



PRESS RELEASE

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New CER essay

## The US elections and Europe: The coming crisis of high expectations

By Kori Schake

The election of a new US president in 2008 offers an opportunity to repair US-European relations. But, as Kori Schake argues in this essay, both sides must guard against high expectations. Europe will expect a post-Bush US to take a multilateral approach to foreign policy. However, the US is likely to continue acting as an exceptional power, sometimes unbound by international law. Similarly, the new US administration may expect the EU to make a bigger contribution to sorting out the world's trouble spots. But it will be disappointed: most Europeans believe that the Iraq war has vindicated their soft-power approach, and they are not going to spend more on defence.

To avoid a crisis of high expectations, and to capitalise on the change of leadership in the US:

- ★ Leaders on both sides of the Atlantic need to adjust their sights. Any changes that the new American president introduces on issues that matter to Europe – Iran or climate change – will be evolutionary, not revolutionary.
- ★ Europeans and Americans will need to find a way to talk about Iraq in terms that resonate with both sides and that do not belittle the continuing US involvement. The US feels alone in bearing the burden of Iraq, and Americans tend to gloss over the political price their European allies paid for supporting the war.
- ★ Europeans will also need to find ways of reminding the US of their comparative value as allies. Americans are likely to enter into one of their periodic fits of searching for better allies than the Europeans.

### Notes for editors:

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3. This paper can be ordered from the CER website ([www.cer.org.uk](http://www.cer.org.uk)) or by contacting Kate Meakins at [kate@cer.org.uk](mailto:kate@cer.org.uk) or on +44 20 7233 1199.

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