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A Leading Role for the Security Council

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In the past month, the world has witnessed something previously unknown: a common stand taken by America, Russia, Europe, India, China, Cuba, most of the Islamic world and numerous other regions and countries. Despite many serious differences between them, they united to save civilization.

It is now the responsibility of the world community to transform the coalition against terrorism into a coalition for a peaceful world order. Let us not, as we did in the 1990's, miss the chance to build such an order.

Concepts like solidarity and helping third world countries to fight poverty and backwardness have disappeared from the political vocabulary. But if these concepts are not revived politically, the worst scenarios of a clash of civilizations could become reality.

I believe the United Nations Security Council should take the lead in fighting terrorism and in dealing with other global problems. All the main issues considered by the United Nations affect mankind's security. It is time to stop reviling the United Nations and get on with the work of adapting the institution to new tasks.

Concrete steps should include accelerated nuclear and chemical disarmament and control over the remaining stocks of dangerous substances, including chemical and biological agents. No amount of money is too much for that. I hope the United States will support the verification protocol of the convention banning biological weapons and ratify the treaty to prohibit all nuclear tests; though both steps would reverse the Bush administration's current positions.

We should also heed those who have pointed out the negative consequences of globalization for hundreds of millions of people. Globalization cannot be stopped, but it can be made more humane and more balanced for those it affects.

If the battle against terrorism is limited to military operations, the world could be the loser. But if it becomes an integral part of common efforts to build a more just world order, everyone will win; including those who now do not support American actions or the antiterrorism coalition. Those people, and they are many, should not all be branded as enemies.



Russia has shown its solidarity with America. President Vladimir Putin immediately sent a telegram to President Bush on Sept. 11 condemning the "inhuman act" of that day. Russia has been sharing information, coordinating positions with the West and with its neighbors, opening its air space, and providing humanitarian assistance to the Afghan people and weapons to the Northern Alliance.

This has been good policy. But we should bear in mind that both in the Russian establishment and among the people, reaction to it has been mixed. Some people are still prone to old ways of understanding the world and Russia's place in it. Others sincerely wonder whether the world's most powerful country should be bombing impoverished Afghanistan. Still others ask: We have supported America in its hour of need, but will it meet us halfway on issues important to us?

I am sure Russia will be a serious partner in fighting international terrorism. But equally, it is important that its voice be heard in building a new international order. If not, Russians could conclude that they have merely been used.

Irritants in American-Russian relations; issues like missile defense and the admission of new members to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization; will be addressed in due course, but they will be easier to solve once we have moved toward a new global agenda and a deeper partnership between our two countries.

Finally, it would be wrong to use the battle against terrorism to establish control over countries or regions. This would discredit the coalition and close off the prospect of transforming it into a powerful mechanism for building a peaceful world.

Turning the coalition against terror into an alliance that works to achieve a just international order would be a lasting memorial to the thousands of victims of the Sept. 11 tragedy.