



Belgo-British Conference 2005 Conference Report 2020 – a new horizon for Europe

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“André Villeneuve and I share the feeling that the last conference in London was a great success.

The quality of the debates, highlighted by good speakers and animated by a very interactive dialogue, resulted in a better comprehension of topics of common concern but not necessarily approached in similar ways in our two countries.”

Baron Jacobs

Co-chair Belgo-British Conference

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Foreword

The 2005 Belgo-British Conference gathered in London as all eyes were on the UK's presidencies of the European Union and G8. The eventful political backdrop made the opportunity for long-sighted, open and deep discussion particularly timely. The theme of 'Europe in 2020' prompted two days of imaginative and stimulating debate about our continent's future.

Each year the Conference draws a more impressive group of participants, and this sixth year was no exception. The participants included some of the UK's and Belgium's most prominent politicians, diplomats, journalists, businesspeople and academics, as well as the rising generation of leaders.

The success of the Conference is due to the hard work and dedication of many people, and we would like to take this opportunity to express our thanks. Firstly, to our two distinguished patrons, HRH Prince Philippe of Belgium and HRH the Prince of Wales, whose continued support and confidence in the value and future of the Conference is of the greatest importance to us. Secondly, we would like to thank our new co-Chairs, Baron George Jacobs and André Villeneuve, who have thrown themselves into the life of the Conference with great enthusiasm. The success of this year's Conference is in large part due to their excellent leadership. We would also like to thank the other members of the Conference Board: Zeinab Badawi, Cara Barnwell, Marc Bellis, Nigel Bellingham, Robin Berkeley, Nigel Bowie, Laura Citron, Marina Cruysmans, Luc Devolder, Baroness Mia Doornaert, Olivier Fleurot, Charlie Jeffery, Claude Misson, Piet Vanden Abeele, Nathalie van Ypsersele, Veronique Vlieghe and Jana Zikmundova.

Zeinab Badawi, Piet Vanden Abeele and Olivier Fleurot are standing down from the Board after several years of invaluable support. We thank them for their outstanding contributions to the Conference over the years. We are delighted to welcome Catherine Stewart and Jonathan Fenby to the Board for 2006.

We would also like to express our sincere thanks to all our sponsors, without whom the Conference would not be possible. We were delighted that Accenture, BP, Bekaert NV, Eurostar, Euronext, Fortis, UCB and Volkswagen were all sponsors of this year's event. We are particularly grateful to Eurostar for their generous sponsorship and flexibility.

Finally, we would like to thank Baroness Mia Doornaert for producing an excellent report at a difficult time. As we would expect from a journalist of her calibre, it provides a distilled insight into a fascinating three days in London. We hope you enjoy reading it.



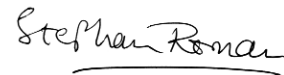
HE Baron Thierry de Gruben
Ambassador
Embassy of Belgium, London



HE Richard Kinchen MVO
Ambassador
British Embassy, Brussels



Claude Misson
Director-General
IRRI/KIIB



Stephan Roman
Regional Director West Europe North America
British Council

“It was always going to be tough to emulate the high standards set by David Simon and Baron Buysse. However, with the possibility of an excess of courage, we set out to explore some of the main issues facing Europe in the current years. Thanks to the excellent quality of the participants, and wonderful support from the presenters, rapporteurs and the Working Group Chairmen, we were able to shed some light on what the European citizen might face. I am most grateful to the British and Belgian organisers, the Ambassadors and, in particular, my fine Co-Chairman George Jacobs for helping to set a high standard for the meeting.”

André Villeneuve
Co-Chair, Belgo-British Conference

Discussion Group Themes

Discussion Group 1

The shape of Europe in 2020 – Which Europe?

How will the European Union work in fifteen years' time? The founding vision of 'ever closer union' appears to be under challenge not least with the stalling of the ratification process for the Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe. Some member states – mainly the bigger, richer ones – now appear focused more on national interests than deeper integration. 'Renationalisation' of EU policies has entered the lexicon. All this was reflected in the constitutional debate, which showed more concern than earlier negotiations with defining and defending member state powers. Is all this a short-term response to enlargement, with the 'normal service' of ever closer union to be resumed? Or are we seeing a sea-change in attitudes to European integration, pointing to a more intergovernmental Union, perhaps more dominated by the bigger member states? Is there a middle way with 'variable geometry' in a 'multi-speed' Europe?

Discussion Group 2

Environment and climate change 2020 – What really is our future?

"Human activity is putting such a strain on the natural functions of Earth that the ability of the planet's ecosystem to sustain future generations can no longer be taken for granted". This grim message was given by the World Bank chief scientist in a report in February to the Royal Society in London.

For its part, the European Commission has repeatedly issued stern warnings about rising CO₂ levels and strongly supported the Kyoto protocol which finally came into force this February. Climate change and sustainability were debated at some length by the EU Council and also by the G8 summit although it is uncertain how much real attention the UK Presidency will succeed in focusing on the environment in 2005.

But what will be the real impact of climate change on our future environment, lives and economy? Both Britain and Belgium have been keen supporters of the Lisbon Agenda, stressing the need to increase EU economic competitiveness and growth at the top of the EU priority list, but is this compatible with our shared concern for the environment?

How can Britain and Belgium, within the framework of the EU, reconcile these two seemingly contradictory agendas? Is environment the basis for future prosperity or a barrier to it? What can, or what should we do about climate change? Is it too big an issue for nation states? Is it better to cede authority to the institutions of the EU?

Discussion Group 3

Will we still need a manufacturing industry in 2020?

With globalisation, European industry is increasingly choosing to locate manufacturing in lower cost regions such as Eastern Europe or Asia. This allows European industries to retain their competitiveness in the global market, but there is an obvious trade-off in terms of jobs. The Lisbon Agenda sought to increase both jobs and social inclusion, but its targets now seem unreachable. How can competitiveness be combined with social cohesion? Will we still have a manufacturing industry in Belgium and the UK in 2020? And if we don't, what will be the economic and social impact? The UK already relies much less on its manufacturing industry than Belgium but has learnt some painful social lessons on the way. Realistically, manufacturing is unlikely to increase significantly so what can two countries such as Belgium and the UK do to ensure future economic growth? If a knowledge-based services economy is the only realistic replacement for traditional manufacturing, how should education, research and training be structured to ensure the right skills for growth?

Discussion Group 4

What role will Europe have in the world in 2020?

Since its creation, the EU has been striving to build an area of democratic values and human rights within its borders. As these borders have widened, the process of membership of the EU has played a crucial role in the consolidation of democracy in the post-communist countries of central and eastern Europe. Some argue that Europe acts as a democratic 'centre of gravity', spurring, for example, the recent changes in neighbouring countries such as Georgia in 2003 and Ukraine in 2004. To the south, the EU's EuroMed programme aims to tread a path of positive influence through a combination of dialogue and development aid. How will the EU's relationship with its Muslim neighbours develop, particularly in the context of possible enlargements to Turkey, Bosnia and even Albania as well as the reality of large, long-established Muslim communities in many Member States?

In 2020, will Europe continue to be a relatively passive foreign policy player, acting as a beacon of democratic values, and offering, for some neighbours, the goal of membership? Or will Europe take a more active stance in 'exporting' its values to its neighbours and further afield? Such a European foreign policy would require much greater coherence between Europe's major powers – and they have still to agree an overall Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP). What is the right combination of 'soft power', military strength and development assistance for Europe to become a respected and credible influence on issues of geo-strategic importance, such as the Middle East? What sort of balance to the US does Europe hope to become?

Thursday 20 October

- 17:15** **Meet in lobby of the Royal Horseguards Hotel**
- 17:30** **Registration and welcome coffee**
Prince of Wales Suite
- 18:00** **Opening session**
- Chair **André Villeneuve**
Chairman, Euronext Liffe
Co-Chair, Belgo-British Conference
- Keynote speakers **Rt Hon Charles Clarke MP**
Home Secretary
- Armand De Decker**
Federal Minister for Development Cooperation
- Closing comments **Baron Jacobs**
Chairman, UCB
Co-Chair, Belgo-British Conference
- 19:00** **Reception**
British Council
- 19:45** **Transport to Residence of the Belgian Ambassador**
- 20:00** **Opening Dinner**
Hosted by HE Baron Thierry de Gruben, Ambassador of HM the King of Belgians to London
- 22:30** **Transfer to Royal Horseguards Hotel**

Friday 21 October

- 8:30** **Meet in lobby of the Royal Horseguards Hotel**
- 8:45** **Welcome coffee**
- 9:00** **Opening plenary**
Prince of Wales Suite
- Conference**
- Chairs **Baron George Jacobs**
Chairman of the Board of Directors, UCB
Co-Chair, Belgo-British Conference
- André Villeneuve**
Chairman, Euronext Liffe
Co-Chair, Belgo-British Conference
- 9:20** **Introduction to the Discussion Group themes**
- Group 1**
The Shape of Europe in 2020
- Introducer **Annemie Neyts-Uyttebroeck, MEP**
Minister of State
Member of the European Parliament
- Group 2**
Environment and climate change 2020: what really is our future?
- Introducer **Sir Ken Collins**
Chairman of the Scottish Environment Protection Agency
- Group 3**
Will we still need a manufacturing industry in 2020?
- Introducer **Reinhilde Veugelers**
Economic Advisor,
European Commission
- Group 4**
What role for Europe in the world in 2020?
- Introducer **Mary Kaldor**
Professor of Global Governance,
London School of Economics (LSE)
- 10:30** **Coffee**

Friday 21 October (continued)

11:00	Working Group sessions begin	13:00	Lunch Locarno Room, Foreign and Commonwealth Office Participants to be accompanied on foot to the FCO
	Group 1 The Shape of Europe in 2020	14:30	Working groups resume
Chair	Denis MacShane, MP Former Minister for Europe	16:30	Working groups end and coffee
	Group 2 Environment and climate change 2020: what really is our future?	16:45	The Utility of Force: The Art of Warfare in the Modern World
Chair	Marc Pallemmaerts Professor of Environmental Law, Free University of Brussels	Speaker	General Sir Rupert Smith
	Group 3 Will we still need a manufacturing industry in 2020?	17:30	Free Time
Chair	Rick Haythornthwaite Chairman-designate of the UK Better Regulation Commission	19:00	Transfer from Royal Horseguards Hotel to Guildhall
	Group 4 What role for Europe in the world in 2020?	19:30	Cocktail reception East and West Crypts, Guildhall
Chair	HE Guy Trouveroy Ambassador of HM the King of the Belgians to Cairo	20:15	Dinner East and West Crypts, Guildhall
		Speaker	Mark Eyskens Former Prime Minister of Belgium "A year in the life of Belgium"
		Speaker	Jonathan Fenby Editorial Director of Earlywarning "A year in the life of Britain"
		22:30	Transfer to Royal Horseguards Hotel

Saturday 22 October

8:45	Participants check-out Transfer from lobby of Royal Horseguards Hotel to the British Council	11:45	Drinks
		12:00	Lunch Buffet at the British Council
9:15	Welcome coffee	13:15	Conference closes
9:30	Conclusions Chairs		Transfer to London Waterloo International and airports
	André Villeneuve Baron Jacobs		
	Presentations by Discussion Group Rapporteurs		
	Group 1 The Shape of Europe in 2020 Rapporteur		
Rapporteur	Paul Taylor European Affairs Editor of Reuters		
	Group 2 Environment and Climate Change 2020: what really is our future?		
Rapporteur	Jacqueline McGlade Executive Director, European Environment Agency		
	Group 3 Will we still need a manufacturing industry in 2020?		
Rapporteur	John Peet Europe Editor of The Economist		
	Group 4 What role for Europe in the world in 2020?		
Rapporteur	Jean-Paul Marthoz International Media Director for Human Rights Watch		



Belgo-British Conference 2005

2020 – a new horizon for Europe

Report by Mia Doornaert, De Standaard

President Bush and President Putin are chatting informally. Putin is admiring Star Trek. “Such a remarkable contribution to modern culture”, he says, “and so multicultural. There are people of all origins, even Russians, but no one of French, German or English origin.”

“There’s an explanation for that”, Bush answers. “Star Trek is about the future”.

Neil Kinnock, Chair of the British Council, former Labour leader and EU Commissioner opened the Belgo-British Conference 2005 with this story and with it captured the key question at the heart of the conference debate: how will Europe meet, and the European Union respond to, the formidable challenge of the rising Asian giants, China and India?

There was one point of agreement about Europe in 2020: “Business as usual” is not an option.

Consider these statements:

“With an Orwellian perspective, let us suppose that we would be here, in London, in October 2020, opening one of the quality papers. What

kind of headlines might we find? ‘Europeans vote on tenth draft of EU constitution’. Or: ‘Last European factory has closed down and moved to low wages country’. Or: ‘In spite of huge energy crisis, EU governments bicker over common energy policy.’

“Europe must project its values towards other parts of the world.”

“The European Union will have to look more as an organisation that addresses security and other major concerns of the citizens, and less as only a trading block.”

Now if you’d have to guess who said what, you would assume that the first quote comes from a die-hard British Eurosceptic, and the second from a Belgian believer in the EU. In fact, it was the other way around. The first quote belongs to the speech of Armand De Decker, the Belgian federal minister of Development Co-operation, the second to that of Charles Clarke, the British Home Secretary.

When we speak about 2020, we need to speak “about policy, about the citizens”, Mr. Clarke said. When people look at the problems they have to address - violent crime, drugs, insecurity, antisocial behaviour - “and you ask them what the European Union does to tackle those, they say: not a lot”.

The terrorist attacks of July 7 in London have been a traumatic shock. “Many people think we can keep those problems out by building a fence around Britain, and retiring behind the white cliffs of Dover in splendid isolation.”

“In fact, the reverse is true”, Mr. Clarke said. “Those problems cannot be handled by countries separately. By 2020, the EU must be seen as addressing those issues.”

The key to cooperation “is intelligence, whether it concerns terrorism, drugs trade, traffic in human beings”.

In confronting terrorism, the Home Secretary said, one has to have a clear idea of the adversaries one has to confront. But fighting the terrorists is not enough.

Europe must project its values towards other parts of the world.

The central point in combating terrorism, Mr. Clarke said, “has to be the building of democracy”.

This was not an abstract notion or an impossible dream. “When I was a student, most of the countries of southern Europe had dictatorships; the countries of Eastern Europe lived under dictatorships. There was apartheid in South Africa; there were military dictatorships in most of the countries of Latin America. So this shows change can happen. Change did happen, and much of it was thanks to the EU.”

Mr. Armand De Decker also stressed that only through close cooperation between the EU states could the European Union play a role creating stability and democracy on a global scale. International stability requires “that we tackle the huge challenge of development. Giving a future to the young generations of the underdeveloped world is not only a duty of

international solidarity, it is also our common interest.”

“But what is now most urgent is not taking the citizens into the EU’s life but taking the EU into the citizen’s lives.”

The minister acknowledged that the EU was not “in the best of health” but to return decision making back to the nation state would be wrong. “Can anyone really believe that a national approach would put us in a stronger position when we compete with partners like the United States, Japan, China, India, Russia, Brazil, on huge strategic issues and markets related to energy, trade and access to commodities? Would a national approach help us tackle global issues like protection of the environment, international trade, international terrorism and crime? For all of us, this could only lead to balkanisation, isolation and decadence.”

Mr. De Decker quoted Thucydides: “Nobody is so strong that he can be sure that he will always be the strongest.” And he added: “This applied to the European powers yesterday; it could apply to other superpowers today and tomorrow.”

The shape of Europe: A new European modesty

The need for the EU to reconnect with the citizens was one of the major themes of the discussion in Group 1. Annemie Neyts MEP set the tone in her introduction. This reconnection is a task for national governments and political parties. National politicians should demonstrate how much the EU is part of citizens’ daily life. “It is most important to integrate the EU dimension in day to day internal politics.” This will not be done, she said, “as long as EU policies remain footnotes – if at all – to national policies, pasted on as an afterthought.” Of course, the EU should take the citizen’s concerns at heart. “But what is now most urgent is not taking the citizens into the EU’s life but taking the EU into the citizen’s lives.”

Looking at the recent setbacks the European Union has suffered, Group 1 asked the question

whether there would still be an EU in 2020. Despite these concerns, “there were no takers for the pessimistic view of a break-up of the EU”, said the rapporteur, Paul Taylor, European affairs editor of Reuters in Brussels.

The group came up with a vision of the EU in 2020 which might be more described as muddling through, or, “to put it in a more uplifting way”, a new European modesty.

With one or two dissenting views, the members believed that, on balance, trade will be freer, and economic integration will have advanced further. The members expected a continuation of economic integration of the European Union but were aware that the EU may, at best, be only the fourth global economic power by 2020. The other point of clear agreement was that there would be a bigger EU. Numbers varied but, said the rapporteur, “I counted roughly between 30 and 35 members.”

“We need to have role models, we need to have icons, but we also need to have modes of consumption that people can aspire to”

There was a broad agreement that the EU in 2020 won't have a constitution. That was seen as part of the new European modesty. The general view was that it was more likely that there would be some further adaptation of the existing treaties and that politicians, mindful of the pitfalls of referendums, were going to have to advance more modestly in ways that do not alienate their electorate.

The general view was that there would be some more complex form of differentiated European integration. Groups of countries would move forward as they did with Schengen and the euro but some feared that this kind of EU looked too much like a patchwork Europe.

The format that was most popular was the idea of a multi-speed Europe, that is to say a Europe in which member states were all in principle

committed to going in the same direction, but would not do so at the same speed.

That, said the rapporteur, “was partly what contributed to the modesty of some people who in the past have had more ambitious federal designs for Europe”.

But some members still raised the possibility of a new democratic founding act that would re-engage the European public in a bold way. An example was the election of a European government that would essentially merge the functions of the Presidency and the Commission but most people felt that the constitution experience ruled out that prospect.

Environment and Climate Change: Keeping Europe in the lead

Sir Ken Collins, Chair of the Scottish Environment Protection Agency introduced the topic saying that “Human activity is putting such a strain on the natural functions of Earth that the ability of the planet's ecosystems to sustain future generations can no longer be taken for granted.” That, he said, was the message in a report to the Royal Society by the chief scientist of the World Bank.

“The changes in weather patterns over recent years provide increasing evidence of the impact an unsustainable lifestyle can have on our environment. Almost two out of every three catastrophic events since 1980 have been directly attributable to heat waves, floods, droughts or storms – no need to draw attention to New Orleans.”

He noted that in spite of the magnitude of the problems, “in most national elections, the environment barely surfaces as an issue”.

On the other hand, environmental policy has been developing over the last 32 years at a European level.

He felt this was quite normal. “National boundaries are largely irrelevant for issues such as acid rain, bird migration, climate change and ozone depletion.”

He added: “I do believe that if we had not had the EU then we would have needed to invent something like it to deliver environmental protection benefits and necessities across European territory as well as in our own backyard.”

In the discussion of Group 2, the challenge was not to say whether the members believed in climate change or not. According to the rapporteur, Jacqueline McGlade, Executive Director of the European Environment Agency, the question was, “that we really determine the direction we want to go in. Do we want a future which is business as usual, a continued dependence on fossil fuels, nuclear and other power sources? Or are we going to try to break out onto a different path, where energy efficiency and renewable energy is filling the gap, and we address consumption patterns and production? And if we are going to do this, where is this leadership going to come from?”

“The fundamental issue for us now is that growth, which is associated with the Lisbon model, is not being decoupled from environmental damage. The aspiration to have decoupling, which means that the GDP would grow without a contingent increase in greenhouse gas emissions, is beginning to prove harder than we thought. And so, going towards 2020 we will not see a fundamental shift if we stick to the business as usual model.”

“Europeans see globalisation as a threat, rather than an opportunity”

The group noted though that the questions are not about policies but about implementation. So advocated a mixture of measures, at the appropriate level, from local to EU wide, which would add up to Europe being able to take a step change in response to climate change, and sustain a leadership role.

“We need to have role models, we need to have icons, but we also need to have modes of consumption that people can aspire to”, the rapporteur said.

The group agreed that the Cardiff Process has to be reinvigorated. “Because without that policy interconnection, without the implementation of environmental priorities within the transport sector, within the energy sector, within agriculture we will get nowhere.”

Under the EU policy, there are still large regional differences across Europe on environmental legislation. “However”, the rapporteur concluded, “this is one policy area where we should all stick together” to achieve the step change that is needed.

Will we still need a manufacturing industry?

The debates on the proposed EU constitutions brought out a worrying trend in many of the “old” EU countries. Their populations do not see the European Union as a bulwark against unwanted effects of globalisation but as a factor in bringing them about. Their biggest criticism is that the EU is unable to stop the flight of jobs to low wage countries and that this will condemn whole categories of workers to unemployment.

In her introduction to Group 3, Professor Reinhilde Veugelers pointed to the Eurobarometer of the Spring 2005.

The “transfer of jobs to other countries that have lower production costs” scored highest on the list of things EU citizens say they were afraid of (73%).

“Europeans see Globalisation as a threat, rather than an opportunity”, she said.

“What is the reality?” she asked. “Should we be more worried than before?” But, Professor Veugelers said, the evidence showed that “the impact of relocation is still small relative to restructuring in general. Only 7,2% of job reduction was due to relocation.”

So the public perception of the facts is very different from the facts themselves.

There are reasons for concern in Europe, she said. “The EU is not sufficiently present in faster growing areas, is not sufficiently attractive as location destination.”

The Union should ensure through policy implementations that globalisation and delocalisation are no longer a threat to growth but an opportunity for growth.

The group noted that manufacturing is clearly declining across all of Europe, with Britain perhaps leading the way. The perception was that this was not a serious problem. The feeling was that there would still be manufacturers in Europe in 2020, probably in the high-end speciality area. But there was no feeling that manufacturing was so important that it needed special protection or that the EU should close markets, or should foster 'national champions'.

"What we felt mattered", said the rapporteur, John Peet, Europe Editor of The Economist, "was not whether an activity was called manufacturing or services but whether it added value, whether it was sustainable, whether we were competitive."

"You have to keep ahead by innovation, investment in human capital, the building up of skills. And Europe tends not to be very good at some of these things. There was a general feeling that we should look for ways to encourage investment, possibly with explicit incentives.

Most of the group was critical of the contribution of universities: too few European universities in the top 100, links to industry badly developed, too disconnected from the notions of entrepreneurship and business, too constrained by governments.

"I think for the current generation, if Europe is really seen to be making a contribution to the big and very dangerous global issues that we face, then it's going to become a much more popular project."

Of course, America was in the background of all this discussion, with the feeling that America

does some of these things at better than Europe. "We came up with a concrete idea, which was that European research money of which there is quite a lot should be allocated on an entirely merit driven basis, and not at all, as it is now, by country lobbying. If we actually allocated it where the project would justify it, this might help to foster elite research-based universities in Europe."

There was also the feeling that there is not enough respect for excellence in the European Union, whether in education or in business, and perhaps too much emphasis on equality. Some people felt the Europeans could learn from America and its respect for excellence.

The group felt however that there were plenty of examples of good practice within Europe with Finland often being cited as a good model.

They realised the importance of public opinion. They felt that national leaders needed to do much more to educate and persuade people that these things were not as much of a problem as they felt. Otherwise there clearly was a risk of a backlash, and a desire for protectionism. Part of the answer would be transitional help for displaced workers from the old sectors.

The big question then was how to bring the necessary changes about. Is a crisis needed? They pointed to individual countries which had benefited from a crisis. "Finland overcame its crisis of 1990. Ireland has had a crisis; Britain had a crisis in the 1970's."

"The conclusion was that perhaps things might get worse before they get better", said the rapporteur.

What role for Europe in the world? How to spread values of human rights.

Mary Kaldor, Professor of Global Governance at the London School of Economics, was in London on July 7 2005. "Everyone was trying to call friends and relatives and the mobile phones didn't work. I looked at my computer and immediately I had messages from India, the United States, even from Baghdad and Jerusalem asking if I was okay."

"In 2020 there will be 500 million Europeans and 500 million Arabs."

That, said the introducer to Group 4, really illustrates the new nature of our security problems. "We are much more aware of violence in different parts of the world and at the same time there is a real disconnect between what we actually experience and what we see on television."

What is new about our security environment, she said, is not that there is more violence. What is new is that we can no longer insulate ourselves from it.

Previous wars in the 19th and 20th century were far worse than those we experience now. But they had clear beginnings and clear endings. And people felt they could protect themselves against foreign enemies by having armies and border controls.

"Now, I think there is a huge danger - especially after the no's against the constitution - that we simply try to go back to the old ways; that we think that the way we protect ourselves is through protecting our borders".

"The truth is that we cannot do it."

An inward looking approach will not protect Europeans. "But more importantly, if we don't have an outward looking approach, we'll have great difficulty in dealing with the conditions that nurture criminality and terrorism."

"I think for the current generation, if Europe is really seen to be making a contribution to the big and very dangerous global issues that we face, then it's going to become a much more popular project.

Europe has to be outward and forward looking. And it has to do this to spread the basic values of human rights, equitable development and peace.

"Human rights is not only a question of morality, it is also a question of enlightened self interest, not only in relation to the questions of development

and peace but also in relation to the question of terrorism", the rapporteur, Jean-Paul Marthoz said.

Thinking about Europe in 2020 is not about speculation. "It's about shaping the future, it's about taking the measures that will respond to our interests, values and expectations".

A European common foreign policy, based on projecting human rights, development and peace, seems to be one of the most popular aspirations in every European wide public opinion poll.

In spite of that, there was scepticism about the possibilities of a strong common foreign policy of the European Union.

Discussions focused on the Mediterranean and Middle East region. The EU cannot really dream of playing a positive role globally if we cannot have a decisive role on our immediate neighbourhood, the group said. For some, that engagement also meant that the EU tries to guide the US ally towards more positive action in the region.

In this consensus, there was a very strong 'but', the rapporteur said. "The EU was accused rather generally of being inconsistent and incoherent in its promotion of human rights and democracy in the region. The wonderful European rhetoric of human rights was not matched by a correspondent policy of real engagement with the promotion of democracy and human rights in the region."

Many in the group very strongly expressed the view that there should be a much bigger push by the European Union in favour of democracy and human rights, especially in countries like Egypt, Palestine and Tunisia.

The issue of the Mediterranean and the Middle East was of course "very closely linked to the Middle East in our midst, to the presence of first, second, third generation people coming from those regions", the rapporteur said.

It was stated that in 2020 there would be 500 million Europeans and 500 million Arabs. There are many examples, in both our countries,

of integration. But there are many examples of discrimination, and examples that tell us that, perhaps, 'multiculturalism' has not been successful.

This had consequences, the rapporteur said, "for the way the EU should consider not only its integration policies but also its migration policies."

For Europe in 2020, the group felt the great challenge would be to draw up a workable common policy to create enough common political will, to project the values of human rights, peace, and sustainable development outside its borders.

War amongst the people

General Sir Rupert Smith closed the conference with an impressive speech on the utility of force. "In September 2001, a group of people, using the apparatus of the state, attacked the totems of the state, in such a way and to such affect that the war on terror followed, a war on a state of mind. A conflict in which the United States, a state with the largest, best equipped military forces in the world is unable to dictate the outcome desired. A conflict in which forces with great potential to exert power, are unable to do so to advantage when challenged by forces that are by the same standards ill equipped and disorganised."

The paradigm of war which existed in Europe and North America since the days of Napoleon is no more. There was a linear logic behind war. This logic, this distinction is gone. Another form of war has developed which in fact originated as the antithesis to the Napoleonic wars. It was the "small war", the guerrilla war.

"Force does have its utility. But how do we use it?"

"The people, rather than the formal army, went to war. And they waged the small war. The basis tactic of the guerrilla fighter is to engage only on his terms, in the ambush, to avoid being pinned down in a fight for ground, and to depend on the people for support, both physical and moral.

"The single most important thing to do is to change the way we think about using military force, change the model in which we see it being applied."

In a second phase, "the anarchists and the communist revolutionaries added to that basic tactical idea a generic strategy. This gave those tactical acts a political coherence. That strategy has three related components."

"The first component is the strategy of provocation. Here one seeks to provoke an overreaction so as to paint the opponent in the colours of the bully, the tyrant, and thereby gain sympathy, support and credibility for one's cause and recruits."

"The second strand of this strategy is the propaganda of the deed. Taking out two skyscrapers in New York and a chunk of the Pentagon was as propaganda of the deed absolutely top marks. How many people knew about Al-Qaida until then? It became a factor that had to be dealt with."

"And then there is the erosion of will. If I operate to create a continuous and steady drain of men and resources, with no prospect of a satisfactory cessation of the conflict, the will of the opponent is eroded."

Those tactical acts coupled with the generic strategy of revolutionary warfare, "have changed warfare from the traditional industrial war to war amongst the people".

This war amongst the people is a revolution in how we have to think about the use of force, the general said.

"In war amongst the people, the primary objective is not to win the trial of strength and overcome the resistance of the opponent. It is to win the clash of wills to continue the fight."

"In war amongst the people the objectives are malleable and complex. They describe the

condition in which by means other than force you alter the intentions of your opponent."

"The single most important thing to do is to change the way we think about using military force, change the model in which we see it being applied.

"Force does have it's utility. But how do we use it?"

"Our opponents appear to have a better understanding of the utility of force than we do. In general, the use of force was an act of last resort. But is it now? Is there an orderly process, recognised by both parties in which force is the last act? I don't think there is. And when all other options are exhausted, will force bring about a resolution? And if it doesn't, do we pile on more force? What other options are there other than to accept defeat? How do you terminate an

"The European Union has in my view great potential to handle the entirety of the package. It could produce a direction and coherence of action between the military actions and the other measures that might apply."

engagement if your last resort is not working? Or is defeat an exit strategy?"

"NATO was designed to put military strategy into effect. It has no capacity to handle political, legal, or economic measures."

"The European Union has in my view great potential to handle the entirety of the package. It could produce a direction and coherence of action between the military actions and the other measures that might apply. But how is this to be brought together on the theatre of operations where the enemy has to be faced? We don't do a very good job of it at the moment."

The general concluded: "I put it to you that, until we understand the nature of war amongst the people, and adapt our thinking and our

institutional structures accordingly, our statesmen and our generals will continue to fail to answer correctly that first, that most important strategical question."

Conclusion

It is essential that in every aspect of their policies towards the major challenges of our time, Europe's leaders have a clear vision of what they want to do and not to take their endeavour for "something impossible for it to be."

This was one of the constant themes in the discussions. For Europe to play a major role in 2020, political leaders will have to reconnect the EU with the citizens. This means that they formulate clear policies with which the citizens identify, and the ways to implement them. And that they stop blaming "Brussels" for everything which goes wrong and claiming credit for everything which goes right.

Co-chair André Villeneuve, noted that the Belgians tend to mourn the EU constitution much more than the British do, but that both agreed that major challenges like globalisation or protection of the environment have to be tackled at the European level.

Co-chair baron George Jacobs, concluded with satisfaction that nobody believed that the European Union would not be around anymore in 2020. He also noted that the participants saw new challenges, like the rise of the Asian giants, as an opportunity, rather than as a scenario for catastrophe. He thought it essential that the conference recognised that "the capacity to innovate will be central". To be in good shape in 2020, "we must have the capacity of doing something that the others can't".

The Belgo-British conference made it clear that, contrary to what Bush and Putin joked about in the story told by Neil Kinnock, the Europeans do not mean to write themselves out of the future.

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www.eurostar.com



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www.ucb-group.com



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Strong bilateral relations between the United Kingdom and Belgium are a precious asset for our government and society respectively. The Belgian Federal Public Service (FPS) Foreign Affairs supports the Belgo-British Conference with enthusiasm. This project fits into a long-term agenda aiming at addressing the concerns shared by our citizens and developing informal networks in all walks of life. The Belgo-British Conference has proven its value in connecting people across the Channel. The Belgian Federal Public Service is delighted to contribute to such a successful and valuable event.

www.diplobel.fgov.be



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Foreign and Commonwealth Office

The Belgo-British Conference is an important component in the relationship between the United Kingdom and Belgium which the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, through the British Embassy, has supported since its inception. We are delighted that the 2005 Belgo-British Conference will demonstrate the strength of that relationship by bringing together leading opinion-formers for an open exchange on key European issues.

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