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***“Bridging the Atlantic: Advancing EU-US Collaboration in a Shifting Global Landscape”***

**Washington Seminar on Artificial Intelligence, Regulation and Markets  
*Ensuring responsible development and use of AI technologies***

**The Mentor Group**

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Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen, I would like to thank the Mentor group for the opportunity to address this prestigious audience. It is an honour for me.

Let me start by noting that our Seminar comes at a key moment, just before important elections in Europe, in America and in many other jurisdictions across the world. It also comes in the midst of pivotal geopolitical developments, with authoritarianism on rise, with an extremely aggressive Russia, an ever more assertive China, conflict in the Middle East, not to mention our well-known common global challenges like climate change with its long term consequences across our life.

So we need to see our EU-US relations in this broader context where economy becomes a space for a geopolitical rivalry where security has many dimensions, where turbulent world can take us to the power based globalization and trade.

Russia's war against Ukraine which is today without any doubt a Russian war against the West, is the biggest and most immediate challenge to our security, on both sides of the Atlantic. Russia has to be stopped. Our common resolve to help Ukraine defend itself - and in doing so defend our own vital interests and democratic way of life - this resolve demonstrates what a strong transatlantic relationship can achieve, and tests our friendship of first resort. While there is clearly a bilateral dimension to our relationship, there is also our global role and the strength of our global agency depends on our individual economic, military and political power.

For the EU and its Member States, the bond with the United States is our most important and strategic relationship. And I must say that in this turbulent world I see the transatlantic economy remarkably resilient and deeply integrated. Over recent

years, we have built a solid bridge across the Atlantic. When authoritarian and revisionist regimes grow, we need to progress on our strategy of de-risking and reducing dependencies, fortify defensive trade measures or cope effectively with huge global overcapacities, generated by Chinese state subsidies. We have to put a price on every single breach of rules by China. What matters is not only the bilateral gain and solutions between the EU and the US, but that we are jointly leading and seen to be leading together in a way that is consistent with our values and beneficial to many of our friends and partners around the world. The real game changer on China can be a big coalition able to put on the table a non-negotiable solution. Only together, the European and US can bring such a coalition into being. I think that we had missed signals that transformative times were coming and today we all recognise that multilateralism and its institutions are in a fragile state, challenged, influenced or undermined by autocratic actors. This is a symptom of the revival of great power competition that never generates win-win situations.

As you most likely realize, for the EU, defending and reinforcing multilateral institutions and the rules-based order is more than a policy option. It is a fundamental objective and part of our DNA. But we are aware that multilateralism, even if it most likely will never be perfect, needs to evolve and be reformed. This reform has to be done with the US and EU at the forefront. Our failure to engage in reforming and leading multilateral institutions will result in others filling the vacuum, rewriting the rules to their own advantage, to the detriment of democratic world. We need to play the leading role in making the global rules fit for the future and do this together.

Over the last years, we have expanded our cooperative space as never before, and we have multiplied tools we have at our disposal to cooperate. We have dozens of work streams within the Trade and Technology Council (TTC), a young, unique and valuable vehicle for transatlantic cooperation, covering clean tech and energy, economic security, trade and investment, digital instruments, sustainability and growing commitment to create a sustainable transatlantic market. Next step is to move toward aligned and interoperable standards and policies. Let's hope that the election will keep this path opened. But a lot of political will be needed.

Some call the TTC a glass half empty, others a glass half full. Whatever it is what matters for me is that this glass exists. It has proven its usefulness, it has delivered results. It helps us confront both China and Russia, cooperate on chips supply chains or AI Code of Conduct. Of course, there is the unfinished business. And I hope that the IRA mitigation through a Critical Minerals Agreement and the Global Sustainable Arrangement for steel and aluminium will materialize as well. In the European Parliament, we have been insisting that all stakeholders should be formally integrated into the transatlantic cooperation, playing a major role in the TTC. We equally believe that the TTC requires an accompanying parliamentary dimension, which we have already advanced on the EU side. During our biannual meetings of the Transatlantic Legislators' Dialogue (TLD), which I have the honour to co-chair together with the Honorable Nathaniel Moran and Jim Costa, we have raised this issue with our Congressional counterparts. Indeed, boosting the involvement of lawmakers, stakeholders and partner countries as well as creating a permanent secretariat for the TTC, are some of our recommendations.

What is still ahead of us is the need to explain to the general public here in America and there in Europe how the transatlantic cooperation generates millions of jobs. Amcham talks about 16 million additional jobs. But our citizens do not know that. A strong parliamentary dimension of the EU-US strategic partnership means not only collaborating on legislation or exercising oversight of the executives implementing the cooperation agenda. It is also about ensuring that people in our constituencies and beyond are fully aware of benefits of our partnership and also, why not, the TTC technical work.

I already mentioned the TLD, but let me add that during our last 88th TLD meeting in Brussels, last April, economic security was high on our agenda. Together with Congressional colleagues, we discussed resilient supply chains, economic coercion from rival powers, protection of our physical and cyber infrastructures, and the coordination of our export and investment controls. Members of both Houses were very supportive of the work of the US-EU Energy Council resulting in improving our energy security and of cooperation on clean energy technologies. We underlined as well the need of boosting transatlantic research collaboration. We also had a good

conversation with Jens Stoltenberg, also on frozen assets with David O'Sullivan but also on abducted Ukrainian kids.

We are in election year. We must spare no effort before, during and after American and European 2024 elections to ensure that our new post electoral political institutions will appreciate benefits of the EU-US cooperation. The European elections can bring a majority in the European Parliament that will be less green, more pro-Russian, more sceptical about the future of European integration and transatlantic alliance. We must spare no effort to reduce the risk of weakening the power of our relationship. A well-functioning, transatlantic legislator's dialogue can help. Transatlantic stakeholders can help. I discussed it yesterday with Nathaniel Moran and do it on a regular basis with Jim Costa.

In Europe we have a long list of issues related to economic security. We are also aware of economic risks that don't come from shocks and crises but from intended economic coercion. Security must be seen in broad terms. It is not only military and cyber security, but also related to energy, food, health, climate, trade, finance, technology, espionage, foreign interference or weaponization of any flows. There is no doubt that a next decade of the man made threats is ahead of us. And that a thin line between protection and protectionism is getting thinner and thinner and becomes easier to cross. Trade wars can come. Identifying all economic security risks and undertaking all the needed de-risking in the time when business model and economic landscape are shifting, moving toward resilience based investment logic is not an easy task.

In January 2024, the European Commission adopted five initiatives to strengthen the EU's economic security at a time of growing geopolitical tensions and profound technological shifts. We are committed to enhancing the EU's economic security while upholding the openness of trade, investment, and research in line with the June 2023 European Economic Security Strategy. I think I can say that for Europe economic security policy is about competitiveness of our economy, about protecting against security risks but it is also about partnership with others on shared concerns. As you know, in the context of security risks Europe also faces a growing pressure to reduce significant military capability gap. The recently presented defence industry strategy aims in principle at incentivizing the process of building European own

defence potential. The strategy is ambitious but can be successful only if well-funded. The challenge is that we talk here not about ad hoc solutions but about long-term project of collective security. The good news is that this strategy is opening a big space for EU- US cooperation

It is true that recently we have learned to look at technology through the prism of broadly based security. This has been reflected in a series of legislations adopted during the current legislature coming to the end in 7 weeks which provide a legal framework for a digital ecosystem, including the AI Act, but also the Digital Services Act, Digital Markets Act, Data Act and some others that matter as well. There have been many conversations across the Atlantic on all those frameworks, not only in DC, but in some states as well.

Let me say a few words about the AI Act. Certainly, AI is here to stay. It is not at all clear what it can do with us and for us but it seems that nothing is more ready for global approach than AI. And AI is also a perfect example of the potential for EU - US cooperation.

AI is certainly an example of a global challenge, it is not a zero sum technology and the big question is who should sit with us at the AI transatlantic, which I can imagine will be a EU, US and UK table. It matters because rules and standards require trust and because AI creates new space for innovation and brings many partners driving it forward.

Of course the AI Act and the Executive Order come from different legal culture. But I believe we will do ourselves a favour if we work together. For both partners transparency matters, here we are on a convergence course. Many issues will need to be integrated across the jurisdictions. The malign interference challenge will need to be introduced into the system. Educational programs, sensitising the public will be needed. And there is already a lot of good practice to share. Social media platforms will need to take up their share of responsibility. Yes, there are many AI related issues on which we should establish bonds across the Atlantic stay aligned, work on a trusted menu to be used, ensuring, in particular, that the cloud is built on a trusted technology.

On both sides there seems to be understanding that to compete globally we need safe technology. We also understand from our conversations so far that privacy and kids protection are our common priority. Internet must be a place where kids can connect and be safe. Deep fake would be another issue and, unfortunately, it seems that on both sides of the Atlantic we are not sufficiently well equipped to shield the upcoming election. Foreign interference is usually using the already existing antagonisms and conflicts. Unfortunately, a lot is happening locally and we need to defend democracy there as well. We also know that in the current geopolitical context, the risk of foreign interference has increased dramatically.

In every technological revolution, there are those who lose, or at least do not benefit. Therefore, on both sides, we should ensure that society wise there are no digital deserts, that high tech industries are not two-thirds men that technology becomes a tool for an inclusive life. In our transatlantic conversations, there are efforts to understand better how we can make the AI trustworthy. And how to cope with cyber security which remains the biggest threat to us all.

Many beneficiaries of AI are excited. Decades in scientific research can be saved. We will need innovation friendly regulatory regime, ensuring interoperability, protecting access to data. In Europe we need to avoid complexity of potentially overlapping regulation already in place. For small business, it will be challenging to figure out how to make best use of it. But there will be actors who are now part of the industry discussion who will not be interested in transparency.

There will be different reactions of societies. Experts say that in poor countries, acceptability of deep change might come easier; people are more excited about the change than in stable, mature societies. There will be jurisdictions, which will be leapfrogging. This can impact the level of risk.

To sum it up I would say that EU and US must stay together on data governance and on main principles for AI. And of course, collaboration will be essential to protect democracy. The outcome of elections on both sides of the Atlantic will shape the future of EU-U.S. cooperation, with implications for global security. But it is unknown today. We will need to visibly share our common values and interests, regardless of election outcomes, to deter aggression from adversaries like Russia and China. I

also trust that both the EU and the U.S must jointly prioritize investment in military technologies aligned with NATO standards and focus on cybersecurity to increase the resilience of critical infrastructure. In the event of political shifts, alternative channels for cooperation, in which we have heavily invested in recent years, like the Trade and Technology Council or transatlantic business community will become increasingly important. Still a lot will depend on political will.

Before closing, allow me a word of praise of the current US Administration, which has been working to improve the international economic landscape, especially through the work of the G7 and the G20. Engagement and support by both the European Parliament and the US Congress reinforces our common stance toward the rest of the world. It will be up to us to demonstrate a cooperative approach to the global world, to see that global coalition of likeminded democracies based on trust survives and gets stronger. I have said that perfect multilateralism does not exist but effective trustworthy global institutions can reduce conflicts, risks and damage.

I hope that the United States and the EU will continue to enjoy an outstanding relationship. The summits in 2021 and 2023, the work achieved or still in progress are testament to this. Irrespective of election outcomes on both sides of the Atlantic this year, the European Parliament and the European Union will seek to continue to advance our cooperation with the US, preferably through carrying on the course of institutionalised structures that exist. The E.U. and the U.S. must continue to show mutual trust and joint international leadership, as this is not a partisan issue but a fundamental shared interest!