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The US-EU Counter-Terrorism Conversation: Acknowledging a Two-Way Threat

Jonathan Laurence

In December 2009, under the shadow of the first homegrown Islam-inspired terrorist attack to take place on US soil, the Brookings Institution convened "The Transatlantic Dialogue on Terrorism." The November 5th Fort Hood shooting spree by a US Army Major and psychiatrist and other recent arrests of would-be US militants threw a spotlight on the reality of a two-way threat posed by violent radicals in both the US and Europe. Two months earlier, a US citizen was charged with targeting the Copenhagen headquarters of *Jyllands Posten*, the Danish newspaper that published the Prophet Mohammed cartoons in 2005.[1] These events forced a rethinking of the prevailing wisdom that characterized earlier transatlantic counter-terrorism cooperation where US-EU cooperation was organized principally against an inbound threat from Europe to the United States.

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[1] One of the Danish cartoonists, Kurt Westergaard, was attacked in his home on January 1, 2010; a 28-year old Somali man was shot and injured by police at the scene and later charged with attempted murder.

Until last year, US observers worried about homegrown terrorism largely by proxy, in foreign contexts: violent radicalization in the West appeared to be a mostly European phenomenon. The US policy debate about Muslim extremism, meanwhile, focused on the ramifications for the visa waiver program and the exchange of passenger records with European governments and airlines. American commentators regularly accused Europeans of virtually fuelling radicalization by mishandling immigrant integration, and were baffled by Europeans' debates about headscarves and *Leitkultur* ("guiding culture") that characterized their fitful attempts to redefine their national communities.

Americans, meanwhile, retained their confidence in the integrating power of Muslim Americans' upward mobility, a national tradition of religious pluralism and the symbols of the American dream and the melting pot. The US citizenship of those arrested on terrorism charges in the early years of the war on terror, in contrast with the European experience, appeared almost accidental. While *they* in Europe imposed restrictions on religious expression and debated the wisdom of granting Muslims citizenship, many in the US felt if not immune, then safely ensconced. It was thought that American Muslims would prove wholesale resistant to radicalization thanks to

educational and employment opportunities. Even when US law enforcement became concerned with terrorist links in Somali communities, these appeared to be imported first-generation issues that would fade with time as the dynamic host society did its work.

But recent cases show that the combination of extreme alienation from US foreign policy, whipped up with religious fervor, can trump even the relatively harmonious multicultural setting of American society. No consensus has emerged among counter-terrorism experts as to whether the string of Americans arrested in late 2009 represent a qualitative leap over the seemingly amateurish plotters foiled in the early years of the previous administration's War on Terror.[2] The two US converts recruited to Al Qaeda and the Taliban only briefly piqued Americans' imagination in the aftermath of 9/11.[3] But their names have since been joined in the past several months by a gallery of US citizens and longtime residents pursued by terrorism charges, many of whom resided at length in the Washington, DC and other major metropolitan areas. The recent wave of arrests has focused the national debate away from the constitutionality of US detainee policies and towards the potential for homegrown terrorism.

The Hot Autumn of 2009

• **Najibullah Zazi**, an Afghan national and US permanent resident arrested in September 2009 based on his alleged collaboration with Al Qaeda on planning terrorist attacks with weapons of mass destruction in New York City. He allegedly traveled to Pakistan to receive explosives training.

• **David Coleman Headley**, formerly known as Daood Sayed Gilani, a Pakistani-American businessman who has lived in Philadelphia and Chicago, and is accused of involvement with terrorism. He was arrested in October 2009 and charged with plotting an attack against the Danish newspaper *Jyllands Posten*. Headley was also accused of involvement in the Mumbai terrorist attacks of 2008 and was charged with providing material support to Lashkar-i-Taliba (a militant Pakistani Islamist group).

• **Major Nidal Hasan**, an American-born Muslim of Palestinian descent and trained psychiatrist who was awaiting deployment to Afghanistan at Fort Hood, TX when he allegedly killed thirteen people and wounded thirty others on November 5, 2009. He had corresponded with Anwar al-Awlaki, an imam believed to be an al-Qaeda recruiter who preached at the Dar al-Hijrah Mosque and Islamic Center in Falls Church, VA. Hasan attracted the attention of US intelligence agencies with his internet research and correspondence several months before the attack but his activity was judged to be in line with his professional responsibilities.

• **Anwar al-Awlaki**, a US citizen imam and lecturer residing in Yemen, known for his anti-American teachings and an alleged recruiter for Al Qaeda. His sermons were attended by three of the 9/11 hijackers and by Major Nidal Hasan, with whom al-Awlaki briefly corresponded. Reports of his death in an air strike in Yemen in December 2009 have been contested.

• **The Sargodha 5.** Five US men of different backgrounds (Pakistani, Egyptian, Eritrean and Ethiopian) arrested in Sargodha, Pakistan in December 2009. Officials say they were headed to North Waziristan to train with the Taliban and al Qaeda. The men came to the attention of an Islamic militant in the region through their YouTube activities.

[2] E.g., José Padilla, the Lackawanna 6, Sears Tower plot, etc. See timeline in *New York Times*, January 10, 2010.

[3] Adam Gadahn and John Walker Lindh.

The resurgence of the terrorism issue in transatlantic relations illuminates how much national stereotypes have changed over the past eight years. Yet there remain inherent difficulties of crafting a common strategy given different US and European experiences, perspectives and priorities. In the past, Americans perceived the threat as mainly external and thus relied on predominantly military tactics in the "Global War on Terror." Europeans, who faced a domestic threat from violent extremism within their immigrant-origin communities, resented the American use of military tribunals, extra-judicial renditions and detention against European citizens and residents. The reality of attitudes and practices was always more complicated, but the caricatures stuck. In 2004, Democratic presidential nominee John Kerry was accused of displaying European sensibility when he suggested the merits of deploying law enforcement in the fight against terrorism.[4] German Chancellor Gerhard Schröder used the specter of US belligerence to salvage his reelection campaign that same year, and Europeans were broadly skeptical of Americans' linkage of counter-terrorism and weapons of mass destruction that led to the invasion of Iraq.[5]

Despite extensive technical cooperation on counter-terrorism between the US and the EU, the transatlantic conversation on how best to address terrorism and its causes has often seemed like a dialogue of the deaf. An influential article in the *Washington Quarterly* in 2006, for example, asserted that the US and Europe disagree on "the precise nature of the terrorist threat, the best methods for managing this threat, and the root causes of terrorism," and that moreover, they fail to "understand or accept each other's positions."[6]

The US and the EU now face changing domestic circumstances. After a relatively quiet period, Islamist-inspired terrorism returned to the forefront of transatlantic relations in 2009. In the preceding era from 2002-8, both US and European authorities sought advantage over terrorism suspects by relying on the foreign national status of those arrested, and refused to engage the full panoply of domestic institutional options. The US branded many suspects arrested abroad as "enemy combatants," thereby delaying the resolution of thorny constitutional questions. Europeans for many years tried to deport their way out of a radicalization problem in their immigrant communities, working closely with governments in the immigrants' countries of origin to identify security risks among Islamists active in their territories. This delayed the pursuit of a domestic integration strategy towards Islamic groups. In France and Germany, governments have lately succeeded in establishing state-mosque relationships akin to existing state-church arrangements with other groups, but most countries have only reluctantly engaged religious leadership in domestic institutions. With the advent of homegrown terrorism by native-born citizens on both sides of the Atlantic, now the US and Europe must adapt their counter-terrorism practices to the reality that many terrorism suspects in the future will be fully naturalized and enfranchised members of their citizenry.

[4] Bush faults Kerry on Terrorism Remarks," *New York Times*, October 12, 2004.

[5] Wyn Rees and Richard J.Aldrich (2005), "Contending cultures of counter-terrorism: transatlantic divergence or convergence?," *International Affairs,* Vol. 81, No. 5, pp. 905-923, p. 913.

[6] This despite the "remarkably similar" characterizations of national security threats in the U.S. National Security Strategy of 2002 and European Union Security Strategy of 2003, including an emphasis on international terrorism, weapons of mass destruction and failed states. See Daniel Byman and Jeremy Shapiro, "Bridging the Transatlantic Counter-terrorism Gap," *The Washington Quarterly*, Vol. 29, No.4, (Autumn 2006) pp.33-50.

Transatlantic Dialogue on Terrorism

One year into the Obama presidency, counter-terrorism officials and experts from the US and Europe met at the Brookings Institution to discuss the persistence of the dissonance in transatlantic relations between practical cooperation and philosophical differences. This Transatlantic Dialogue on Terrorism, hosted by the Center on the US and Europe, explored strategies for increasing US-EU cooperation and improving mutual national security.[7] Oliver Rüss, chief advisor to the EU's Counter-Terrorism Coordinator (EU-CTC) and the Dialogue's keynote speaker, argued that the US and Europe face three similar challenges in the coming decade:

1. Young citizens who travel to border areas in Afghanistan and Pakistan

2. Domestic relations with diaspora communities coming from conflict zones

3. The need to better understand, explain and prevent radicalization. [8]

Brookings senior fellow Daniel Byman, who served as commentator for Rüss's remarks, argued that both the US and Europe need to re-conceptualize their understanding of counter-terrorism. Byman identified two important challenges for European counter-terrorism officials:

1. The mobility of terrorism suspects within the EU, which is not matched by the mobility of the police or by better communication among bureaucracies; and

2. The reality that EU counter-terrorism measures often reflect "the common lowest denominator."

As he put it, "it is still easier for a terrorist to be European than it is for governments to be European." Workshop participants who participated in panel discussions on "paths to violence" and "responses to the threat" concluded that both American and European officials needed to absorb lessons from one other, and focused in discussion on how to enhance US-European cooperation and achieve consensus on the scope and nature of contemporary terrorism threats.

Enhancing Capacities and US-European Cooperation

The Transatlantic relationship experienced a deep diplomatic crisis in the period after September 11th, but intelligence sharing and inter-agency cooperation on counter-terrorism matters always remained robust. Even while US and European leaders debated the wisdom of deployments to Iraq or Afghanistan, confronted one another in the UN Security Council, and used one another as straw men in election campaigns, a quiet and constructive working relationship endured and led to increased cooperation on police, judicial affairs and border control matters.

Recent polls show that US and European citizens share similar perceptions of the terrorist threat and that the American President's popularity in EU member states is at historic heights.[9] In his major declarations in 2009, from

[7] The Transatlantic Dialogue on Terrorism, sponsored by the European Commission, and based at the Center on the US and Europe, aims to deepen the strategic understanding between the United States and Europe on the transnational terrorist threat and its causes, as well as to further opportunities to develop complimentary counter-terrorism policy. This analysis draws insights from the public session and from an expert workshop that took place later in the day.

[8] The text of Oliver Rüss's and Daniel Byman's remarks is available at: http://www.brookings.edu/~/media/Files/events/2009/1215_terrorism/20091215_us_eu_counter-terrorism.pdf.

[9] See "Chapter 12a: US Opinion on Transnational Threats" in "Public Opinion on Global Issues," Council

the Inaugural Address (January 20) to his speeches in Istanbul (April 6) Cairo (June 4) and at the UN General Assembly (September 24), President Obama has heralded a new era of US multilateralism. Furthermore, the slow but steady maturation of a new EU Counter-Terrorism Coordinator has made strides since 2005 towards creating a single intelligence counterpart for US authorities. Last October, the EU and US issued a joint statement celebrating their "close operational partnership" on "enhancing transatlantic cooperation in the area of justice, freedom and security."

In the fall of 2009, EU and individual member-states offered some assistance towards the closure of the Guantanamo Bay, and announced that 7,000 new troops would stay, or be sent, to coincide with the increased American engagement in the ISAF force in Afghanistan. US officials still hope for more support on these and other fronts, but the flurry of terrorist attempts, attacks, and arrests in 2009 served to open wider the window of opportunity to enhance transatlantic coordination on counter-terrorism.[10]

On both sides of the Atlantic, there have been major reforms of the way intelligence agencies organize and share information with one another and with their international counterparts. The cost of the US National Intelligence Program for 2009 has ballooned to nearly $50 billion: the National Counter-Terrorism Center and Department of Homeland Security were created, as were fusion centers, joint terrorism task forces, etc. Since the EU Counter-Terrorism Coordinator was established in 2005, the European Council upgraded the role of Europol through a Counter-Terrorist Task Force (CTTF) in furtherance of "bilateral law-enforcement relationships" with the goal of "harmonizing" policies across member states.[11] National and local officials in the US and Europe also began working more closely with Muslim communities in an effort to improve relations and nurture contacts.

Supporters of the European integration process contend that current EU counter-terrorism efforts are underfunded, and that coordination failures between member states persist in an atmosphere of enduring mistrust vis-à-vis Europol, which has the potential to become a European FBI, but it does not have its own high-level intelligence. EU counter-terrorism authority, despite the EU treaty's advances, is still a "peculiar mixture of intergovernmental and transnational features."[12] The EU Counter-Terrorism Coordinator has responded to these criticisms by outlining a strategy of "Prevent, Protect, Pursue and Respond," and pursued the Europeanization of counter-terrorism policies through the Lisbon Treaty, which includes several relevant innovations. The presidency of the EU, a rotating position currently held by Spain, assembled national CT officials in Madrid to inaugurate a European Committee for Counter-Terrorism

on Foreign Relations, November 2009, www.cfr.org/public_opinion.

[10] In January 2009, Bryant Neal Vinas, a convert to Islam with family roots in South America, pleaded guilty to receiving training from Al Qaeda in Pakistan; Shirwa Ahmed, a Somali-American, became the first known American suicide bomber in February 2009; in October 2009, a 32-year old CERN researcher of French-Algerian origin was arrested for links to Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb; also in October, a 35-year old Libyan national legally resident in Italy attempted to bomb a Milan barracks; in 2009, US officials learned that Omar Hammami, an American of Syrian background who grew up in Alabama, passed through Toronto, and ended up in a leadership position of Al Shabab, a militant Islamist group in Somalia, where he has reportedly fought alongside other US citizen volunteers.

[11] Oldrich Bures, "Europol's Fledgling Counter-terrorism Role," *Terrorism and Political Violence*, Vol. 20, Issue 4, October 2008, pp. 498-517.

[12] Kaarlo Touri, "European Security Constitution," Law and Security: Facing the Dilemmas, European University Institute Working Paper, Law Faculty, 2009/11, p. 4.

Coordination.[13] The officials met in a new context of increasing institutional integration – beginning with a stronger Europol – following the passage of the Lisbon Treaty, which entered into force in December 2009.[14] The reigning Treaty on European Union includes several new provisions relevant to counter-terrorism:

1. The new Article 43 of the EU Treaty allows for European Common Security and Defense Policy (ECSDP) to contribute to the fight against terrorism;

2. A specific legal basis will be added to the Treaty on the workings of the EU to allow European institutions to support the Member States in crime prevention;

3. The new Article 222 of the EU Treaty (known as the "solidarity clause") will require the EU and the Member States to support each other in case of a terrorist attack, not unlike NATO's Article 5;

4. The new Article 275 (2) of the EU Treaty states that the jurisdiction of the European Court of Justice will be enlarged to allow for judicial review of any restrictive measures adopted against individuals in the context of the fight against terrorism.[15]

There are structural limits to the counter-terrorism coordination that the European Union can realistically accomplish. Some sensitive intelligence will likely never be pooled for use by all members, just as the US has layers of federal, state and local counter-terrorism coordination. Europeanization is advancing steadily but selectively, and bilateral relations between member states will remain the preferred forum for sharing information in the European Union. Some norms and practices will indeed be "Europeanized," but not necessarily by law or institutional mandate.

In light of the full menu of counter-terrorism topics currently under review in the United States – from extraordinary renditions to detention, secret detention, torture, fair trials, and targeted killing – it is likely that the EU and US will continue to disagree on "some aspects of the fight against terrorism."[16] Although President Obama will oversee the end of Guantanamo, harsh interrogation measures and secret prisons, the US still detains terrorism suspects without trial and has not renounced the use of military commissions.[17] In a recent European Council on Foreign Relations policy memo, Anthony Dworkin advocated a "forward-looking policy setting up principles that accord with US-EU values," one that avoids the "lowest common denominator." The open questions now are whether Europe will become more engaged in Pakistan, and how long the transatlantic consensus that a military presence in Afghanistan helps to protect European and American streets will last. This will depend in part on whether the ISAF forces are perceived as a benevolent presence, which underscores how counter-terrorism policy is intertwined with foreign policy. EU and US policymakers are no doubt mindful of research showing that 95% of suicide terrorism has been committed against military occupying forces.[18]

[13] J.A. Rodriguez, "España creará un comité europeo de coordinaciìon antiterrorista," *El Paìs*, January 2, 2010.
[14] Valentina Pop, "Madrid set to boost counter-terrorism activities," *euobserver.com*, January 4, 2010.
[15] See Federico Fabbrini 2009, "The Role of the Judiciary in Times of Emergency," Yearbook of European Law 2009, Oxford University Press.
[16] Anthony Dworkin, "Beyond the War on Terror: Towards a new Transatlantic Framework for Counter-terrorism," ECFR Policy Brief 13, May 2009.
[17] Benjamin Wittes, "President Obama's Decision on Closing Guantanamo," *The Washington Post*, September 29, 2009.
[18] Robert Pape (2005) Dying to Win: The Logic of Suicide Terrorism, Random House.

Placing the threat in perspective

The degree of official and media focus on radicalization and terrorism can distort perceptions of their scale. By this measure, terrorists have won a psychological battle: terrorism's political toll on immigration societies outweighs the current security threat it poses. Recent research sheds insight on the evolution of the terrorist threat since Al Qaeda's creation in 1989. The counter-terrorism expert Marc Sageman –who participated in the Brookings meeting – examined the 400 violent jihadists (out of 20-25 million Muslims in the US and Europe) who pursued a total of 60 plots in Western countries over the past two decades, peaking at ten plots per year in 1995 and 2004.[19] Fourteen of the sixty became successful attacks.[20] Europol reported in 2009 that 187 Islamists were arrested in EU member states (out of 1,009 total terrorism arrests) and there were no recorded attacks by Islamists in 2008.[21] Tracking potential terrorists and their personal "tipping points" remains an essential but obstinate task, often likened to looking for a needle in a needle stack.

The evolving understanding of potential terrorist profiles has consequences for counter-terrorism methods on both sides of the Atlantic. A new Danish study concludes what could already be gleaned from the profiles of known terrorists: the frustrating reality that "radicalization" has little to do with "integration."[22] The most profoundly alienated have sometimes been those who speak the local language and objectively "fit in" to their countries of residence. Moreover, poorly executed CT efforts can undermine communities' relationships with public authorities.[23] Nearly 1,500 individuals were arrested under the Terrorism Act in the UK since 2001, for example, but only 521 (35%) were charged with a terrorist-related crime, and only 102 of them convicted (7%).[24] "The Channel Project," a British counter-radicalization program that seeks to identify future radicals, has come under criticism for allegedly targeting school-age children for profiling.

Muslim communities have chafed at the extra attention. In the UK, intelligence agencies are accused of "harassing Muslim youth and coercing them to spy on other Muslims."[25] Sageman argues that "we must avoid arresting too many people, as France did in the 1990s. Too many people have become terrorists in prison after being mistakenly accused of wrongdoing."[26] On the other hand, authorities' margin for error is small: twelve terrorist plots were prevented in the UK between 2004-9.

Fourteen deaths were attributed to Islamist terrorism in the US last year: 13 at Fort Hood and 1 at a Little Rock recruitment station (in June 2009). None took place in Europe. In a bit of Transatlantic irony, a conservative analyst recently exhorted the FBI to become more French. Reuel Marc Gerecht accused US authorities of being "inattentive" and "too sensitive" in handling the case of the Fort Hood suspect: Gerecht argued they were blinded by

[19] Eight in 2005, 6 in 2006, 6 in 2007 and 3 in 2008. Source: Interview with Marc Sageman in *Le Monde*: "La guerre en Afghanistan n'a pas de sens," *Le Monde*, September 9, 2009.

[20] Nine by the Algerian GIA, 2 by Al Qaida and 3 "inspired" by Al Qaeda; and ten where bombs failed to explode. Source: Sageman interview in *Le Monde*.

[21] TE-SAT 2009, EU Terrorism Situation and Trend Report, The Hague: 2009.

[22] Shahamak Rezaei and Marco Goli, 2010, "The house of war - Islamic radicalization in Denmark" (Krigens Hus – islamisk radikalisering i Danmark), Aarhus University.

[23] Rachel Neild, "Ethnic profiling in the European Union," Central European University Press, 2009.

[24] Ninety-four were convicted on other charges. "Only a third of UK terrorism arrests lead to charges," Reuters, May 13, 2009.

[25] "FOSIS expresses serious concern following MI5 harassment of Muslims," FOSIS press release, May 22, 2009; see also "Muslims say FBI tactics Sow Anger and Fear," *New York Times*, December 17, 2009.

[26] "La guerre en Afghanistan n'a pas de sens," *Le Monde*, September 9, 2009.

"a concern for not giving offense to Muslims" and said that this would "never prevent the French… from aggressively trying to pre-empt terrorism."[27]

Conclusions and Recommendations

European and American participants at the Brookings Institution public session and workshop discussed a number of recommendations, including imperatives and caveats, with regard to deepening transatlantic counter-terrorism cooperation. Some recommendations entail practical and easily implemented improvements already under consideration in EU-US discussions, such as the stationing of air marshals on board intra-European flights and the sharing of Passenger Name Records among European countries. Others concern broader strategic reorientations.

Conference participants discussed how the Obama Administration increasingly incorporates the civilian element in its military endeavors, and has re-introduced the rule of law with regard to many (though not all) terrorism detainees. The discovery of homegrown terrorism on US soil has also led Americans to become more appreciative of the necessary role of law enforcement agencies and domestic counter-radicalization efforts operating under strict constitutional guidelines – in addition to a new appreciation for the role played by foreign policy and the communication of its underlying motives and goals. Despite President Obama's affirmation, after the December 25 attempted airline bombing, that Americans are still "at war," US counter-terrorism strategy is being refined in ways that Europeans instinctively appreciate.

European authorities, in turn, have become more accepting of the war-making end of the counter-terrorism spectrum thanks to their involvement in Afghanistan. As Oliver Rüss, chief advisor to the EU's counter-terrorism coordinator, said in the public session of the conference, "Europe has learned through the Afghanistan engagement that law enforcement is not the only way or not always the first tool to be applied… when you have something like insurgencies and real war against European soldiers."[28] Rüss noted that the Europeans' understanding of counter-terrorism has been broadened from "knocking down doors in European capitals" to include counter-insurgency in the battlefield.

On December 25, 2009, ten days after the Transatlantic Dialogue on Terrorism met at Brookings, an attempted bombing on board a Northwest Airlines flight to Detroit highlighted persistent coordination difficulties between US and European officials, and pointed to issues that still need to be tackled through transatlantic cooperation. Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab, a Nigerian national with a multiple-entry US visa, had hidden explosives sewn into his undergarments. His years spent as a student in London, and the fact that he passed through Amsterdam's Schiphol airport in the Netherlands, added a familiar European twist on his attempt, and further underscored the urgency of information sharing and the exchange of best practices.[29]

Contributing to Americans' dismay over their own intelligence community's lack of internal

[27] "Major Hasan and Holy War," *Wall Street Journal*, November 23, 2009.

[28] Oliver Rüss, "Coordinated Counter-Terrorism Policy: Experiences and Possibilities for Enhancing U.S.-European Cooperation." Keynote speech of the 2009 Transatlantic Dialogue on Terrorism at the Brookings Institution. The full text of Rüss's remarks and Daniel Byman's response is available at: http://www.brookings.edu/~/media/Files/events/2009/1215_terrorism/20091215_us_eu_counter-terrorism.pdf .

[29] Lorenzo Vidino, "Towards a radical solution," *Foreign Policy*, January 5, 2010; Links were also reported between Abdulmutallab and Anwar al-Awlaki, of Yemen, who is discussed above.

coordination, cooperation with European counter-terrorism authorities also fell short. The incident revealed uncertainty whether Dutch airport officials were permitted to use body scanners on US-bound passengers and ambiguity as to whether the UK shared with US authorities its earlier decision to deny a visa to Abdulmutallab. In addition, if the warning that Abdulmutallab's father delivered to the US Embassy had been "properly shared and analyzed," as one French counter-terrorism judge recently wrote, the suspect could have been prevented from boarding a US-bound airplane.[30] Sharing is a daunting but necessary task whose difficulty is magnified by the existence of eighteen US intelligence agencies and the practical aspects of coordination among the EU's twenty seven member states, each of which has its own intelligence and security apparatuses.

The persistence of the terrorism threat reveals new opportunities as well as a new imperative for transatlantic cooperation. Several unexpected points of convergence come out of the current US-EU counter-terrorism conversation. If the last decade began with a fleeting sentiment that "We are all Americans," as *Le Monde* editorialized after 9/11, the new one was greeted with the grim acknowledgment that "We've all become counter-terrorists."[31] The counter-terrorism policies that will be pursued in this decade, however, will not mark the predominance of the "American model": rather, they are likely to look like a hybrid of US-European approaches.

The following recommendations were raised in discussion:

Areas of Potential Cooperation

Given the sensitive nature of the shared information, a constant process of transatlantic confidence building has to take place.

1. Improve passenger verification and security information sharing between the two sides of the Atlantic.

2. Intensify and broaden counter-terrorism prevention work.

3. In furtherance of counter-terrorism prevention, coordinate EU-US policies towards failing states and failed states that can serve as safe heavens for terrorism.

4. Focus on the victims of terrorism to help delegitimize and de-glamorize terrorism.

5. Adjust counter-terrorism measures to better protect soft targets such as the transportation system and hotels.

6. Examine the critical role of infrastructure and cyberspace defenses in the counter-terrorism fight.

7. Recognize that multilateralism is only one component of counter-terrorism policy. Bilateralism and domestic measures are also important. Moreover, EU and US influence in multilateral institutions such as the UN has decreased.

Opportunities for Transatlantic Learning

1. The EU has acquired advanced competencies in the field of counter-terrorism (CT) and this could provide new ground for US-EU cooperation. Some of the programs implemented in Europe (including media communications, imam training, de-radicalization programs aimed at young

[30] Jean-Louis Bruguière, "The Holes in America's Anti-Terror Fence," *New York Times*, January 13, 2010.
[31] Frank Rich, "The Other Plot to Wreck America," *New York Times*, January 10, 2010.

people, etc.) could be adapted to the US context.

Unilateral Policy Improvement

1. One of the most important signals that EU countries send to the world is not so much EU foreign policy as European immigration and integration policies.

2. Focus less on "Radicalization," a concept popularized in the media, and more on political violence and the subculture that sustains it.

3. The EU's counter-terrorism policies continue to be too broad and the EU has not made counter-terrorism objectives a major priority in its dealings with Pakistan and North Africa.

4. Revise the legal framework of terrorism activity to harmonize EU policies (e.g.: in some member states, participation in terrorist training camps is not seen as a crime).

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The Transatlantic Dialogue on Terrorism

Tuesday, December 15, 2009, 11:00 am – 3:15 pm
Center on the United States and Europe
The Brookings Institution
1775 Massachusetts Ave, NW, Washington, DC

Agenda

11:00 am – 12:15 pm **Briefing: "Coordinated Counter-terrorism Policy: Experiences and possibilities for enhancing U.S.-European cooperation"?** (*Location: Falk Auditorium -- Open to the Public.)*

Featured Speaker: **Oliver Rüss**, Office of the EU Counter-Terrorism Coordinator
Discussant: **Daniel L. Byman**, Georgetown University and Brookings
Moderator: **Jonathan Laurence**, Boston College and Brookings

12:30 pm - 1:45 pm **Workshop Session 1: Responding to the Threat** *(Stein room) One year into a new American administration that has sought to change the tone of US foreign policy and its interactions with Muslim communities, and several years after the creation of new counter-terrorism policies across Europe, is it possible to speak of a new era for the old war on terrorism? Have US and EU responses displayed a learning curve, and does the right blend of policies now match the threat?*

Speakers: **Raphael Bossong**, Global Public Policy Institute, Germany
Federico Fabbrini, European University Institute, Italy
Benjamin Wittes, Brookings
Moderator: **Fiona Hill**, Brookings

2:00 pm - 3:15 pm **Workshop Session 2: Paths to Violence** *(Stein room) After the Fort Hood shooting it was revealed that the alleged perpetrator had sought religious advice from an American-Yemeni fugitive preacher known for his violent incitement. What is the current operational independence and ideological vitality of the jihadist network in Europe and the United States? How much do international networks still matter to the dynamics of the current terrorist threat?*

Speakers: **Alessandro Orsini**, University of Rome Tor Vergata, Italy
Bruce Jones, Brookings and New York University
Marc Sageman, Sageman Consulting LLC
Max Taylor, University of St. Andrews, UK
Moderator: **Jonathan Laurence**, Boston College and Brookings

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