

Opening speech by José Manuel Barroso at the European Strategy and Analysis System Conference

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José Manuel Barroso, President of the EC, delivered a speech at the ESPAS - European Strategy and Policy Analysis System – conference "Developing Strategic Thinking in the European Union - Global Trends 2030" on 18 February 2013 in Brussels. He presented his view on the major trends European Union and others strategic partners are facing and laid out possible policy responses.



HEURE	DESCRIPTION	DUREE
00:00:00	Speech by José Manuel Barroso, President of the EC, (in ENGLISH): Let me first of all congratulate BEPA, Jean-Claude and all those in BEPA that have organised this conference. Also a special word of thanks to James Elles, I know his strong commitment and leadership in this matter, and to all of you that are engaging in this very important exercise in terms of global networking. At first sight, the Global Trends 2030-exercise might seem like a very ambitious, even daring initiative. Woody Allen once said: 'I'm always astounded by people who want to 'know' the Universe when it's hard enough to find your way around Chinatown.' And	00:02:41

sometimes I feel we could say the same about Brussels. Similarly, why would the European Union want to invest time, resources and credibility in trying to know the distant future, when the events of next week or next month are hard enough to figure out? Why put our best minds and independent thinkers together to consider what the world will look like in 2030, when 2013 poses quite enough of a challenge for most of us? And yet, I really think this is a necessary step for us to take. Because forecasting is more than trying to find out what will happen tomorrow. It is a way to focus on what matters today. Forward thinking is a precondition for forward planning and for the decisions of today. And every issue that shows up in the long-term discussions already has its place in what we do on a day-to-day basis. We need that mental focus more than ever. In a time of economic insecurity and global economic shifts, it gives guidance to our efforts to adapt our social-economic model to the needs of tomorrow's economy and society. In a time of major geopolitical and geoeconomic changes, it pushes us to look outwards, instead of

temptation to turn inward. In a time of political disquiet and discontent, it offers hope instead of fear. So I am very happy to be able to kick off this conference, and to help sharpen our ability for strategic thinking in the years to come.

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Speech by José Manuel Barroso (in ENGLISH): Ladies and gentlemen, We already know, of course, a lot of the main trends coming at us. If anything keeps surprising us, it is the speed with which they are already becoming visible, tangible even. The shift of economic gravity to the East and South has accelerated as a result of the crisis. We can expect absolute poverty to be significantly reduced over the next two decades, though in per capita GDP the difference between developed and emerging economies will remain large. Over the last 10 years about 70 million people a year joined the ranks of the middle class. By 2030 over half of the world's population will be labelled as such. Overall development will press on, but the downsides of unsustainable growth will manifest themselves ever more clearly. Inequality is bound to increase, and pose a threat to the societies and political systems of developed and

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developed and developing societies alike. Over the next thirteen years, the world population will increase by another billion, and the same will happen again the fourteen years after that. 95% of that growth will happen in developing countries – indeed an enormous challenge to manage. More examples could be given to capture both the nature and the pace of change underway, the Achilles heels of our model, but also our comparative advantages. Black and white analyses of the decline of the west and rise of the rest are, in my view, very simplistic. And so are the analyses that ignore the magnitude of the changes and pretend that we could face 21st century reality with 20th century thinking. This is why we need to change, reform and adapt if we want to succeed in a more competitive world. But we need to do so conscious that in Europe our social market economy has served us well and it is the model we want to keep, knowing well that for that we need the reforms, real reforms for increasing competitiveness. This is the understanding that underpins the financial, economic and social agenda that the European Commission is pushing today: to guarantee our economic

	<p>guarantee our economic welfare and safeguard our social model, we need to adapt. We need to reform. Business as usual is not an option.</p>	
00:05:18	<p>Speech by José Manuel Barroso (in ENGLISH): First of all, we need to balance the books as we promised we would. Public debt in the EU has risen from around 60% of GDP before the crisis to about 90% on average today, exceeding the limits that we set for ourselves in the Stability and Growth Pact and indeed entering in what can be considered a number dangerous to growth. So there is no alternative to fiscal consolidation, and in the longer run there is no alternative to sensible government spending. Secondly, we need the structural reforms that promote growth and then turn growth into jobs. This will not be any easier in the future. Apart from strong competition developing elsewhere, a number of technological changes will greatly affect our ability to do so. We are still in the middle of a technological revolution that will dramatically change how we work - and impact on who will be able to find work. Innovation, education and adaptability are therefore key, and these feature highly in our Europe 2020 agenda. This is</p>	00:02:00

...very much a fight we can still win. Because Europe's economic fundamentals are basically solid. The European Union remains a world leader in high-value added products and in high-tech. We don't passively stand by and watch technological change while it happens, we shape these evolutions ourselves. Between 2004 and 2010 we have created 3 million extra jobs through services exports, in which the European Union accounts for a quarter of all trade world-wide. We have the educational systems and the labour force to compete successfully in tomorrow's economy. If we continue to shift government expenditure into investment, research and development we will have a solid base to build our future welfare on. If only we put our minds and our combined efforts to it.

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Speech by José Manuel Barroso (in ENGLISH): Ladies and gentlemen, If knowledge is power, technology will change the way political power relations are structured as well. The political and social impact of technology will be just as important as its impact on the economy. Today, more than 5 out of 7 billion people have

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...more people have access to mobile phones. By 2030, over half of the world's population will have internet access, while literacy rates may pass 90%. A combination of social, material and technological progress will empower and embolden citizens across the globe. With an upgrade in status comes an update of values, greater awareness of their government's responsibility to address their grievances and support their aspirations, and better means to express their concerns or dissent. That part of the future too is already happening, we are seeing this happening. And the Global Trends 2030 report hints at a possible 'age of convergence', a 'global citizenship' that the combination of technological and economic development is making possible. For the European Union, which is above all a community of values, this is both a hope and an encouragement. Values like human dignity, the rule of law, the universality of human rights and fundamental freedoms are enshrined in our treaties as being at the heart of both our internal and our external policy, and we will support and strengthen this convergence in the best way we can.

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Speech by José Manuel Barroso (in ENGLISH): Ladies and gentlemen, The major question mark for the future is not so much the trends coming at us, but our political ability to shape them. Future relations between states and regions will be ever more interdependent. I really believe this is one of the lessons of the crisis, if not the most important lesson of the crisis, this increased interdependence. And this happens for economic reasons, because production and supply chains will be truly global; due to technological advances that cut across borders whether we want it or not; and also because problems like climate change, terrorism, food security, increased migration flows and access to raw materials are equally transnational. Our political institutions and mind-set need to follow these trends, for it will never work the other way around. What we see today is that the nation-state is no longer able to address some of these challenges on its own, but at the same time there is not yet a supra-national entity fully equipped with the competences to do so. It is this institutional and political gap that we need to fill. Here in Europe I

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to him here in Europe, I believe we have some of the solutions, in fact we have been a kind of laboratory of globalisation and we can also share these experiences with others. Of course not pretending to give lessons, but believing that shared competences at the global level makes sense in the age of interdependence.

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Speech by José Manuel Barroso (in ENGLISH): This is why more European integration is part of the answer to face these challenges. But when I speak about integration I don't necessarily mean more centralisation. I mean in substantive terms the capacity to share competences and to work together, trying to leverage what we can do individually or regionally or nationally by a common European approach, and giving that way some contribution to the global governance challenges. And this is also what we are working on here in the European Commission: to set out a vision and a road map on how Europe can move into the next stages of integration. In very concrete terms, with our Blueprint for a Deep and Genuine Economic and Monetary Union the Commission has opened the debate on how our Union should evolve in

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the medium to the longer run. We have to fit our political, institutional and economic framework to the tasks demanded of it. And we have to do this in an open debate with our citizens, who have the need to voice their concerns and the right to make their own decisions in a truly European political sphere. And European cooperation is a stepping-stone to the effective multilateralism that is needed to tackle problems on a world basis. The European Union is party to more than 50 United Nations agreements and conventions as the only non-state participant, it is the largest contributor to the United Nations budget and takes the lead in United Nations initiatives, from climate change to development assistance. We are a full and active member of the G8 and G20, where we push for a global approach on international issues like financial regulation and coordinated economic policies. To be able to deliver this kind of leadership, we need to act together and prove our strategic partners across the world that Europe works. If we want to support our values - peace, democracy, human dignity - we will need a strong, united and pro-active union. And an effective European Union

is our best guarantee for effective multilateralism. The European Strategy and Policy Analysis System is part of empowering the European Union to become a more active and more efficient global actor. It sends a strong political signal that we as a European Union are willing to look beyond institutional borders, to go beyond internal and external borders even, to tackle future evolutions and new challenges together. This process has only just started, and this conference underlines our readiness to continue the dialogue in the years to come, to share insights and experiences with similar initiatives elsewhere and see if a global trends community can be formed. The major report to be finalised by 2014 will be the next step, and should have a clear impact on European Union decision-making in the next institutional cycle and beyond.

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Speech by José Manuel Barroso (in ENGLISH): Ladies and Gentlemen, let me conclude. In 1937 a demoralised French poet, Paul Valéry, wrote: 'L'avenir est comme le reste; il n'est plus ce qu'il était.' Interestingly, around the same time his English counterpart Robert Graves wrote the

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... report states that the same thing to a friend: 'The future is not what it used to be. It is an involuntary spending and manipulation of physical forces, empty of consciousness. It no longer matters.' The phrase perfectly captures the sense of powerlessness that grips people in times of uncertainty and change. When people give up interest in the future, they lose their sense of purpose. That is precisely why responsible political leaders, policy makers and organisations need to look beyond the horizon and offer a vision of the future; offer both realism in the analysis and hope in the ambition; develop the sense that we have the future in our own hands. For Europe, the future will never again be what it used to be. But with a united Europe, the future will remain largely ours to make. I thank you for your attention.