of our international environment and you were mentioning this just a few moments before.

I can quote for you the first sentence of the European Security Strategy of 2003, that stated I quote: “Europe has never been so prosperous, so secure nor so free”. So, we see today that the world has changed dramatically, and very quickly. And indeed this Global Strategy starts from a very different assessment of our reality. Because the world has changed, our region has changed, but also the European Union has changed. It has more complexity but there are also more tools that we have in our toolbox in the European Union to face this reality.

But if you look at these last weeks, these last days, these last months, it is quite clear that we are living in challenging times. We’ve had in sequence the British referendum, the attacks in Nice, the situation also here in America, in Orlando, tensions in the American society, terrorist attacks in different parts of Middle East, Africa, Asia and what is happening in Turkey. You look at these events and you get a very clear picture of the challenges we all are facing together – not only in Europe, everywhere in the world.

But we couldn’t simply focus on the threats, and this is an essential part of our Strategy. Because otherwise it would not be a Strategy, it would be a long list of problems to face. We also have to focus on what we can do to prevent future crises and to get the opportunities the world offers to us. I have mentioned some of our recent common achievements, from the deal with Iran to COP21. We believe the world still has a huge potential for economic growth and for human development. We have a duty to make full use of such potential and this is our responsibility. And we believe in Europe we have the power to do so – obviously together with our global partners, and working as a true Union, as a European Union that is really a Union.

In this work, we don’t start from scratch. Quite the opposite. Our Union is already the biggest aid donor, the first trade partner and the main foreign investor in most countries in the world. I know we don’t easily realise that but it is the truth. And we are increasingly active as a global
security provider – from Colombia, where we are already preparing already to support the implementation of the peace deal, to Myanmar and the Philippines, where we are engaged directly in the national reconciliation processes. Two far away places where the European Union is already a very reliable and significant security provider. But too often in Europe, we don’t realise how strong we are and sometimes we need friends outside Europe to remind us of our strength, of how important it is and which kind of responsibilities we have. And the message that President Obama passed a couple of weeks ago in Warsaw, a couple of weeks before in Hannover, was extremely powerful in Europe. We need sometimes to have our friends reminding us what we have achieved in the last 70 years and what it is at stake not only for the Europeans but also for our partners in the world.

But today we have to make sure that we use as Europeans all the instruments we have in a coherent and synchronised way. This is a key part – maybe the key part – of the Strategy, and this will be vital also for its implementation. The Strategy sets a vision, but also sets the instruments and the steps to turn the vision into action with some very concrete measures to be taken. Then you will need the political will and the consistency to do it, but that is the second chapter of our work.

The threats we face have never been so complex, we all know it. Conflicts for the control of land or even for the control of resources have made an unexpected comeback in recent years. But at the same time, and in the very same conflicts sometimes, we need to cope also with new kinds of wars, for instance very clearly an information war, some call it a propaganda war. Today we know that military might can be necessary but it's never sufficient alone because of the complexity of the crises that we have in front of us.

Everyone noted that “resilience” is the key word in the Strategy. One of our core ideas is that we won’t manage to end or prevent conflicts if societies and States are not resilient enough. And I say societies and States because the resilience of a State alone will never make the States resilient for real. You need societies to be open and resilient, and that is what makes also institutions in the long run resilient. Human development, job creation, institution building, climate action and the protection of human rights are for us integral part of our work on security.

Let me go back for instances to the Anti-Daesh Coalition ministerial we had just earlier today. As you know, just one example, I will make two. In this case the European Union is not directly engaged in the military action against Da’esh and yet our contribution in Iraq and Syria is key. Why? Because we are working to strengthen the country’s institutions, including the security sector, and the inclusiveness of the societies in particular in Iraq. We are demining the areas liberated from Daesh, to let the people of Iraq go back to their homes and their lives. And all of this, in today's reality, is an integral component of our work for security, as much as the military side of it.

Another good example is the work we are doing in Africa. No one invests as much as we do in development cooperation, especially in Africa. But we have also finally realised that development is possible only when a country’s security situation is stable. This is something our African friends know extremely well: it is impossible for a society to thrive under the constant threat of terrorist attacks, or militias and criminal gangs replacing the legitimate authorities.
So, just a couple of weeks ago, I presented a new proposal to use the European Union’s funds to empower our partners to tackle their own security, strengthen, governance and stability. And this is a way of engaging even more effectively in development cooperation. Capacity building and security sector reforms are indispensable steps for us on the path towards sustainable development.

This is the kind of approach the Strategy takes. This is the European way to engagement in the world: a hopefully effective, smart mix of soft and hard power. The old idea that “Europeans are from Venus” doesn’t reflect a changing reality. Actually it is quite outdated. Our Union is already more than a purely civilian power. The future of our security is one where hard and soft power are much more blended than in the past.

This is why the Strategy calls for Europe to seek the full spectrum of defence capabilities. And the only way to do so, is through stronger cooperation inside our Union.

We need to spend enough on defence. We’ve said it several times. But we also need to spend better. We need a truly European defence industry, and we need to meet our collective commitment to invest 35 per cent of our total equipment spending in collaborative procurement. This is a way of spending better. We need to strengthen the Capability Development Plan. We need to improve cooperation among Member States through the European Defence Agency.

Security and defence cooperation in our Union has to become the norm, not the exception. This is one of the core elements of our work on security and defence. We still have not explored the full potential of our Treaties in this regard. The Treaties gives us the instruments and tools to do so. We need the political consistency will and determination to use all the instruments we have.

For instance, the Strategy calls for addressing the obstacles which have so far prevented the deployment of the Battlegroups – an instrument we have, an instrument that could be needed, an instrument that we might be able to use in the coming future.

This is what strategic autonomy means, and this is what our Union must aim at. And I would like to be completely clear on this. There is no contradiction at all between the strategic autonomy of a stronger European Union, and a stronger partnership between the EU and NATO. For this very reason, less than two weeks after the presentation of our Strategy, at the NATO summit in Warsaw we have signed a Joint Declaration between the EU and NATO, to move our partnership to the next level. Our cooperation is getting closer and is getting wider – covering new fields from maritime security to hybrid threats, from cyber security to the fight against human smugglers at sea. We are already working together and complementing each other in many parts of the world, from Afghanistan to the Aegean Sea. With the Joint Declaration we just signed and we are going to implement in the coming months, we have committed to an even greater cooperation, more complementarity, more coordination on exercises, a more integrated defence industry.

Let me go even further than that. Not only there is no contradiction. In today’s world, a strong NATO requires stronger security cooperation inside the European Union. Because the only way we, the Europeans, can take responsibility for our collective security, is through cooperation inside our own European Union. A stronger European Union means a stronger NATO. And, let me remind us all, especially in these hours, a stronger NATO is key to
America's security. We are bound to be together. That's the history of the last 70 years across the Atlantic and that's the future we want for our children: peace, security and prosperity both in Europe and in America. And we are bound to be together.

So we must combine together our hard and soft power. We must connect our work on security and on development. We must couple conflict prevention and peace-making. We must join our humanitarian aid and our investments for jobs and growth, our public policies and the action of private investors and the civil society.

This is what the Strategy is about and this will be essential to its implementation as well. Three days ago, in the EU Foreign Affairs Council – the one where John Kerry was, becoming the first Secretary of State who came as a guest – we have begun to work on the next steps. We will set a clear timetable for the Strategy's implementation. In one year time, we will produce a first annual report on this. The work to revise all existing sectorial strategies and to produce new ones needed will start already in the coming months.

And we will need the whole foreign policy community to be part of this work as you have been part of the work leading to the Strategy. Your ideas have helped us through the drafting of the Strategy, in the thinking and the policy-making, and they will be just as important as they have been also in the next phase.

There is no time to lose. You know, we were discussing this just before entering the room and many told me that after the UK referendum it would have been wiser to wait and postpone the presentation of the Global strategy.

But I thought that in difficult times, in a difficult moment for our Union – and for the UK, but this is a different story... – our duty is to focus on what is important, on what will make our citizens safer, our region more stable and the world a better place. Because we have a responsibility as Europeans. And we are responsible people. I know some are tempted to demolish, instead of building on what we have already achieved. But the secret of change is to focus all of our energies not on fighting the old, but on building the new.

In times of turmoil and confusion, we will need for sure an extra dose... two extra doses of tenacity, rationality – just not the most popular thing in these days – and courage.

But the history of Europe has shown that one of the things we do better – maybe the thing we do better, apart from food! – is overcoming difficulties. The EU was born on the ashes of the World War II. We turned a continent that has been at war for centuries in the most successful project of regional integration in the entire world. And more recently, we have just come out of the worst economic crisis in our times.

We are strong. We still have for sure a lot to do, a lot to improve, a lot to change. But my message here today – as it was in China last week and in Europe every single day – is this: European is strong and will grow even stronger, together with its partners, together with America.

Link to the video: http://ec.europa.eu/avservices/video/player.cfm?ref=I124969
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