

**SPEECH**

**Romano Prodi**

President of the European Commission

**Europe and peace**

**University of Ulster, 1 April 2004**

Vice-Chancellor, Professor Hume, ladies and gentlemen,

### **Greetings and thanks**

It is a pleasure and a privilege to be here. I wish to thank Professor McKenna and the University of Ulster, together with Professor John Hume, for their kind invitation.

### **Tribute to John Hume**

Let me pay a personal tribute to John Hume. His part in bringing peace to this land is an example and an inspiration to us all.

Together with David Trimble, his contribution to healing the sectarian divide has been immense. It has brought benefits all of you here appreciate. Better than any, you Irish know what peace means, and what a difference it makes.

The Irish people and the communities of Northern Ireland have always been close to our hearts. We will continue to support them so peace continues to prosper.

When he received the Prize in Oslo in 1998, John gave the credit to the Irish people in these words: "*we owe this peace to the ordinary people of Ireland, particularly those of the North who have lived and suffered the reality of our conflict.*"

He also said how much the European experience inspired him in his work for peace. I could not agree more with him, and today I want to explain the reasons why I believe this so strongly.

The European Union can be seen in many ways. But to me it is one thing above all others: **the fostering and flourishing of peace.**

We should never forget that the basic reason for the European integration process -- and the European Union -- is peace.

That was the overriding objective of our founding fathers: Jean Monnet said that building Europe meant building peace. You cannot be clearer than that.

At a time when Europe lay in ruins, devastated by war and devoured by the hatred it had generated, an onlooker would have found it difficult to believe in reconciliation between France and Germany.

Half a century later, we know it was much more than a dream. I agree with John when he says that "*the European Union is the best example in the history of the world of conflict resolution....*"

Our continent has been transformed. It was once a cauldron boiling over with conflicts. And today Europe is a powerhouse for peace, generating stability and prosperity beyond its borders.

The Union has brought us one of the longest periods of peace in our history. And it has set an example that gives hope to millions around the world.

Our success shows we have found a model that works. A model to draw on in managing relations between states in our neighbourhood and even beyond.

We can be proud of these achievements. We have learned the lessons of the past. We have realised the importance of respecting diversity. Above all, we have discovered ways of consolidating peace through structures that tackle the **root causes of conflict.**

We Europeans know a lot about conflict. As a continent, our past is dominated by war, with short interludes of uncertain peace.

Look at the political map of Europe over the last five centuries. It illustrates the perpetual unrest on a continent with few natural frontiers. They reflect little more than the arbitrary ebb and flow of power between empires and fiefdoms.

### **The lessons of the past**

Ladies and gentlemen,

For hundreds of years, war was the only way for Europeans to ensure their security. It was a matter of attacking before being attacked and destroying your enemies' cities before they burned yours. **And we should never forget that those dark days could return.**

The great walls of this town are there to remind us of that age of conflict and insecurity, when people had to build colossal defences to survive. And often Europe's peoples paid the price in blood and grief for very little protection.

This is the world Thomas Hobbes described. The great English philosopher saw the natural condition of mankind as "*that condition which is called war ... where every man is enemy to every man.*"

*Leviathan*, his great work published in 1650, explains how it takes a powerful State to deal with the constant threat of war.

That was just two years after the Peace of Westphalia put an end to the Thirty Years' War. It closed a terrible chapter when Man was truly wolf to Man.

And when those three decades of religious conflict were finally over, people counted the losses.

For most of Europe, they were shocking. Germany -- the main battlefield -- had lost almost half its population. Cities lay in ruins, trade had collapsed, serfdom was reinstated. Pillage, famine, disease, widespread rape and social disruption turned the clock back a century.

And elsewhere the picture was equally bleak.

The end of the Thirty Years' War reminds us of 1945 -- with many important differences.

The Treaty of Westphalia *did* bring a sort of peace to Europe. It did this by introducing the modern sovereign state as the protagonist of power politics.

This marked a new stage in European history. It laid the foundations for a new order of interstate dynamics. And it ushered in a new form of instability.

A new era of European order and disorder began. A new, desperate search for stability in a new round of the zero-sum game I have described.

The Netherlands and Switzerland gained their independence, the German states were strengthened. And these new players agreed on the principle that states had no right to intervene in each other's internal affairs.

This meant that the people's security was guaranteed within each state. Let us not underestimate what this progress meant to people.

But peace and security within the state brought only a small improvement. Because Hobbes' vision of man's relations with his fellows continued to apply between states. And Europe's states kept on as wolves to each other, building unstable coalitions and fighting for territory.

In the absence of clear international law, the law of the jungle applied: across the continent, states did as they liked.

This was the backdrop against which the political ideas of the Age of Enlightenment must be seen.

## Shaping a lasting peace

Immanuel Kant, who died exactly 200 years ago, saw clearly that there could be no lasting coalition between such states.

He realised that relations between states were indeed like the world Hobbes had described -- a "*state of nature*" when war could break out at any moment.

So how could this unbearable situation be changed? This is the question Kant tried to answer in "*Perpetual Peace*", a work he published in 1795, shortly after the French Revolution.

To make perpetual peace possible, Kant proposed a "*federation of 'republican' states*". He believed there was no place for war between states **that had a civil legal order and respect for moral law**.

Nowadays we might call that **sharing the same basic values**. And as we also believe today, Kant thought that if citizens have a direct interest in peace to safeguard their prosperity and well-being, they will always oppose war in a republic.

Kant was not thinking of some kind of world republic or superstate -- any more than we are in the European Union.

He wanted to find a practical and realistic way for states to coexist peacefully, to truly enjoy security.

In this, Kant was very modern. He did not seek to do away with our nations and states any more than we want to see the end of individual nations.

The crucial point is that Kant wanted an alliance of states that agreed on certain **principles and rules**.

He believed perpetual peace could be achieved by a peaceful federation of states that agreed not to go to war with each other. And that federation would be strengthened by trade and underpinned by a system of international law.

Like Kant, we believe the rule of law should apply within states just as it should between states.

Kant may have been pleased to see what we have done in the European Union -- a form of supranational democracy in a Union of sovereign Member States. In some ways, our Union enshrines the essence of Kant's federation of sovereign democracies.

We too have realised that common and converging interests are powerful tools for building peace. And we have founded our Union on shared values and a system of common rules.

So let us see how we have got where we are today in terms of peace and stability.

## **Reconciling enemies and bolstering stability**

Ladies and gentlemen,

We founded our Union on reconciliation between the peoples and nations of our continent, on tolerance for others, on individual freedoms and minority rights.

United in our diversity, we based the Union on a willingness to see the other's point of view rather than imposing our own, on reciprocal undertakings, freely entered into and democratically accepted.

It is striking to note the great differences in our Member States' constitutional origins. The checks and balances introduced over time have considerably altered the original structures. So whether they started as constitutional monarchies or republics, they all function today as highly developed democracies respecting the same values and principles.

Respect for diversity has allowed each individual state to retain its own characteristics. This has not impaired our collective respect for the values and principles we share. But it means our conflicts do not degenerate into violence. As John Hume says:

*"All conflict is about difference, whether the difference is race, religion or nationality. The European visionaries decided that difference is not a threat, difference is natural. [...] The answer to difference is **to respect it**. Therein lies a most fundamental principle of peace -- respect for diversity."*

## **How the European Union did it**

Ladies and gentlemen,

The principle of diversity is enshrined in our institutional framework. Our rules are there to safeguard the interests of our Member States, both large and small.

At least two generations of our citizens have now grown up without seeing war in their countries. This is our greatest achievement, but we should not be complacent.

We tend to take for granted our stability, prosperity, democracy and respect for human rights and basic values. As if things could never be any different.

Among the reasons for success were the founding fathers' combination of low-key rhetoric and modest ambitions. They kept their sights on the achievable steps.

For fifty years we added brick to brick, building a structure of institutions, rules and principles.

The four freedoms of movement -- goods, services, persons and capital -- have led to our single market.

Many of our Member States share a single currency. And they have done away with passport checks. This was possible because we have stepped up cooperation between our police and judicial authorities.

All this has made our internal borders much less important than in the past.

We have developed common policies to consolidate our stability and prosperity.

We are now in the process of taking big steps in the area of justice and home affairs. Protecting our citizens' security is vital, particularly at a time of terrorist threats. And we can safeguard our internal security more effectively by working together.

All this has shown us that the multilateral approach is the only one that can work. Because living on a continent with few natural borders means we cannot ignore our neighbours.

On the world scene too, we support multilateralism, because we know individual states cannot go it alone.

Since 1945, there have been enormous changes on the international scene. New institutions designed primarily to ensure peace and security and foster cooperation have given form and substance to the multilateral approach.

We have built up a system of overlapping layers to reinforce security. This has meant supporting other regional and international structures to bolster our security -- such as NATO, the United Nations, the Council of Europe, the OSCE and, most recently, the International Criminal Court.

It has meant setting up an international system to manage and underpin our prosperity -- **through such organisations as** the World Trade Organisation and agreements like the Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

### **1989: time for a proper policy for peace**

Ladies and gentlemen,

There are some dates that stand out in history because they mark great periods of change. We must take care to learn the right lessons from them. Remember Mikhail Gorbachev telling Erich Honecker that "*he who comes too late will be punished by life.*"

1989 was a watershed in European history.

Conventionally, for historians the 19th Century started back in 1789. And I believe the 21st Century started in 1989.

Some have seen 1989 as marking the triumph of liberal democracy and economic liberalism. And they claim this amounts to the end of history.

For my part, I believe 1989 marks the time history started again. It is the end of the Cold War -- not the end of history.

Closing the Cold War, it ended a period that was neither war nor peace, but more like a truce.

But 1989 also brought a return to armed conflict with the break-up of the former Yugoslavia.

Our institutions were, of course, already established. We had started to think about external policy. As a Union we had never before had a war on our doorstep. And we all know we were caught totally unprepared.

But in 1993 we took two strategic decisions. We signed the Maastricht Treaty that introduced a common foreign and security policy. And we opened our doors to the countries of central and eastern Europe.

In other words, we took strategic decisions to bolster our security in the light of the post-Yugoslavia experience. And these involved both "hard" and "soft" power.

### **Security in a complex and dangerous world**

Ladies and gentlemen,

An intelligent multilateral approach involves both "hard" security and "soft" security.

We all know what "hard" security means: the credible threat -- or the use -- of force. And it is perfectly legitimate where it complies with the rules of international law.

We built our Union for peace. We would have liked to do away with all weapons. But we know the world is still a dangerous place.

The 11th of March this year has brought home the importance of joint action to protect our people and ensure security. The scale of the atrocity and its implications have altered the political landscape.

The way people responded was impressive. It has strengthened my faith in the Europeans.

They demonstrated in silence in their millions across Spain -- and across Europe -- against the bombs in Madrid's stations.

Only days later, the Spanish people voted massively to show they believed in democracy and were not daunted by terrorism. The turnout at the elections was 10% higher than in 2000.

Their message was clear. They fought back against the logic of violence and fear.

This should be Europe's response too. We must fight terrorists, we must protect our citizens and we must defend our way of life. We must safeguard our values of democracy, openness and tolerance. We must ensure our minorities and our legal immigrants continue to enjoy the benefits of our open societies.

In December last year, the Union outlined a European Security Strategy for the first time. The problem of terrorism and its root causes figure prominently in the Strategy. This timely initiative on the part of the High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy now needs implementing urgently, as last week's Spring European Council stated.

The Council also decided to establish a European counter-terrorism coordinator, whose task will be to improve the exchange of information. It also endorsed a set of measures including:

- sharing of intelligence,
- controlling terrorists' sources of financing,
- action along the lines of the solidarity clause in the draft Constitution.

Of course, internal security goes hand in hand with security on the external front. Since the Maastricht Treaty, we have started to organise our foreign and security policy. We need to develop this further.

And since the Anglo-French defence initiative at St Malo, things have indeed moved. A European security and defence policy has started to take shape.

The aim is to strengthen the European pillar of NATO. NATO continues to bear the main responsibility for our security. But we need to ensure we can take action militarily where our American partners are not concerned.

Events gathered pace in 2003. In January, the Union undertook its first mission under the European security and defence policy. This involved taking over the monitoring and mentoring of police activities in Bosnia and Herzegovina from the UN-led International Police Task Force. And the Union is preparing to undertake a follow-on mission to SFOR, the NATO stabilisation force in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

In March, we launched an EU stabilisation mission called *Concordia* in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia that drew on NATO assets. Following the successful completion of the operation, we set up *Proxima* -- the EU Police Mission in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia in December.

Outside Europe, the Union has already conducted a military operation called *Artemis* in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

These examples show that, where this is needed, the Union is capable of a modulated response that takes account of each individual situation and can include aspects of hard security.

However, I am convinced that wars are not won by weapons alone.

This is all the truer where you are fighting not a state, but a terrorist organisation. In a war against terrorism, the concepts of the past do not work. The balance of terror of the Cold War does not work with terrorists. Deterrence has no effect on suicide bombers. Targeted killings just boost the terrorists' recruits.

We have to get realistic about solving the problem of terrorism. It is a dangerous illusion to think it can be defeated without tackling the root causes. Force alone is not enough to defeat terrorism. Both force and brainpower must be used. Alongside the military option and repression, political avenues need to be explored with equal determination. And for both options the multilateral approach needs following: unilateral approaches are no longer enough.

### **Hard facts about "soft" security**

Let me tell you the hard facts about "soft" power. "Soft" power is not about wearing kid gloves. There is no easy way to peace. It is easy to see how states fail. *Building* nations is the real tough job. And that is only done when you no longer need occupying troops.

It cannot be achieved overnight. And it may not hit the headlines. But it gets the job done in the long term. Preventing is better than pre-empting.

Good examples are fostering our democratic principles through development assistance to bolster peace and security internationally. And I am proud to say the European Union's role is second to none here.

The Union is by far the world's foremost donor of overseas development assistance.

We are also an active promoter of sustainable development. Because development is a key factor in building peace.

The Union is addressing certain major root causes of conflicts -- such as poverty, demographic pressure and competition for scarce natural resources, like water and land.

The Cotonou Agreement between the Union and 77 African, Caribbean and Pacific countries stresses poverty eradication and smooth integration into the world economy, good governance, democracy and the rule of law.

And how does soft power work? To explain, let us take a step backwards in time and look at what happened.

As we said, the European Union's role in fostering peace and stability started at home by reconciling age-old enemies.

Subsequent enlargements have bolstered peace by fostering democracy -- in Greece, Spain and Portugal. Look how those vibrant democracies have flourished over the last three decades.

In the current enlargement, the prospect of membership has had a big impact. It has bolstered democracy, peace and stability across the divide that split Europe in two for fifty years.

The European Union's soft power has provided impetus for economic, social and political reforms in the candidate countries. And it has fostered respect for human rights and democratic values.

Our soft power can help to resolve armed conflicts too. The example of Cyprus is striking. The realisation that the Greek part of the island is going to join the Union has galvanised the Turkish Cypriots. They have demonstrated in large numbers in favour of accession. I still have hopes that Cyprus may yet join us as an undivided island.

One important aspect of soft security is treatment of minorities.

In democracy, the majority rules but minority rights must be protected. None of our nation-states are homogeneous in ethnic terms, much less so in religious, ethnic, and cultural terms.

Minorities have often suffered at the hands of dominant groups. They have also served as a pretext at times for intervention across borders.

The problem is particularly acute in the Balkans.

Recent events in Kosovo demonstrate clearly how precarious the situation is there. There is no room for complacency. Peace is a fragile plant that calls for constant care and nurturing. There will be no lasting solution in the Balkans if we do not offer the countries in the region realistic prospects of joining the European Union. This has worked with other countries in the past. And it will work in Kosovo too.

The Union makes borders less meaningful, so being a minority within a single Member State is less of a problem.

In our Union, everyone is -- in a sense -- in a minority. And in our Union, no state can lord it over the others.

Fundamentally, no religious, ethnic, cultural or other component must be able to dictate to others, but all must have equal dignity. That is why I call our Union a "Union of minorities".

### **Forging a ring of friends**

In terms of fostering peace, the most important aspect is a stronger common foreign and security policy.

This also implies taking action in our region.

At the beginning I spoke of **the need to underpin peace with structures that tackle the root causes of conflict.**

We cannot confine our efforts to our member countries. We need to project stability beyond our borders. That means promoting political and economic reforms that can enable our neighbours to share in our peace and prosperity.

It means working with partner countries on the basis of converging interests and shared values. And a broad, long-term view of our self-interest is the key idea behind the policy we are developing for the countries on the enlarged Union's borders.

The aim is to create a ring of friends around the Union -- stretching from Russia right around the Mediterranean to Morocco -- and to share with them the peace, stability and prosperity we have enjoyed in the Union for the last fifty years.

We hope to include the Israelis and the Palestinians among these friends. This can only work if both these peoples can live in sovereign and independent states, secure within their borders, and at peace with each other.

When both can take part in a process of political and economic integration, this will bring lasting stability to the region and will make the world a more secure place. This will effectively guarantee **sustainable peace.**

I am aware this is a daring proposition, but I make no apology for it. There is no alternative to this now.

To be totally clear, a two-state solution would be only the first step, however gigantic. But even such a giant step would not achieve our goal of sustainable peace for the region.

We must bear in mind that we can no longer just rely on the diplomacy of states. This goal calls for much more.

The new model I have in mind would no longer treat individuals and social groups as passive subjects but make them the real protagonists of national and international politics.

It will probably take many years, but it is the only way forward.

Ultimately, we want to extend to these countries the four freedoms on which the Union is based. This will give tangible form to our commitment not to erect new barriers across Europe.

The bomb attacks in Madrid have brought home the urgency of such a policy. It is clear that until there is a settlement between the Palestinians and the Israelis, the Middle East will continue to spawn terrorism and insecurity for us too.

That is why we need a wide-ranging response. We need to convince our allies of the need to work together in a multilateral context. And to convince them of the effectiveness of soft power. It will help ensure our own security, both internal and external.

### **Investing in peace**

Ladies and gentlemen,

We Europeans know from long and bitter experience that war is the worst of all solutions and must remain the very last resort.

And because we have always lived in close contact with other cultures and civilisations, isolation has never been an option for Europe. We know that the open societies and tolerant cultures we cherish can be the first victims of any conflict and any terrorist threat.

We have transformed the Cold War truce into true peace. On 1 May, the European Union will have 25 Member States. Peace is now a consolidated fact for the European Union.

However, we are seeing the emergence of new threats and new challenges.

Fighting terrorism, ensuring international stability and security, keeping the world economy on an even keel, safeguarding the environment for a sustainable future are beyond the capacity of any individual State -- however powerful and however limitless its resources may seem.

That goes for the countries of Europe and it goes for our allies and partners around the world. That is why multilateralism is the only option.

Tomorrow will see the emergence of new powers and perhaps new superpowers.

That is why promoting our values internationally is so important for our own long-term security.

Thank you.