

German Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier

**"Responsible Sovereignty in an Era of
Transnational Threats"**

15 July 2008

Bertelsmann Foundation, Berlin

Mr Secretary-General, Ban Ki-moon

Mr Pachauri,

Javier,

Mr Talbott

Mr Thielen,

Mr Ischinger,

Excellencies, distinguished friends,

First of all, I would like to thank you most warmly for this opportunity to speak to you this evening. And I would like to extend a special welcome to our guests from abroad. I am delighted to welcome you to Berlin! This really is an impressive gathering of foreign and security experts tonight!

Ladies and gentlemen,

If we look back only 20 years, nobody could have predicted what this place, this area would look like today:

This used to be a place of division, the Berlin Wall just a couple of hundred metres down the road. Now exchanges of free thoughts and ideas – such as ours tonight – are possible just across the street from where some of the most important institutions of communist East Germany used to have their seat: the Central Committee in the building now occupied by the Federal Foreign Office, the People's Chamber and the State Council.

There are signs that 20 years from now the world will have changed dramatically again. And I share with you, Mr Talbott, and your partners in the Managing Global Insecurity Project, the strong conviction that today we have an opportunity and a duty to try to shape this future.

I really appreciate the undertaking led by the Brookings Institution and I am looking forward to the results and proposals you present.

Ladies and gentlemen,

As we all know now, after the fall of the Iron Curtain, the world did not enter a phase of "capitalist peace". Neither did it mean the end of history, as some analysts and prophets used to put it.

Instead, from the early nineties to the present day globalization has been the name of the game, shifting the traditional patterns of geo-economic and geo-political realities.

The tragic events of 11 September 2001 and the ongoing struggle against fundamentalism and international terrorism in Afghanistan and beyond is a constant reminder of the threats we still face today.

And it seems that the scope of threats undermining peace and stability is widening. International terrorism has been joined by a new cluster of challenges, jolting the very basis of our system of global governance.

Food insecurity, climate change, growing competition for resources as well as global financial turmoil are undermining global stability, international law and democratic transition worldwide. That has rarely been more obvious than in the last few months.

And what these last few months have shown is that our current system of global governance is not sufficiently prepared to deal with these new challenges. We are in the midst of a global reorientation, a collective process of adjustment in reaction to these new challenges. We need to come up with new concepts to master them.

"Responsible Sovereignty" – as you term it in your project – refers to the most important part of this new approach: shared responsibility among the members of the international

community, maximizing the opportunities and minimizing the risks brought about by the changed international situation.

Indeed, we are singing from the same sheet. I have called in my recent speeches for a Global Responsibility Partnership in the world's search for a new global order.

- A Global Responsibility Partnership aimed at equitable and fair access to global public goods.
- A Global Responsibility Partnership that contributes to crisis prevention, conflict management and post-conflict reconstruction.
- And a Global Responsibility Partnership that is more inclusive and fills regulatory and institutional gaps in the international system.

One thing is clear: no country and none of the traditional alliances – present or future – can shoulder these tremendous tasks alone.

By global we mean truly global. We cannot manage the new challenges without integrating the emerging powers of Asia, Latin America and Africa into rules-based global regimes.

We need to think about possible designs for a renewed international framework of institutions. A framework that can handle both old and new threats, hard and so-called soft security issues.

In all these challenges we either win together or we fail together. Therefore, we need to come up with a way to not only link up our capacities to anticipate and prevent threats but also to identify our joint political interests, to forge global consensus and to strengthen international cooperation.

Responsibility and Cooperation – these are the key terms for shaping the 21st century.

Ladies and gentlemen,

This world needs a fresh approach to global governance – an approach that is more holistic, more inclusive, more proactive and more focused on the real challenges of the 21st century.

And, ladies and gentlemen, the time is ripe to work towards such a new approach: 2009 is the year of opportunities.

A newly elected President in Russia, a new US President, China after the Olympics: all these changes push open a window of opportunity to create a legitimate and effective world order for the 21st century.

Let me just make one brief remark regarding the G8. In the coming year, the G8 plus 5 Heiligendamm process will be reviewed during Italy's G8 Presidency. I have said before that we need to both deepen and broaden the outreach process. I advocate making the outreach format more inclusive – let's make it a G 13! – and, at the same time, strengthening the conclave character of the G8.

Ladies and gentlemen,

If we want to seize the opportunity ahead of us, the transatlantic relationship will be absolutely crucial. It is therefore vital that we renew and reform the transatlantic partnership in order to shape the global age together.

That's why I have been arguing for a renewed transatlantic agenda. However, we must not stop at this point. We have to take Russia, China, India on board as well as other emerging powers such as Brazil, Mexico, South Africa to mention only a few. We have to find a global agenda that enables us to tackle the great challenges of our time together: energy security and climate change, financial markets, non-proliferation and disarmament – and the transformation of global governance structures by means of a Global Responsibility Partnership.

Thank you very much.