

Remarks As Prepared for Delivery: Embargoed until 7 p.m. March 26, 2007

**Treaty of Rome Anniversary Ceremony**  
**Deputy Secretary of State John D. Negroponte**  
**March 26, 2007**

Commissioner Piebalgs, Ambassador Scharioth and Ambassador Bruton ... distinguished colleagues and guests, I am delighted to welcome you to the Department of State for this historic commemoration. It is a great honor to have the European Union Ambassadors with us tonight and a testimony to the breadth and depth of our relationship with Europe that our guests tonight also include, my counterpart from Treasury Bob Kimmitt, and General Alexander Haig.

As the European Union celebrates the half-century mark, we in the United States are honored to applaud its immense accomplishments. For five decades now, the EU has been a force for positive change, not only in Europe but around the world. At home, the European Union has succeeded in uniting a war-torn continent economically and politically. Abroad it has succeeded in promoting its core democratic values so that other nations and regions might follow its inspiring example.

On a personal note, I'd like to just mention that I was a college student in Paris when the Treaty of Rome entered into force in January 1958. It was a moment of great excitement and I have fond memories of the time.

From the beginning, the United States pledged its support to building a strong united Europe. In the aftermath of World War II, the American people extended assistance to Europe in the form of the Marshall Plan, which this year enjoys its 60th anniversary. Over a four year period, the Marshall Plan provided \$13 billion to help Europeans heal their wound and rebuild their economies. We also joined with Europe to create NATO, the most successful Alliance in history and the security foundation on which the European Union was able to grow and prosper.

By removing tariff trade barriers and promoting European economic coordination through institutions such as the Organization for European Economic Cooperation (known today as the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, or OECD), the Marshall Plan helped set in motion European integration. That powerful idea was shared by visionary leaders like Jean Monnet and Robert Schuman who were fundamental in establishing the European Coal and Steel Community in 1951 and the European Economic Community in 1957. Altruism aside, getting Europe back on its feet was critical for the U.S. Our economy has benefited greatly from trade with the developed countries of Europe.

Fifty years later, look at what has happened: The European Union represents 27 countries, 23 official languages, 490 million citizens, and the largest economy in the world. European integration has been an unconditional success story.

Later this spring, President Bush will welcome the leaders of the European Union to Washington for the U.S.-EU Summit to discuss the transatlantic and global agendas. His emphasis will be on the future, but I know he will receive his European colleagues with deep appreciation for the

extraordinary accomplishments of our transatlantic relationship over the last fifty years. I would like to read a personal message from the President, which I presented to Commissioner Piebalgs earlier this evening:

“Today, we join Europe in celebrating the 50th Anniversary of the Treaties of Rome.

Half a century ago, six countries united by the conviction that the future of Europe must be one of liberty, hope, and prosperity signed the Treaties of Rome and gave birth to what would become the European Union. Today, 27 countries and nearly half a billion people stand together as a force for prosperity, stability, and freedom. On this anniversary we celebrate the extraordinary accomplishments of the European Union and look forward to a bright future for all its citizens.

During these historic times, our world requires the cooperation of the United States and Europe to confront and overcome the new challenges we face. Our people are bound by common values, including democracy, free enterprise, and a deep respect for human rights. By working together, we are helping to build stability and prosperity in the Balkans, strengthen freedom in the Southern Caucasus, assist a reforming Ukraine, and promote democratic reform in Belarus. Through our strong global partnership, we can advance a more hopeful world for people everywhere and lay the foundation of peace for generations to come.

Laura and I send our best wishes on this special occasion. George Bush.”

In closing, let me just add that we in America, including the business community – the Transatlantic Business Dialogue, the U.S. Council for International Business and the European-American Business Council, the non-profit sector, as well as academics, researchers, and others in the policy world recognize what you in Europe have achieved and are proud to be your friends.

Please accept my most sincere congratulations on the fiftieth anniversary of the Treaty of Rome.

Thank you very much.