

progressed on EPC during the spring of 1990, both sides reviewed proposals to make changes to upgrade the importance and increase the frequency of the ministerial meetings. This was to be achieved through a number of measures: holding the meetings twice a year; alternating the locale between Washington and Brussels; when in Washington to include a meeting between the US President and the President of the EC Commission; and to try to de-link timing of the Brussels ministerial from the NATO ministerial in order to create more focused bilateral discussions.

The 1990 US-EC Ministerials, held on April 23-24, were significant for three reasons: 1) they were the first Ministerials to be held in Washington; 2) President Bush for the first time had a one-on-one meeting with President Delors; and 3) both sides agreed that Baker's call for a treaty was premature. It is this last outcome that is the most important for the purpose of our discussion. In the *tour d'horizon* during the Delors/Bush meeting, Delors explained that the EC considered a formalized treaty to be inappropriate given the awkward stage in the Community's external relations: the EC was preoccupied with the aspirations of central and eastern Europe as well as the creation of a common market to include the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) members; and there still remained the problem of the divided competence between the Community and the Member States in many areas. Delors suggested that the operationalization of a formal treaty would depend on the further progression by the EC along its path toward Political Union (PU).

Bush was apparently comfortable with this position and both sides agreed to concentrate instead on reinforcing dialogue under existing mechanisms. Bush's comfort level at keeping the treaty proposal in abeyance was no doubt increased by the fact that the State Department had "discovered" that some form of Friendship, Commerce and Navigation (FCN) treaty already existed with 11 out of the 12 Member States of the Community.²⁶ Following the Bush/Delors meeting and its own internal consultations, the European Council decided in June 1990 to begin talks with the US government on a joint declaration.²⁷

ii) Canadian Reaction to US-EC Dialogue

Canadian officials were impressed by the dynamism and scope of the EC-US contacts; by the commitment displayed by both sides to realize the spirit of Secretary Baker's Berlin speech. Canadian officials especially noted the impressive number of cabinet-level contacts between the EC and the US — in addition to the breadth of the consultative agenda which was developing along the lines of bilateral cooperation on science and development — as reflective of an attempt to forge a broader and more cooperative bilateral dialogue in light of the "new Atlanticism".²⁸