

CLOSING COMMENTS

Sean Kay, Ohio Wesleyan University, USA

During his closing remarks, Dr. Kay reviewed several important themes of the proceedings, including the reassuring focus on complimentary EU and American institutions rather than balancing ones. He also stressed that NATO is an institution in significant decline, perhaps irretrievably so. As such, member states, including Canada, must address what NATO's political unmanageability, military dysfunction and strategic irrelevance means for them.

In terms of Canada's role in the transatlantic alliance, Dr. Kay noted that Canada can help to bridge any deepening divide between the United States and Europe in terms of strategic culture. However, Canada must also calibrate its interests in ways that serve those of its people. Canada, also, has set a high standard for democracy promotion around the world with its well-regarded emphasis on "human security" which makes Canada a moral leader in world politics. As with the EU and USA, Canada must be careful to avoid imposing its values on others. Instead, we should set a good example at home so that others might find our systems compelling and seek to emulate what we do.

Dr. Kay also argued that instead of thinking in terms of institutions that reflect multilateralism, issues of importance and mutual concern – including issues absent from the discussion, such as terrorism, energy and the environment, border security, missile defense, and even the regions of the world that are also likely to draw significant attention for Canadian interests - must be identified and multilateralism built around them. Dr. Kay further posited that it is entirely possible that Canada shares a strategic culture with Europe, but at the same time actually has no real vested interests anymore in European security. In view of "success in Europe", the transatlantic partners perhaps can begin to focus elsewhere – on Latin America and Asia, for example.

Finally, Dr. Kay reiterated the idea that we live in a moment with possibilities for "transformational diplomacy" which can literally reshape the world, but that will and resources are in short supply. However, Canada plays an important role in the kind of experiences – particularly in terms of how to work effectively at the local, national, and international organizational level while integrating non-governmental organizations and private actors into solving real-world security problems. Though a proud American, Dr. Kay acknowledged that the United States needs to listen, often, to what its friends with experience in these new areas have to say. In the end, we will all be better off for it as we all continue to invest in a better understanding of global security.