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## Unilateralism, Multilateralism, and the New Institutions

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I'd like to thank the European University Institute, the Italian Delegation to the European Community, the Institute of International Affairs and my own Government, through the American Embassy in Rome, for their sponsorship of this event and for the invitation to be with you today.

This is my first public appearance overseas as Assistant Secretary of State for International Organization Affairs. What more beautiful setting than Florence, a city that was so critical to the development of diplomacy, political thought, and free trade, to initiate my own work as a diplomat?

### Transformational Diplomacy

The first person to hold my position in the State Department was Dean Rusk, a legendary diplomat who went on to be Secretary of State. Assistant Secretary Rusk took over the Bureau in 1945 as war was ending and a new international order emerging. He, and most of my other predecessors in the American diplomatic community, worked in a world in which the greatest challenge was to prevent conflict between the major powers of the day. They operated in a world of strong sovereign states, negotiating state-to-state issues using traditional diplomatic tools such as demarches, treaties, and international conferences.

As I assume office in the post cold war, post 9/11 era, the challenges look very different. Today, there is little prospect of violent conflict between the major powers of the day.

Moreover, ideological divides between the great powers are growing less extreme. In every corner of the world, counties are more likely to be democratic and more likely to embrace the free market. In 1974 there were just 30 democracies; today there are 117. The WTO has 148 members, more than three-fourths of the world's nations and almost twice as many members as when it was founded.

Instead of threats from great powers fighting for territorial and ideological control, today's threats are more likely to come from forces government cannot control – terrorists, traffickers in people and drugs, disease, and the environment. Dangers like these are aggravated when weak states are unable or unwilling to address them. As President Bush said: "America is now threatened less by conquering states than we are by failing ones."

Traditional state-to-state diplomacy cannot adequately address these kinds of challenges. And so President Bush and Secretary Rice have called for "transformational diplomacy," an effort to make sovereignty work by strengthening institutions to promote justice and human rights, invest in people, and secure economic freedom.

Transformational diplomacy, like traditional diplomacy, seeks a world of prosperous, peaceful, and democratic states. But to secure a long-lasting peace, transformational diplomacy relies on strengthening civil society, promoting elections and the rule of law, and encouraging economic openness by reducing the opportunities for corruption, eliminating barriers to business initiatives and increasing human capital through education.

Transformational diplomacy focuses on responsible governance, economic reform, and the development of strong regional and local organizations, both governmental and nongovernmental. Transformational diplomacy requires action at all levels, not just in capitals but also in the towns and villages and valleys and mountains where people live and where threats can be stopped in their tracks.

Part of transformational diplomacy involves a willingness to think broadly and creatively about our multilateral institutions – how to make our institutions better able to meet the new challenges and opportunities.

After World War II, the international community dramatically reordered its international institutions. It created the United Nations, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, the International Monetary Fund, and the World Bank. Today's threats are as real as those we confronted in the 1940's and we need to show the same commitment today to ensuring we have international bodies prepared to address them. The spread of prosperity and freedom in the developed world was made possible, in large part, thanks to the institutions we created in 1945. We will be negligent if we do not put the same energy now into ensuring effective multilateral institutions. It will take hard work, but failure to act now will have tragic consequences, especially for those in the poorest and most vulnerable regions of the world.

## **Multilateral Policy**

With that, let me reiterate that the United States remains committed to multilateral action. The President believes that American interests are best served by addressing problems with strong partners. Multilateral institutions multiply the strength of freedom-loving nations and so the United States is committed to lasting institutions like the United Nations, the World Trade Organization, the Organization of American States, and NATO as well as other long-standing alliances.

As we look to the multilateral institutions best able to promote transformational diplomacy, the U.S. will always view the United Nations as an essential partner. When the UN Charter was flown from San Francisco to Washington in June 1945, it was given its own parachute even though the diplomat who was carrying it had to travel without one!

I can't say that the American public always shares this reverence for the United Nations, but we do understand its

importance in today's world and we continue to believe that it should better fulfill the role that its founders envisioned for it: *"to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war ... to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small, and to establish conditions under which justice and respect for the obligations arising from treaties and other sources of international law can be maintained, and to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom."*

Indeed, the U.S. remains the UN's largest contributor because we believe it to be a vital partner.

- Last year, we contributed over 50% of the World Food Program's budget because we know that the Program is saving millions of lives.
- The U.S. contributes almost a third of the budget of Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), money that protects refugees and facilitates their return home or re-settlement in another country.
- We are also the world's number one contributor to the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) helping to feed, vaccinate, educate and protect children in 157 countries.

But the UN, and all multilateral organizations, have limitations, some of which are endemic. For example, too often the UN is looked at as a counterweight to the United States. We believe this approach undermines the U.S. less than it does the UN itself. The United Nations gains its legitimacy from its member states. The disproportionate influence of non-democratic states in the UN and their use of the body to embarrass leading democracies or shield human rights abusers from accountability undermine the moral authority of the body.

Other times the UN can act too slowly, requiring member states to act independently. For example, the U.S. declared the murder of innocent civilians in Darfur to be genocide, when many nations continued to argue over the legal meaning of that word.

For this and other reasons, it is important to view the UN and other multilateral institutions as one option of many. The United States in every case must judge the value of an approach by the results it achieves.

## **New Approaches**

To ensure that our multilateral approaches can be brought to bear effectively in transformational diplomacy, we must take several steps.

First, we must direct the work of all international organizations including the UN to building open societies. As one example this fall, the United States and the rest of the Democracy Caucus are supporting a resolution in the UN General Assembly devoted to fighting corruption. The United States is receiving collective backing from the UN Democracy Caucus to support this resolution.

At the United Nations the Democracy Caucus has become a dynamic vehicle for a dialogue between the established democracies and those countries seeking to create their own democratic institutions. At the 2004 UN General Assembly President Bush called for the creation of a UN Democracy Fund that would provide further assistance to newly emerging democracies. This fund, which has already received pledges from 15 countries that total more than \$43 million, will support efforts to strengthen democratic institutions through project grants to governments, NGO's and

other UN agencies.

Second, we must strengthen regional organizations. Regional organizations, like the AU, have a unique understanding of their own problems and bring to the task specialized cultural and linguistic knowledge and other skills. They can act in ways that are less costly and are less likely to abandon the task for political reasons. We have worked closely with the African Union to assist the African Union Mission in Sudan (AMIS) to bring security and protection to areas in Darfur. The U.S. has supported AMIS expansion and African Union sponsorship of inter-Sudanese peace talks in Abuja, Nigeria.

Third, we must work to develop communities of interest, such as the Community of Democracies, which can speak with moral clarity about human and political rights. In promoting democracy around the world, democracies large and small, old and new have an essential role to play. We are looking to countries like Brazil, Argentina, Mexico, Nigeria, South Africa, and India to join us in multilateral initiatives. The recent decision to expand the Convening Group of the Community of Democracies to add Italy, Cape Verde and Morocco, provides an opportunity to ask a broader group of countries to play an important role in this regard.

Lastly, the UN also needs to do more to promote the institutions of a market economy in developing countries. Rich countries and successful developing countries have diverse traditions and policies, but all share certain basic building blocks -- rule of law, property rights, policies designed to engender public confidence in markets.

I am glad for the opportunity to share these thoughts with you today and look forward to your questions or comments. Thank you.

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