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QUO VADIS, GERMANY?
MAKING SENSE OF BERLIN'S FOREIGN POLICY IN AN ERA OF GLOBAL CHANGE

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P R O C E E D I N G S

MR. VAÏSSE: We're going to get started. I'm Justin Vaïsse and I'm Director of Research for the Center on the U.S. and Europe. I'm very happy you could join us this afternoon for this discussion with Cem Özdemir, Hanns Maüll and Angela Stent which will be an attempt to make sense of what many say is a new direction in German European and foreign policy.

This event is held in the context of the partnership we have with the Heinrich Boell Foundation on the Future of the E.U. Just a couple of weeks ago we held an event for the release of the European Foreign Policy Scorecard, a joint venture between Brookings and the European Council on Foreign Relations –of which Cem is a founding board member, I should add. Today we're holding a discussion on the foreign policy of one particular member state, Germany.

Why Germany? Simply because foreign policy decisions taken in the last year or so by the coalition government of Angela Merkel have left many allies of Germany and indeed I believe many Germans a bit skeptical about its direction. Just to give you a few examples:

- As you know, Berlin abstained on U.N. Security Council Resolution 1973 to impose a no-fly zone on Libya siding with Brazil and India, but also Russia and China against or at least rather than the U.S., France and the U.K.
- In the wake of Japan's nuclear crisis, Chancellor Merkel shut down all pre-1990 nuclear power plants and forced a 3-month moratorium taking neighboring countries by surprise.

- More importantly, on the Eurozone crisis Berlin expressed reluctance to rescue the peripheral countries facing sovereign debt crises until the situation threatened the euro itself doing enough to save these countries but not to resolve the crisis.
- The last example: Angela Merkel's speech in Bruges in 2010 where she advocated the idea of going from the community method to the union method, meaning putting the center of gravity of European integration from the Commission to a sort of intergovernmental process. People don't quite know what to make of all of this. I remember 10 or 15 years ago there was a lot of talk about "the Berlin Republic" where Germany was supposed to become more assertive, a more traditional country in its foreign policy, playing power politics as others, but this didn't really come to pass. Analysts are scrambling to explain what has taken the place of that – or of the traditional Cold War German foreign policy.

Let me give you a few quotes from recent publications. For example, there is indeed a sort of "unipolar moment within the Eurozone" as argued by a new ECFR brief by Ulrike Guérot and Mark Leonard, but there is "no grand strategy" to match it says Hanns Maüll in an article published just yesterday I think in The Economist. "The country has no normative ambitions and seems to have lost its moral and political compass," writes Dieter Dettke in a recent brief for the AICGS. As a result, there seems to be, and I quote again, "A huge geopolitical void in the center of Europe," in the words of Jan Techau, Carnegie's Director for Europe quoted in the same "Economist" article as Hanns is quoted in. This question of where Germany is headed is all the more vexing that we know that there are very important structural evolutions taking place, but we don't know what exact role these evolutions play in the policy changes.

For example, it's hard not to link the more independent course that Germany has taken on Russia and China, and perhaps even the U.N. vote not to link it to the fact that Germany represents almost half of the exports of the E.U. to China and indeed has benefited enormously from China's hunger for machine tools in particular and other goods that Germany produces. Goldman Sachs has projected that exports to China would be on par with exports to France at the end of 2011. That's one example of structural changes, but we could also mention changes in public opinion, a new generation, more Euro skepticism that has been detected by many polls, or changes in party structure with the rise of Die Linke, the fact that the FDP has become more Euro skeptic and probably more instability. So you see these are the two objectives of this discussion. First, to try to describe what the new German foreign policy is, to give it a name. Second, to try to understand the reasons for this change of course and what the future may hold.

We have only an hour and a half and it's a very vast subject, so I'll quickly introduce our panelists and we'll get the debate started, and I'll introduce the speakers in the order in which they will speak. I will first ask Hanns Maüll to start. Hanns holds the Chair for Foreign Policy and International Relations at the University of Trier in Germany, and he is currently serving as a Senior Fellow at the Transatlantic Academy. He is an eminent specialist of German foreign policy and also of relations between Europe and Asia. He was Co-Director of the Research Institute of the German Council on Foreign Relations to which he remains an adviser today. He is a frequent contributor to many publications like "Foreign Policy" and the author of many books. He will give us the professor's perspective or the academic perspective.

Next I'll ask Cem Özdemir to give us a more political perspective on this question. It's really my pleasure to welcome Cem back to Brookings. He's certainly not a newcomer. He's at least participated in two previous events here at Brookings and we certainly hope that this discussion will be lively as the last two. Cem as all of you know I'm sure is the Co-Chairman of the German Green Party and one of the fresh faces of Germany politics as an article in "Le Monde" just yesterday reminded us. He was elected to the German Parliament in 1994 and served two consecutive terms until 2002. In 2003 he was a Transatlantic Fellow at the GMF here, so Washington has no secrets for him. And from 2004 to 2009 he was a member of the European Parliament and spokesperson on foreign affairs for his group. Since late 2008 he's been the Co-President of the Die Grünen with Claudia Roth, and a very popular Co-President as he was reelected last year with more than 88 percent of the vote. Cem – this is almost a Libyan score!

To discuss the interventions by Hanns and by Cem, our last panelist or discussant will be our own Angela Stent who is a Nonresident Senior Fellow with us at the Center on the U.S. and Europe at Brookings. She is a Professor of Government and Foreign Service and Director of the Center for Eurasian, Russian and East European Studies at The Georgetown School of Foreign Service. From 2004 to 2006 she served as the National Intelligence Officer for Russia and Eurasia at the National Intelligence Council, and she had previously served on the Policy Planning Staff at the State Department where she dealt with Russian and Central European affairs. She is a specialist in particular of the Russian-German relationship on which she published two books among other numerous publications. Of course, after the three speakers have debated, we'll open for a session of questions and answers. Hanns, why don't you start?

MR. MAÜLL: Thank you very much, Justin for this nice introduction and for the invitation. It's a great pleasure and an honor for me to be here and to discuss the subject.

The pleasure is even greater than usual because of the heading you have given this session, "Quo Vadis, Germany?" I remember I gave an interview to one of the German policy journals in 1997 with almost exactly the same title, "Quo Vadis, Germania?" At that time already I was expressing a concern which you will hear me express later on, a concern about an erosion of German foreign policy, particularly of German's foreign policy purpose. So there's an interesting case of consistency. Remember, this was 1997 and quite some time ago. It's a consistency of the academic and I keep harping the same themes it seems and that may be suspicious actually. It makes me suspicious. But there is also a certain consistency which you would suspect from that in German foreign policy, and I will argue as you will see that that is indeed the case.

I want to approach the two questions which you have given us with three different perspectives in mind or offering three conceptual approaches, German power, interdependence and purpose. Power of foreign policy, interdependence and the purpose of Germany's foreign policy.

Let's start with German power. It's very visible. This casts a lot in Europe and resented by quite a few people. What are the sources of German power in Europe? Obviously it's mostly economic, the fact that Germany at the moment really is ticking remarkably as an economy, very successful, the economic dynamo at the moment at the heart of Europe. Let me point out that this success story has something to do with both policies and politics and it has a lot to do it seems to me with socioeconomic

adjustments which were taken by a previous coalition government, the Red-Green Coalition Government, just in time. It seems to me one of the problems of that Red-Green government was that the economic adjustment which was necessary was delayed, but one of the success stories was that eventually those adjustments were made and Germany at the moment is reaping the benefits.

Behind that of course you also have the fact that Germany does seem to be a rather impressive and successful socioeconomic model. I suppose the core of the success is German business and German enterprises and perhaps within that success stories of the Mittelstand, the small- and medium-sized enterprises which are heavily concentrated in a part of Germany which in the future will be governed by a Green Prime minister. I'm not worried about that actually and that seems to me business in Baden-Württemberg is not too worried about this.

But let me also point out that it's easy to overestimate that economic power of Germany. First of all, you're probably aware that within the economic powerhouse of Germany there are significant weaknesses, perhaps even an Achilles' Heel in the financial sector particularly in the Landesbanken, but also some of the other commercial banks in Germany are troubled for reasons hopefully we'll come back. I also want to point out that this power is a peculiar kind of power. The economic power which Germany has at the moment particularly vivid and particularly strongly felt in Germany is a one-dimensional power to some extent, at least it's not across the board in terms of military power. What you observe if you look at the Bundeswehr is a story of deterioration and erosion. Diplomatically I think it's up and down. There are periods of strengths and periods of weakness. Even the economic power is in some sense peculiar because what really is doing at the Germany, the way it is exercising its power, is by

imposing constraints on others and it's imposing fiscal constraints in particular on others because it has it feels itself a problem. So the power that it is projecting is an exercise of constraints being perceived in Germany itself. And it is of course a type of power which works only vis-à-vis countries, partners, which have themselves significant weaknesses.

This kind of power is not terribly relevant say toward the Netherlands or toward Finland. It is relevant toward Greece, Portugal and the Eurozone as a whole. But it is a power ultimately based on perceived constraints and weaknesses of others and even of Germany itself. German power the bottom line here is very much contingent and it's fragile I would also argue, and it certainly depends on circumstances very much.

Of course it is this power, and this is my second concept here, interdependence, which is very deeply embedded in all kinds of processes and structures of interdependence, visibly most obvious again in the economic realm. Germany as you all know is a particularly heavily export dependent economy and of those exports which accounts for roughly speaking 40 percent of GNP, some 60 percent goes to the European Union and only part of the remainder, although a significant part, goes to the BRICs and mostly to China. Within the exports to the European Union, 60 percent of total German exports again roughly speaking goes to the Eurozone. So there is a great deal of interdependence there between Germany and its neighbors and also others: China of course. The Chinese market at the moment, if you are a luxury car manufacturer like BMW or Mercedes, you probably make close to 100 percent of your profits at the moment in China in one single market. That's the case for BMW. They basically are profitable at the moment in China and almost nowhere else. For Mercedes it's a bit less. About 70 to 80 percent of their profits probably come from this one single market, China. It's based on the fact that what they supply to China are cars produced in

Germany, and that may change either because the Chinese themselves are going to produce those cars or because German manufacturers will be under increasing pressure to manufacture in China itself.

The question here is, is this sustainable, this situation, this interdependence? Will it change in the future? Most fundamentally of course we have interdependence in the sense that the remarkably success German export machine produces current account surpluses which require financial flows in the opposite direction. So in that sense there is a direct link between the fact that German is a very successful exporter and the fact that German banks hold a lot of debt including bad debt from countries like Greece, Portugal, Ireland and so on. This is it seems to me almost inevitably really this kind of relationship, a very fundamental interdependence.

The last issue I want to address is purpose. If you summarize my first two sets of comments about German power and the fact that this power is deeply embedded in structures of interdependence, then you realize that the challenge or the task for German foreign policy really is the management of interdependence. This is what German foreign policy ought to be about and what it has been about quite a bit in the past. So we are now talking about how to exercise German foreign policy influence and the argument therefore has to turn to purpose. The management of interdependence requires coalition building; it requires a lot of soft skills like leading by example, by down payments and by finding partners for formulating viable and efficient compromises. The grand strategy which German foreign policy has been pursuing and I would argue there has been only one grand strategy in Germany since the inception of German foreign policy in its West German incarnation.

This grand strategy is about three leitmotifs, the leitmotif of never again. That means German foreign policy has been based on a robust rejection of the kinds of approaches German foreign policy had taken in the past before that, and that's not only the National-Socialist expansionary militarist foreign policy with all its horrifying side aspects, but also the kind of military power politics which was pursued by the German Empire. So never again is about rejecting that kind of German past. But of course, there is also an important domestic dimension to this. The second leitmotif is never alone, and this is very closely linked to this never again because the experience of the past had been Germany on its own trying to dominate Europe. Never again, never alone. This never alone means a commitment to multilateralism and to Western alliance systems. The third leitmotif I have summarized slightly less elegantly, politics before force. There is a profound skepticism about the utility and the use of military force in German for very understandable historical reasons and that skepticism is not a complete aversion, it's not pacifism, that would be a misunderstanding, but it's skepticism and that continues to exist.

I argue that there has been only one grand strategy in German foreign policy which had crystallized by 1955 and still continues to provide the guidelines if you like although there have also been three important modifications. But first, what are the main elements of this grand strategy following the three leitmotifs? First it's embedding German foreign policy into the Western alliance system and that continues to be NATO and it means European integration, the European Community and the European Union. Secondly, it means an orientation toward pan-European stability, the idea that was very vividly expressed for those of you who were there a few days ago and listened to former Chancellor Gerhard Schröder, I was impressed how vividly and emotionally he expressed

this idea that a good relationship between Germany and Russia was vital and was existential for guaranteeing stability and peace in Europe. This is a leitmotif which you can take back to the 1950s in fact again, this notion that German foreign policy had a responsibility together with then the Soviet Union and later on Russia to ensure pan-European stability. A third dimension of this German multilateralism is the United Nations, the global dimension, then I would add to the three institutional contexts, and incidentally I should of course also say that the Western alliance system includes two core relationships, the one with the United States and the one with France and the pan-European -- the bilateral relationship and has the bilateral relationship with Russia at its core. There are two further aspects which are important here. One is skepticism toward the use and the utility of military force which I've already mention. Then the notion of a values-based foreign policy, this never again. It finds particularly strong expression in the declaration that the existence and the security of Israel is a vital national interest for Germany where this commitment to the State of Israel most clearly reflects this notion of a values-based foreign policy, but there are other aspects which I won't go into.

Very briefly, important modifications, but I would argue just modifications. No fundamental changes. Modifications of this grand strategy which I've just outlined where first the Ostpolitik in the early 1970s which significantly expanded the scope of German foreign policy without fundamentally changing the grand strategy. Secondly, the modification of the approach toward the use of force in the early 1990s. The first combat missions were not as you'll find very often in literature in 1990, in Kosovo the first combat missions by Bundeswehr aircraft were in 1995 in the context of the NATO war in Bosnia. That obviously was an important modification of German security policy. The third one which is less frequently observed but I think it's important to realize that there also has

been an important modification in the two important Western alliance systems in which Germany operates. During the Cold War the dominant one was NATO because the dominant issue was German security. Since then the dominant institutional framework for German foreign policy has become Europe and, therefore, the bilateral relationship with France has become more important even than the bilateral relationship with the United States. So those were the three important modifications, but they were just modifications. I see this grand strategy having been pursued essentially in very similar ways from 1955 onward and are continued after unification.

That is of course a problem. If you have a grand strategy over more than 50 years, the issue obviously arises how appropriate is this strategy still? It seems to me that this question, how appropriate is this old grand strategy still, has never really been debated in Germany after unification. One element of this admittedly has been debated and that is the element of the use of military force. But beyond that we have not really had a fundamental debate to reassertain. I think this grand strategy probably is still by and large right, but you have to find that out and you have to recommit yourself and that has not happened in German, and that seems to me the major problem which we have been observing increasingly over the years because this grand strategy is kind of paling. It's losing traction. The commitment to this policy orientation is weakening simply because it's become like a mantra. It's being repeated and repeated time and again, it's become reflexive, but it's no longer able to really engage policies the same way it was possible to engage policies say 20 years ago. And it of course has also to do with changes in the international context.

What I see is a story of creeping erosion of commitment and attraction of this grand strategy and the decision in Libya, the decision by the German government to

abstain on the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1973 which very few people in Germany really understand. It's a puzzle. When you talk to people in Berlin they're puzzled by this. Why was this? It seems it was a rather lonely decision by two people, the Foreign Minister and the Chancellor. I think this in a way reflects this process of erosion and it even creates the possibility of what I would perhaps somewhat dramatically call an implosion of German foreign policy, that German foreign policy could significantly lose its traction in the future as a result of this loss of commitment to a grand strategy. The abstention in Libya therefore represents to me a sign of alarm, a warning sign. Of course it's the first time it seems to me that you really had a loss of predictability and reliability in German foreign policy. I think the "no" in 2003 in Iraq was quite different in that sense. This is the first time that you had a major foreign policy decision by the West German government which was unpredictable and sort of lacking in reliability. Berechenbarkeit is a beautiful German term which German foreign policy has held in very high esteem. And perhaps even implied a certain loss of trust. I would argue that predictability, reliability and trust are the principle explanations and were the major assets which made German foreign policy so very successful in the past. I would challenge you that it is very hard to find a foreign policy of any country in the world which has been more successful than German's over 30 or 40 years and it seems to me that success was based on elements like predictability, trust and reliability. So there are a series of reasons for concern and the reasons for concern are not concern about German power, but about a lack of purpose in its foreign policy and a lack of purpose of German in international relations and I'll leave it at that.

MR. VAISSSE: Thanks very much, Hanns. Cem?

MR. ÖZDEMİR: Thank you. I have rather a difficult role here because I'm in the U.S. and I'm a German politician by the opposition, so usually as you know as an opposition politician you're supposed not to talk bad about your country in particular when the chargé d'affaires of your embassy is sitting here and telling back the kinds of things I tell here. No, I'm joking. But I can tell you that it's really difficult if you talk about German foreign policy these days to say nice things about your government. I work hard.

Let me add just one point to what you said at the, Justin. You talked about a range of topics as an example for the kind of confusion that Germany is raising. You mentioned Libya and Greece. There I totally agree. And then you mentioned nuclear power. There I slightly disagree because I think here the current movement in Germany is a good one and I have my questions whether our French friends discussed with us Germans their nuclear strategy. Having said that, that doesn't mean that it's good that we have a European energy policy. The European Council on Foreign Relations argues in favor of that and I deeply believe that, but we have disagreement on the use of nuclear power and sometimes it's also okay if you agree not to agree on one particular point.

Now let me come to my few points I would like to talk about. First of all, the developments in Northern Africa. A lot of people say that came as a surprise for German policy, for European policy, for U.S. policy. In a way it was overdue and the belated result of the end of the Cold War. Globalization finally has arrived in that part of the world, but it came certainly as a surprise on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean. We could see that none of us was really prepared for that. One example on our side of the Atlantic Ocean is certainly the Union of the Mediterranean which was reestablished in 2007. We had a lot of great media coverage about the ceremony, but if I look back I

would say the main purpose of it was maybe for President Sarkozy to sell nuclear power plants to reuse that example. Sorry, I'm a Green. I do not see what the Union of the Mediterranean when it comes to the support of civil society and these kinds of things really helped us. Did any of us have the names prepared of the people in opposition who we should know for the case of the revolution? I don't see that. So if you have so much public money involved in that, it would make sense to use part of that money to prepare yourself for future leaders. One of the biggest shames in my opinion for Germany in particular but also for other European countries is that in a situation -- remember the images we had again in the U.S. and in Europe about Islam after 9/11. In a situation where we see all of a sudden that the people in Northern Africa and in a lot of Arab countries dreams are not that different from our dreams. It's not about getting rid of secular dictators and getting instead of them Islamist regimes. Of course we have unfortunately Islamist movements in France and dangers. But the mainstream movement of young people was about exactly the same kinds of things that we want and that we share, that is, living in a better world, making sure that their children grow up in a world with better chances for them, having rule of law and so on, and of course welfare. So that gives us an extreme chance by the way also for our debates in Europe which are rather difficult on integration policies and the question of Islam. But instead of using that, instead of developing plans where we learn about our experience what happened after the Second World War with developing a Marshall Plan for Northern Africa, the main discussion in Europe and in Germany is about refugees. That's the main discussion. So when we ask people what do you have in mind when you see the pictures of Northern Africa, its refugees?

Now let's look at the figures. We're talking about 30,000 people. I don't say that this is no problem at all. Of course I don't want to simplify things. But compare that to 200,000 people in Tunisia. The case of Tunisia I don't have to explain that. We're talking about a country which really had to go through a very difficult situation and people opened their doors of their houses from Libya just to help them. Instead of focusing on Tunisia and stabilizing the country and making sure that this country could be a role model for other countries, we're completely occupied with domestic-driven policies and I see this as a big shame for us. Another point could be if we want to develop a strategy for that part of the region, it would make sense to do that jointly, the U.S., the European Union and it doesn't surprise you probably when I say also Turkey in this case. It would make perfect sense to develop a strategy together.

After the killing of Osama bin Laden, of course the organization al-Qaeda is weakened, but on the other side, it's also clear that Islamist groups will try to move into these countries. And we should not forget this is a neighboring region of ours and not of the U.S. Again this is another reason why the European Union and in particular Germany should pay attention to this part of the world. In my opinion, this means that Europe urgently needs to develop a strategic partnership, I said that already, with Turkey. Let me give you a reason for that and why I believe it's important. Of course, Turkey is not a role model as Turkey loves to see itself quite often. But Turkey could be an instance where internal transformation is managed relatively successfully. If you look to the history and the relationship for instance between the military and civil society and the military political era if you have in mind especially the old pictures. So Turkey has become in a way a regional anchor in the Levant reference points to all the topics that are on the agenda there, oil, natural gas, refugees, water. You can name it. I think also the

European Union and Germany would have the role to prevent a new kind of competition between Egypt and Turkey. Again we would have a role there, but I don't see anybody in Europe paying attention to those topics or developing strategies or at least thinking about what the European Union could do there.

My second thesis is Germany must adjust its political and strategic compass. That fits quite well to the work you quoted from the European Council on Foreign Relations and I could not agree more there. Before the elections in the State of Baden-Württemberg and in Rheinland-Pfalz more than one month ago, I participated in a TV program on German Public TV and it was also about the Libya question. While I was talking there I asked myself, "Am I the Green and are the others the conservatives and the so-called progressives?" I'll tell you why I ask myself that, because I found myself in the situation that I was the only one in that round of politicians representing the leaders of all the parliamentary groups from the Left Party, the Social-Democrats, the Liberals and the Christian-Democrats, and we have a kind of coalition from Christian-Democrats to the Left Party in a race of pacifism, the kind of notion where we do not have to follow the U.S. on everything they do especially when they do wrong things. I was the one saying as the Green Party leader, a responsibility to protect. This is a new development. This is something we learned from the experience in Rwanda, and I guess that was shared. I thought it was shared. I have to correct myself. It's not shared obviously. Or we learned as progressives if I take the Green Party as part of the progressive movement, we learned from the conservatives on foreign policy starting from Adenauer to Kohl. We learned from that in practically all the foreign policy issues besides Ostpolitik, the left was wrong and the conservatives were right. So we learned from them. But now we found ourselves in a situation that the current conservatives don't stick to that heritage anymore

and it's my party who says we will have a high price for that wrong decision because, first of all, in the region in Northern Africa where people expected us and waited for the signal that Germany is on the side of those who want freedom and democracy, and it's us, it's our country who suffered from communism from two dictatorships, and the best person to know that is our Chancellor. I don't say more about her. I promised to be friendly.

So the second damage is of course toward transatlantic relations. I remember when we were in power there was a decision about the Iraq war and there were some parties criticizing us, by the way also in this country there was a prominent politician criticizing the German government while this person was here. Now we have a situation in the case of Libya where they say no. We abstain together with Russia and together with China. The second damage, and excuse me when I say this is the most important damage to me, that is the European damage. Because if you add that to the euro crisis, if you add that to the problem with Greece and the difficulties of the German administration taking decisions on the Greek case, you get a broader picture and that's not a very good picture on the German foreign policy decision, so I believe that in my opinion was a very, very dangerous situation or leads us to a very, very dangerous situation.

I don't want to simplify. It's always difficult to take decisions when it comes to war, but let me clarify one thing. Our administration is answering questions that nobody asked. Nobody asked for German troops. The permanent repeating of but we cannot send troops is a very cheap and easy excuse because nobody asked for troops. It was just about a symbol. It was just about the message that the West is united there and stands with one voice in the shared of the values there, and that unfortunately was questioned with that decision. I don't want to only nice things about our government, but

remember when we were in power we had to take decision on the Kosovo war. That certainly was not easy for a pacifist party to take such a decision. But leadership is also about sometimes going out to your own voter base and to your own members and telling them the kinds of things that they might want to listen to but have to listen to because it's necessary for the country.

Let me jump to my third thesis briefly. I believe that Europe's crisis is deeper than it appears. On one side, the retraction of German and its focusing on domestic policies causes to my opinion a political power vacuum that Germany has created. Of course Germany still reaps the biggest political and economic benefit of the European Union and you already talked about the economic miracle of Germany in the current situation. But I believe it would be simplifying to explain that only with social reforms. Thanks for the nice things you said about these reforms, but I'm sure we agree that part of it is also linked to the European single market and definitely to the euro. This is very easy to understand but obviously not easy to explain for a lot of my colleagues, but I believe it's necessary to explain to all Germans and all Europeans how much we benefited from the Eurozone and that it's not only our people are hard working, because our companies are so smart and the others are so stupid. It is also because we are the ones who benefit from the Eurozone and that needs to be explained.

Again I started with my example from TV. Another very bizarre situation is that we as the ones who hammered on Helmut Kohl for 16 years when he was Chancellor in German are now the ones who in a way inherited his European Union policy. Unfortunately his own party doesn't partly anymore and other parties also feel very reluctant to have a clear position on the European Union, and when you hear today in the Bundestag or elsewhere Green politicians talking, they quote Helmut Kohl all the

time. I'm not sure whether Helmut Kohl is happy about that that the Greens more or less want to take over his heritage, but he cannot defend himself there. This is also I believe a very dangerous situation because the comeback of national thinking not only in German obviously, but developments in German are anticipating -- shifts in other countries of the European Union. I don't want to give you too many examples, you follow that by the news, but just look at the decision in Denmark, in France and Italy vis-à-vis the reestablishment of national borders, and you all know this is one of the core achievements of the European Union that we gave through the Schengen Agreement our citizens the right that they can travel through Europe and those who have access via the Schengen visa, that they can travel through the European Union. So the question is why do we make those treaties if every country can say I change this, I change that without asking Brussels? This is a very, very dangerous development, and while we were criticizing other countries and their difficulties with democracy, we also have to finger point on ourselves. Just look at Hungary and the restrictions on freedom of the press, minority rights and I could talk about a lot of other cases.

But the worst effect of the current renationalization in my opinion is the euro crisis. Of course it's obvious that the euro crisis is an economic crisis, but even more so in my opinion it's a political crisis. I believe that the kind of reforms we've undertaken always come too late and they're too little. This is also part of the difficulty. Again one brief example. I believe that this is now part of European history that in the case of the Greek crisis when it appeared, we as the opposition came to the government and said, listen, guys. We're the opposition. It's our job to criticize whatever the government. But this is about a crisis of the European Union and as a party you feel that the European Union is crucial for us. Why don't we sit together and agree on a common

position of German shared by all parties on the Greek crisis and help as quickly as possible? The government preferred to wait until the elections in North Rhein-Westphalia were over. They lost the elections and we lost important time. It got much more difficult for George Papandreou to undertake reforms, it cost us much more and besides that, as collateral damage we harmed the European Union. That's a very wise strategy. So I believe that we should learn from that. I don't think it's enough to only finger point at the financial markets. The only thing that the financial markets are doing is they recognize that the European Union is not united, it doesn't speak with one voice and that we ourselves don't have a strategy in how to deal with the crisis.

Let me come to the end. What should German in particular and of course the European Union do to answer the currency crisis? First of all, we certainly need a European economic governance. I believe that's without alternative. A common currency without common governance is not possible in my opinion. That also includes strengthening European institutions, and it's clear that if you have the euro, that it's a matter of time that you also need to have some kind of coordination on taxation, wage policy, maybe on social policy, and that's the next step we certainly need. I'm not that pessimistic if you see the results of the elections of extreme parties, xenophobic parties becoming more successful. In the German case people could say what are you talking about? There is no such party in Germany? I have to say there is no such party, but there is such a newspaper in Germany which in a way fulfills the role that in other countries is fulfilled by these parties. But still I believe if you explain to our citizens how important the euro is for us and if you go out to the market squares, you can convince the people. We still live in a rather, when I say we I mean Germany, we still live in a rather pro-European country so it's up to us to involve these people and explain what's at stake.

MR. VAÏSSE: Thanks, Cem. Angela?

MS. STENT: Thank you, Justin. We've heard the Gesamt concept from Hanns Maüll which was brilliantly stated, we've heard very a interesting political view and political take on this from Cem, so I think I will just make a few remarks on some other aspects of German foreign policy and then I think we should go to the general debate.

When Germany took over its current nonpermanent seat on the U.N. Security Council, Guido Westerwelle said, "The world knows it can rely on us," and I guess the question now is rely on Germany for what? So when I looked at the title, the "Quo Vadis" and everything else, I wondered if you look at what's happened in Germany at least in the last few months, is this a new example of the perennially feared German Sonderweg? I don't think I heard that from either of the other speakers. Is it that Germany lacks any real foreign policy strategy? I think I heard some of that from our speakers. Or is, and I think we didn't talk about that very much and maybe we will more, the result of domestic pressures? Certainly when you look at the Libya vote, you look at the closing of the nuclear power plants, the elections, et cetera, how much is this the result of domestic politics and I'd like to hear more about what the German thinks about a number of these issues. How much is this domestically driven? I too was going to quote the phrase that Dieter Dettke used in his paper, "The lack of any real normative ambitions," and I think that really does come through in what has happened in the last few months.

I'm just going to talk about two issues. One of them is to say something about the German-American relationship. I know that's only just one small part or one part of German foreign policy and how it's evolved recently. And then I do want to talk about what I see as a very successful and constant aspect of German foreign policy and

one where I think there is a Gesamt concept and a strategy and that is in fact the Ostpolitik not just toward Russia, toward Central Europe, toward the post-Soviet space where I think Germany has played a leadership role and will continue to do so.

Let me something about the German-American relationship. You talked, Hanns, about the consistency in German policy, but of course in the last 20 years the German-America relationship has undergone a gradual sea change as German emancipated itself, a united Germany, from dependence on the United States for its security and for its continued existence, et cetera. And there was a period obviously in the early and mid-1990s when German was very concerned inwardly with rebuilding itself as a unified Germany. You're right that the beginnings of military involvement in Bosnia were very important. Even more important I would argue was of course under the SPD-Green Coalition and the sending of troops and the military force in Kosovo and Joschka Fischer, and does come down to the Greens being very much in favor of military intervention if it's for these humanitarian reasons and being willing to send the Bundeswehr in harm's way. Of course you've also had that in Afghanistan don't forget. In Washington they may criticize the level of German's involvement there and the restrictions that are placed on German troops, but they're important and again it's been a very important contribution. I think all of that was a very positive turn if you like in German-American relations.

Yes, of course the relationship soured after the invasion of Iraq and Germany joined the coalition of the unwilling and all of that. But I think we should also remember that once Chancellor Merkel came to power, the relationship improved and I am going to quote you a sentence from George Bush's memoirs where he says, "In addition to serving as a staunch advocate for freedom, Angela was trustworthy, engaging

and warm. She quickly became one of my closest friends on the world stage." I think that was very important for him. I'm not going to say what her view is as she hasn't written her memoirs yet.

The U.S.-German relationship did of course in 2008 suffer some more strains over the issue of whether NATO should grant membership action plans to Georgia and Ukraine. Germany was really the leading country when President Bush tried to persuade Europe to support him in this, she and of course the French as well saying that this was premature, it would be dangerous and basically saying no. And even though you had that phrase from the Bucharest communiqué in 2008 that one day they will join NATO, one day could be a long time away, and I think certainly the German and American response and of course the French as well to the Russo-Georgian war again exposed the differences on these issues.

The Obama Administration did not get off to a good start in its relationship with the German Government and with Chancellor Merkel because you'll remember that candidate Obama was denied the opportunity to give a campaign speech at the Brandenburg Gate. Of course he did give one in Berlin and he still had large crowds. But that has largely of course improved. There is going to be a State Dinner for Chancellor Merkel in a couple of weeks here. This is an honor not given to that many world leaders. And I think Germany is seen today as again still playing a key role in three of the areas of most vital foreign policy importance to the United States. One of them is Afghanistan. A second one is whatever we want to call it now, the antiterrorist coalition, but cooperation in the fight against terrorism. Then also is a staunch supporter in containing Iran, working together in the United Nations Security Council. So I would say there Germany still is regarded as a very steadfast ally.

The fact that Germany did become a BRIC in this Libya resolution, that it joined the BRICs in abstaining at the same time when Germany I believe still would like to seek a permanent seat on the United Nations Security Council unless that's changed does raise several issues. Again I think the sudden closing of the nuclear power plants was something that was certainly noted here. Then I want to raise one other thing which isn't so much the government because Chancellor Merkel said supportive things, but the debate in Germany over bin Laden's death if you followed that I think reminds us again, and Hanns alluded to this, that even though we are liberal democracies who respect the rule of law and we're allies, we do have rather different views still of attitudes toward the use of military force and the legitimacy of things like targeted assassinations, we don't have to go into the historical reasons for that, we know why, and I think again the public in the United States and Germany and this has very much I think become evident in the debate over whether the bin Laden assassination was justified or what else could have been done.

I think until now the U.S. has always assumed that Germany's primary foreign policy focus was obviously European integration, the centrality of NATO, we've heard all about that, and the commitment to multilateralism and I do think that the Libya vote particularly I suppose raises some questions about commitment to NATO and commitment to multilateralism. Maybe we can get back to that in the discussion period.

Let me now say a couple of words about an area where again I think Germany has played a very successful leadership role. I would start off with the repair of German-Polish relations. You'll remember under the Kaczynski brothers was a pretty difficult period given what they said about Germany and some of the things they did. Germany has worked very assiduously with the successor government to improve

German-Polish relations and make German-Polish relations the cornerstone of an expanded European Union's effectiveness and its policy and I think that's very important. Russia as we've already heard is a major partner for Germany. Germany is Russia's main economic and political partner. I would think that the Mercedes dealership at least in Moscow is still doing pretty well, maybe not as well in China, but there are lots of Mercedes there as well as BMWs and Audis and everything else. In some ways the Obama reset policy has in fact followed or tried to follow some of the things that Germany has done. For Germany it's the process that's important. It's the long-term engagement with Russia. Even if it doesn't always produce results, the engagement is very important. It's the interconnectedness of the societies, the interdependence, economic and political, obviously energy, is a very important part of that and the fact that you have a large group of German stakeholders who have a continuing interest in improved ties with Russia and continuing the engagement however difficult or awkward Russia sometimes is. So I think I see that as a success story because I think Germany is trying to have an influence over Russia's current modernization program if indeed it goes forward and also in improving its ties in general to the European Union.

The other part of that is that Germany I would say has been instrumental, and I come back to Poland now, in promoting this Russian-Polish rapprochement that we've seen since the Smolensk plane crash a year ago. Again it's not always a linear process, it has setbacks too, but Germany is consistently encouraging both sides and because they both trust Germany, I think it's had a very important role there I guess including thinking about expanding this Weimar Triangle Format with Germany, France, Poland and then maybe including Russia in some ways.

The final thing I want to say in terms of the post-Soviet space is that Germany has become much more active in most of what I guess we call Eurasia, the current attempts to resolve the Transnistria problem, the Meseberg Initiative, it maybe hasn't gotten very far, but again Germany really is trying to play a constructive role in deconflicting some of these issues. So that while I'm sure that the other speakers are right that there is a questioning of 50 years of Germany's policy and a questioning of where it should be going Quo Vadis maybe globally, I do not believe that this aspect of the policy, the broader kind of Ostpolitik and trying to make this also a European Ostpolitik, I don't see that that's going to change and I see that as something that is a success story, so I'll finish there.

MR. VAÏSSE: Splendid. Before getting to the Q and A, I'd like to get back to Hanns very, very briefly, because Angela mentioned the role of domestic politics in foreign policy, and in your introductory remarks you talked about the debate about substance, about a grand strategy, et cetera, but isn't there an easier explanation which would be to point out that factor of domestic politics, or more generally isn't it more about process? Has something changed in German foreign policy that would explain these outcomes?

MR. MAÜLL: Yes, you're right. It has changed. But I think it has changed in part because of this sort of diminishing commitment to a clear compass on foreign policy. If you don't have that anymore and if you have an international environment, and that's the second factor, which doesn't help to focus your mind, obviously the Soviet threat beautifully helped to focus minds and concentrate on German foreign policy and that's gone too. And if you have that you have a kind of vacuum and into this vacuum then you have domestic considerations coming in and what do you find?

Cem Özdemir gave us several examples of that. What you find is that foreign policy decisions are sometimes, not always, but sometimes unfortunately taken basically out of domestic political considerations. Foreign affairs is treated as a residual category where it doesn't matter all that much and where you can do what you want to do or what you figure you have to do out of domestic political considerations. I find it very difficult to explain why the Chancellor accepted the position of the Foreign Minister on abstention in the Security Council and I agree that the issue was not really German troops, it was that should Germany be with its allies on this or not be with its allies? And for some reason which I have again difficulty to understand, the Foreign Minister felt he did not want to be with the allies. I think the reason, I don't know but I assume, why Angela Merkel accepted that was basically because she felt she couldn't impose too much on her coalition partner and he needed a leg up and she was willing to give it to him regardless of the damage this would do to German foreign policy interests.

I wanted to make if I may briefly a second point on Angela's comments. I very much agree with you on Germany-Russia and German Ostpolitik generally but with one proviso. I'm sometimes a bit worried about the fact that this seems to be insufficiently anchored back into a European approach towards Russia. The best example for that I see is in the field of energy policy where that kind of approach which Germany has taken and I think I agree with you is basically a very constructive and farsighted approach, but it would have to be balanced by making sure that the European Union had a truly common energy policy with regard to natural gas and natural gas pipelines and infrastructure and that sometimes has been missing from German policy on this. So the complement of that strategy in terms of having the European Union on board as a balancing factor for simply the weight of Russia, that I have not always been

completely happy with. But otherwise I think agree that this is one of the more successful aspects of German foreign policy recently.

MR. VAÏSSE: Let's now open it to the room. I am sure there are many, many questions. Just a reminder of the ground rules, please wait for the mike, give us your name and affiliation and make sure there's a question mark at the end of your sentence.

MR. DETTKE: Dieter Dettke, Georgetown University. Thank you for the great presentations. It was an enormous effort to try to explain recent German foreign policy. I think the big question now is whether we have seen in the case of Libya in particular somehow a short-term paralysis of German decision making, the perfect storm of the financial crisis, Fukushima and of course the Landtag elections, and Hanns mentioned this. Or is there a more long-term pattern coming up? That's a big question I think and I want to mention two points. One is on European decision making in the financial crisis. Isn't it true that somehow the bailout or no bailout crowds and the no Transfer Union, somehow anti-European thinking in Germany is beginning to enter the mainstream? It has resonance in the CDU, it has resonance within the FDP and it could somehow enter other mainstream parties too, the Greens, the SPD. There seems to be some openness, and it's a European-wide phenomenon, the True Finns in Finland and other countries so there could be a more long-term issue.

The other is security policy and when I hear about Bundeswehr reform, the new one and not the Guttenberg reform, is an effort somehow to scale down Germany's missions abroad and somehow turn that down. If that's true, I think then we see more a grand Switzerland coming up in the middle of Europe and that is something that would worry me for foreign policy reasons and given the discussion that we have

about the Middle East and the movements there, plus the domestic consequences of that strategy. I would be worried about it and I just wanted to have some reaction to the more long-term consequences and changes in the German pattern of foreign, economic and security policy. Thank you.

MR. VAÏSSE: Thanks. These are great questions. We're going to rounds of three.

SPEAKER: My name is -- and I'm a Ph.D. student at Howard University here. My question is about Turkey. Mr. Özdemir mentioned Turkey as a possible anchor in the area. I was wondering since we see two faces or two perspectives of Germany, one as an E.U. member and one as a nation, we see that toward Turkish membership where at the national level there is an anti-Turkish sentiment toward Turkey but this is an E.U. process as well that's been going on. So I was wondering as Turkey takes a more visible role in the international arena, how do you see the Turkish-German relationship as far as at the national level and also Germany as an important E.U. member? Thank you.

MR. VAÏSSE: Very interesting as well. The last question for this round.

MR. SZABO: Steve Szabo from the Transatlantic Academy. I wanted to ask you what picture in your head you have of German foreign policy. Hanns, you developed the paradigm of civilian power, the Zivilmacht. After German unification there were people like Mearsheimer saying that it would become more a realist power. But I was just reading the European Council's new paper they did on the new German problem, and when I was in Brussels a few weeks ago somebody said to me from the Commission, "Germany is an emerging power. It's like Turkey." This report brings that out too. It's basically leaving Europe in terms of its new markets and its dynamism. It now is a new country, it has taken 20 years for unification to get done but now it's been

done. I wonder how you feel about this issue that Germany is sort of like Turkey or China in that it's moving on its own into this new global role and perhaps maybe has a little hubris too like Turkey might have as well?

MR. VAÏSSE: There's plenty on our plates. Who wants to start? Cem?

MR. OZDEMIR: Thanks for the questions. Dieter's question first. I believe the crucial point is you need to have a very clear position and clear orientation on what are your foreign policy goals, what are your values and I believe the consensus in Germany was and still has to be the Western orientation or multilateralism and on the other side the European Union. If that's the case, you can agree to disagree on some points. Take the example of the Iraq war where Joschka Fischer in that famous scene in Munich at the security conference said to Rumsfeld, "I'm not convinced." But he said that, and nobody doubted that I guess, as somebody who believed in transatlantic relations and the importance there so that the one who said that was not somebody who questions the importance of transatlantic relations. That in my opinion makes a difference.

We went then one step too far when Schröder during a campaign event in the State of Hesse as you might remember added, maybe he was too enthusiastic when he saw the huge crowd in front of him and Grass standing next to him, "Even if the Security Council would decide on Iraq, we still would not follow." That in my opinion went one step too far and I disagree with that. So I believe if you have a clear orientation you can also sometimes take different decisions on particular issues.

The question mark regarding Germany that you hear more and more here in the foreign policy community but also when you go to Brussels is does Germany still believe in the European Union? Is Germany still willing to pay a price for that? And

the second question mark is here mainly of course how important is the transatlantic relationship to Germany or does Germany, I'm exaggerating now a little bit, see itself somewhere between Russia and the U.S., both important allies or is there not a clear orientation? That is questioned and that's not good for our country so we have to make that clear again where we stand. That doesn't mean that we slightly disagree as I said on a number of issues.

The second question with Turkey, again this is a very good example of domestic-policy-driven strategy of the European Union if I use the word strategy in that context. In the case of Austria it's obvious; in the case of Germany it's very obvious. I make maybe one exception to be fair. There are two groups of people who are against the membership of Turkey. By the way, if I say membership that means if Turkey fulfills the necessary criteria. This is not a membership under all circumstances. This is a membership if the necessary Copenhagen Criteria is more or less fulfilled. But there are two groups. One group is the group of federalists who I take seriously, the ones who say we've already overstretched the European Union and if a country the size of Turkey comes, that would be the end of deepening the European Union and of a federative Europe. They have good reason to say that. Do we question whether Turkey is really willing to give up power to Brussels? You can already see that and you know much more about how difficult it is for Ankara to give power to the local area. So imagine Mr. Erdoğan accepting Barroso telling him what he has to do. We know Mr. Erdoğan's sometimes interesting speeches with crimes against humanity when he comes to Germany. By the way, I don't know why he does that, but have you recognized that in every speech that Erdoğan gives in Germany, at least there is one crime against humanity? I had a chance to talk to him and tell him, please, if you talk about

assimilation, you don't have to describe it as a crime against humanity because you describe this as a crime against humanity, how do you describe Bosnia and other things? What kinds of words to you use? He said, don't worry. But next time he used it again in another example, so he's obsessed with crimes against humanity, but that's another topic.

Let me come back. So I believe that it would be extremely important that the European Union comes back to the start of negotiations and uses the process, I'm not talking about the result, I'm talking about the process, uses the process to send the right incentives to Ankara for the reform process because I believe that without these incentives the reform process in Turkey as we see currently is in danger. The willingness of Ankara to take more radical steps is certainly in danger. On the other side, it's also in our interests to have Turkey close to the European Union for the reasons I just gave before when we want to develop strategies vis-à-vis the Maghreb States, vis-à-vis the Arab Peninsula and so on.

MR. VAÏSSE: Angela, did you have something you wanted to add?

MS. STENT: This business about is Germany an emerging power, I too briefly read the European Council on Foreign Relations' report. I think, yes, there obviously is questioning of Europe as you asked Dieter, but Germany is still the anchor of the European Union in many ways. If Germany doesn't believe in the European Union, who does? Right? I think maybe it exaggerates. Obviously some things are changing, there's a debate, but to say that it's an emerging power as Turkey is, I would question that. I don't know what Hanns thinks about that.

MR. MAÜLL: Yes. I agree with you. My first thought was, Steve, if it's an emerging power, it's a rather graying one. Chinese demographics is a bit different.

They still have 10 years or so to go and we don't. We are already shrinking. The Germans are already shrinking.

But more seriously, I also just don't see the ambition behind it. If you look at what is driving German foreign policy to the extent there is one, largely it seems to be budgetary constraints. Fiscal constraints are driving the ambitious of Germany to be the European hegemon and that is not what I would see as an emerging power and from that perspective China really is rather different.

On the Turkey-European relationship, I'm really rather optimistic because I think what we are beginning to see is the dissolution of a misunderstanding and the notion of Turkey joining the European Union has always struck me as being a profound misunderstanding, perhaps not for the previous Turkish elite, but for this one. Why should this new Turkish elite want to take Turkey into the European Union with all that implications that has which Cem Özdemir just indicated? So I think Turkey is in the process of realizing that and we'll probably move from the idea that the two should marry to the notion of, no, that's perhaps not a very good idea, but why can't we have a beautiful friendship? I think the fallout of what's happening in the Middle East now and particularly in Syria to Turkey is that Turkey is beginning to realize that it may need friends more than it sought a year or two ago when it was very optimistic about what it could do on its own and now that may be changing. On the other hand, I don't see really an anti-Turkish attitude in Europe. I think there is an anti-Turkey as a member of the European Union attitude. But as soon as this project disappears from the table, I think there is a great deal of interest and willingness on the European side to engage Turkey very closely. So as I said, I'm rather optimistic on that.

On the question from Dieter, Germany as a huge Switzerland would be a very unhappy Switzerland. If Germany did what you suggest might happen, and I agree with you that one cannot rule it out, but the consequences would not be Swiss comfort, the consequences would be very uncomfortable. I personally think it would be dramatic and so it would be a very unhappy and very disturbed Switzerland. I think this is also understood by perhaps not the population in Germany but by the elite. I think the elite understands very well that letting the euro break up is simply not an option and not a good option for German foreign policy so I think that's not the way things are likely to develop. But the problem of domestication of German foreign policy is a very serious one and so I can understand and to some extent share your concerns.

MR. VAÏSSE: Let's go to the next round of questions.

MR. SMITH: Bruce Smith, Brookings. I want to go back to the euro and express an heretical view or rain on the parade or whatever metaphor we should use here. The euro never made much sense to begin with. You wanted to do it, fine. We're happy to accommodate you. But when you look at the implications of trying to force on Greece the straightjacket which much follow as a consequence of the bailout or help or whatever terminology we reserve, this is a very unfortunate and horrible thing that you're imposing on this country. The austerity, the enforced poverty, the punishment, the penalty, there must be a way that you can find out some way to allow them to escape from the euro, float their currency, stimulate investment because they would revive tourism if they didn't have to be bound by this straightjacket of the euro. I think we may be in a danger here are we not of celebrating process over practicality of the solution to a really grave problem here. I don't know. Maybe, yes, if you had a stronger banker who could impose and make somebody swallow some losses, a central banker, but I don't

see you really doing that. I don't want to rattle our markets. I'm a pensioner, an impecunious retiree and I don't want the market to go down. But do you not have to face up to the fact that you cannot impose in good conscience on a poor country the kind of conditions that are going along with this financial rescue?

MR. LIVINGSTON: Thank you. I'm Jerry Livingston from the German Historical Institute. I have one brief comment on what Angela just said, and then I have a question mark that you asked for.

Hanns, do you not think that Angela answered your question quite well that one of the main purposes of German foreign policy it seems to be is to integrate Russia into Europe? In the speech that Schröder three days ago he stressed that very strongly, and Wolfgang Ischinger made another speech at the German Historical Institute a few months ago on exactly the same thing. It's remarkable how far Germany has come with Poland. That is quite right, Angela. Radoslaw Sikorski, the Foreign Minister, said here at a recent meeting that relations between Germany and Poland have never in history been better and this is an achievement has been brought about in the last couple of years.

My question mark is the following. There has been quite a bit of talk, there hasn't been but there should have been, about American military forces in Germany. We have 53,000 American troops in Germany, 40 and 39 Army and 14 Air, more than any other country except Afghanistan, more now than we have in Iraq. In his memoirs Donald Rumsfeld with whom I discussed this a couple of days ago comes out very strongly for the withdrawal of American forces north of the Alps, and Secretary Gates, his successor, has also talked about the excessive forces we have in Europe. My question is, the question mark you asked for, what would be the reaction of the German

government if American forces were drastically drawn down and redeployed into the United States? As Rumsfeld says in his memoirs, it's just as easy, in fact easier, to deploy them to hotspots from the United States than it is from Germany where if you had a Red-Green government they probably wouldn't let them go and Austria and Switzerland would again forbid over-flight rights, so let's get them out of Germany and let the Germans worry about their own defense more.

MR. VAÏSSE: I'll take these two and then we'll have to close because 4 o'clock is approaching.

MR. PRUTER: Alex Pruter with N24 German TV. My question goes to if it's true that there has been a loosening of the foreign policy framework, the consequence would be that the power of political personalities to make decisions has increased because the framework is loosened so they think that they have more leeway to make decisions. If that is true and looking back at what has happened in the past years, even going back to Gerhard Schröder and his "no" to the Iraq war, do you think that that has increased the erratic nature of foreign policy decisions because politicians, Hanns Maüll for instance cited the fact that probably the decision on Libya was made between two people, Westerwelle and Angela Merkel, also thinking that the German public would follow them? When it became clear after the decision was made that about 60 percent of the Germans were for military intervention but didn't want the Germans to participate, so it seems that there was also a disconnect between what the German public really wanted and what those two politicians thought that the German public wanted. Do you think there is an erratic nature because it's more driven by very short-term domestic considerations? If that is the case looking forward, what does that mean for the future?

Just one point I wanted to make about Angela Merkel and the past developments on Europe for instance when she made one of these decisions that had a big, big fallout on Greece saying no for a number of months. She realized it seems at least afterwards that she had made a mistake, and in a speech at the beginning of the year she said together with Sarkozy they made quite clear that 2011 would not be a repetition of 2010 and they seemed to stick to that line for the moment at least. The question on Libya is whether they also have realized that they overplayed their hand and they're willing to correct, and if they do, how?

MR. NASON: My name is Scott Nason and I am with the Heritage Foundation. My question is about German foreign policy. Given a possible perspective of American decline, do you think that German foreign policy is moving toward a nonaligned status similar to the policies of the BRIC countries?

MR. VAÏSSE: Indeed, in the ECFR brief there is the idea that it's a nonaligned policy rather than an emerging country policy which is not exactly the same point. I'll now give two to 3 minutes to each of the speakers to answer the questions. Maybe Angela, would you like to start perhaps?

MS. STENT: I think I'll let my German colleagues answer the question about U.S. troops. I would say it's possible that if as Hanns says there is going to now begin a major debate after 50 years about what German's grand strategy should be, Germany could eventually end up being nonaligned, but again that would be just such a huge break that I doubt it. I think the nature of the alignment and the nature of the alliance may change, but I don't see any signs of Germany becoming nonaligned in the near future.

MR. VAÏSSE: Thanks. Maybe I'll ask Hanns, so we'll leave the last words to Cem.

MR. MAÜLL: Let me take the questions and comments in order. Yes, I would agree with you about Greece basically not only from a moral but primarily from a political point of view. It seems to be politically unsustainable to ask countries like Greece, Ireland and Portugal to suffer 10 years of austerity policies which may not even work because what you find is actually as you cut down on public expenditures, the tax income also goes down and so you may be chasing an unachievable objective. This is clearly politically unsustainable. What will be needed it seems to me to complement the imposition of austerity policies is some kind of constructive, positive perspective, a growth perspective in other words. Of course one can see what ideally should happen. What ideally should happen is that the kinds of surpluses which Germany produces in its trade say with Greece are then complemented or balanced by foreign direct investment inflows into Greece which then productively transforms the Greek economy. In theory that would be the solution. In practice the question will be how do we get there? All participants are now committed to the euro, they have to make it work and to make it work will imply a kind of convergence of the Eurozone on the German economic model basically. To make that possible I think you have to think about how do you complement austerity policies with the growth perspectives for those countries? Otherwise governments are just going to fall. It's not going to work very simply.

Jerry, yes, as I said I agree with Angela, but just to integrate Russia as the sole purpose of German foreign policy strikes me as being insufficient and also somewhat being blind in more than one eye, the realities of interdependence tie German to Europe, to Western Europe and Eastern Europe, not primarily to Russia. So, yes, that

is important and successful, but it's 10 percent of the task for German foreign policy and I'm talking about the 90 percent where I'm less happy.

What would be the reaction to a withdrawal of U.S. military from German? First of all, it seems to me that a lot of the U.S. military in Germany now actually is not there to defend Germany, they're doing other things. But if assume they were to go, there would clearly be a lot of unhappiness at the local and regional level. That's very clear. At the federal level I think there would also be some unhappiness, but I would argue unfoundedly because in principle I think you're right, the European Union should be able to defend itself. There would be unhappiness nevertheless at the German federal government level because of a reflexive dependency on American security guarantees which incidentally in another report by the European Council on Foreign Relations picked up very beautifully when he talked about the reflexive European sense of dependency on the United States for security. I think basically this is no longer realistic. Europe ought to and Germany ought to grow up on this one. But I also suspect that the issue is not a very pressing one because the purposes of the American military presence in German as I said are largely related to German anymore.

Is German foreign policy becoming more erratic? Yes, this is exactly what I have observed. I completely agree with you. That is problematic not so much because Libya in itself is such an important issue, but it is worrying on central issues such as the euro where we saw last year in May that German foreign policy is capable of bungling it even on very important issues, so I'm worried about this more erratic character of German foreign policy and I would exactly agree with you. I think public opinion on Libya sort of illustrates that very well. My take on public opinion in Germany on Libya is this was a public opinion which wanted to be led. It wanted to be led by politicians.

Germans wanted to have politicians explain to them what position they should take. And I think it would have been entirely possible to persuade the German electorate's public opinion to follow a yes vote at the Security Council. That would probably have led them to demands for German military participation and I'm realistic about this I think. Then the German government would have had to say either no to this or perhaps even yes in some limited way if they could do it. Again I think even a limited military participation probably could have been explained to the German electorate. I do not see a sort of fundamental opposition at this point, that it's an issue of leadership.

Again I agree with Angela that Germany is not going to become a nonaligned country like the BRICs. There's a fundamentally different orientation which has not gone away. I would even challenge some of the premises. What is it we are really talking about when we talk about U.S. decline? What are the implications of that? It seems to me the implication of U.S. decline is in fact more need for multilateralism, more need for multilateral policies, and nonaligned policies don't get you anywhere in such a world. It's a G-zero world as Ian Bremmer recently said quite rightly. Nobody is in charge anymore if the United States continues to decline, and the challenge will then be to organize someone who is in charge, coalitions who will be able to have an impact on developments and being nonaligned simply doesn't get you there so I don't think that's an option for German.

MR. VAÏSSE: Wonderful. Thanks, Hanns. Cem, you have the last word.

MR. OZDEMIR: Thank you. I agree with most of what Hanns just said. Regarding Greece, I believe the mistake at the first place was to let Greece into the Eurozone because it was obvious that Greece was not prepared. You didn't have to be

an expert on the economy to understand that, that the Greek economy at that time was not prepared. Again mistakes were repeated. Eurostat wanted to look into the Greek budget and into the Greek books. The reason why we didn't support that was because if you allow them to look into Greece's budget, you also have to allow them to look into the German budget and we didn't want that. It's that simple. So a very efficient policy I can say now looking backwards. That certainly needs to be changed. If that is not a good example why we need a stronger European Union, I don't know what a good example is for that. Obviously that needs to be changed. Of course it's clear what Greece has to do, so I see this also as a chance for Greece. I will come back to your remark regarding the perspectives for Greece, but Greece has to deal with its imbalances and with its tax system. It has to become a normal state regarding a tax system. Maybe the first time in their history they have to invent such a tax system or fight against corruption and all those kinds of things. But on the other side, you're also right when you say if you look at the details and the conditions, some of the conditions certainly don't make sense. Greece has the worst public transport in the European Union. Now the IMF says cut that again, an already bad system which obviously is a deficit of course, but if you look from the other standpoint, we're talking about climate and so on; we need more public transport and not less public transport. So if the IMF is now hammering on Greece to close the only railway system that they have from Athens to Thessaloniki, it's completely absurd to do that, and I could name some other points which I believe are not really reasonable. So it's obvious that when we discuss about a haircut, I will be careful enough not to say that the Green Party leader and German politician is for a haircut for Greece and at the Brookings Institution, so I will only refer to such a discussion. Obviously there is such a discussion and I'll stop here and continue with the question

about U.S. troops. I fully agree with what you have said. Let's be frank. We benefited from the presence of U.S. troops in Europe. It helped us to invest less in security and more in welfare states, and I believe that NATO is still the most important framework for security. If that's the case, it is important that the U.S. is anchored in Europe. That's my answer to that question. The way it has to be done of course, it's up to you and to the U.S., it's not our right to decide for you, the U.S. has to decide that, but I would support a unilateral decision here and I believe that we also have to understand what the importance of NATO is. By the way, it was not an easy shift in position for my party from a party that wanted to step out of NATO, our original position was that we have to dissolve NATO as if you can dissolve NATO from Germany. That really means something if a Green Party leader says that NATO still is the most important security framework.

The third question, again I agree with what Hanns said. It was absolutely short-term domestic policy-driven decisions. But again I think it is possible to change the opinion of people and convince them and not with just giving interviews. You really have to fight. What fighting means you could see if you remember the famous picture from the Bielefeld Party Congress of the Green Party and the famous thing that happened or the sad thing that happened to Joschka Fischer with his ear. He was attacked by somebody not from the Green Party but somebody who came into the party convention and attacked him personally. And he still went on and spoke and said how important it is to send troops and to show a military presence there. So it's a question of fighting sometimes in democracies. The result of that is in practically all the opinion polls you've had in German in the last years, there is also research about public support for a presence in Afghanistan and then they look into the party support. Guess which party has the highest

support for a military presence in Afghanistan. You would be surprised. It's my party. This is not because our people are smarter or whatever. It has a simple reason. We lost part of our members, we lost a huge part of our voters, when we were in power because of that decision and we know that exactly, that we will have an extremely high price for that. We went down from 51,000 members of the Green Party down to 48,000 members. We lost more than 3,000 members in a very short period and of course lots of votes. So I believe sometimes in politics you have to take these risks and you can convince people.

Let me finish with good news. I learned during my presence at the German Marshall Fund that in order to show that you really learned something from the U.S. is to finish with good news and an optimistic message. I have to admit that's not fully typical German, but sometimes we can also learn from the U.S., and that is there is one member in this current administration in Germany and that's the Minister of Finance, Mr. Schäuble, whom we really have a lot of respect for as the opposition party. I trust his policies vis-à-vis the European Union and the Eurozone, and he managed to convince his Chancellor because the current position of the Chancellor is not that different anymore vis-à-vis the orientation of Europe. The only thing that concerns me now is if she will heel for instance the relationship with Juncker. Remember how close Juncker was with Kohl? If you look at the words they used vis-à-vis each other, that's quite shocking. So I think now is the time to really invest into the European Union and since this government is in power until 2013, I'm optimistic that we will change it then, it's their job and as an opposition politician I say whenever the administration is investing into the European Union, we will support them.

MR. VAISSSE: Thanks. Please join me in thanking and applauding our three panelists and sorry for going over time.

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