



## **U.S. - Dutch Relations** **A History of Friendship and Mutual Support**

The United States' partnership with the Netherlands dates back to the American Revolution. Mutual support between our two nations has been based on close historical and cultural ties and underscored by a shared dedication to individual freedom and human rights.

Dutch interests raised more than \$35 million to aid victims of the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks. Prime Minister Jan-Peter Balkenende has publicly expressed the full political support of the Netherlands for the allied military campaign in Iraq, and the Netherlands is among the U.S.-led "Coalition of the Willing" in the battle to disarm Iraq, serving as the prime transportation hub for the movement of American troops and equipment from the U.S. and Europe to the Middle East. The Netherlands has supplied Patriot anti-missile defense troops to help defend Turkey against any Iraqi attack, and Dutch troops in Afghanistan have relieved American troops to help them assume other duties.

But U.S.-Dutch solidarity extends beyond political and military support. Today, the Netherlands is the third largest investor in the United States, collectively employing more than 561,000 Americans a year. The Netherlands is the eighth largest export market for the U.S. and the U.S. is the *largest direct foreign investor* in the Netherlands. Through the Netherlands American Community Trust, a coalition of Dutch-based U.S. companies support social, cultural and educational programs to benefit disadvantaged communities and American youth at risk throughout the United States.

The Netherlands and the U.S. have enjoyed uninterrupted diplomatic and friendly relations for more than 220 years. Our longstanding tradition of close historical, political and economic ties reaches back to the very founding of America. Following are some key dates in the centuries-long U.S.-Dutch relationship:

- **Staking a claim**  
In 1609, explorer Henry Hudson, on behalf of the Dutch-based United East India Company, entered the area now known as New York. He traveled up the river that now bears his name, claiming the land for his employer.
- **Getting down to business**  
The Dutch were the world's foremost traders and merchant mariners, and quickly set up a trading post on the southern end of Manhattan Island.
- **Dutch beads buy Manhattan**  
In 1625, the Dutch bought the island from Indians for 60 guilders (about \$24), renamed the island "Nieuw Amsterdam" and established it as a center for commerce and trade, attracting the best and brightest from many different cultures.
- **Democracy gets a head start**  
In 1653, New Amsterdam received its municipal charter and officially became a city, making it the first city in North America where citizens freely elected their city council, establishing a platform for democracy.
- **Financial support in times of war**  
In 1776, the Dutch played a major role in financing the Revolutionary War, and was re-paid by the U.S. government with stock certificates, an action that eventually led to the establishment of the New York Stock Exchange in 1791. The Netherlands was the first country to salute the flag of the independent United States.

- **Economic expansion**

In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the Dutch continued to finance the United States and its expanding economy, helping to finance the Louisiana Purchase in 1803 and establishment of a coast-to-coast railroad.

- **Leadership**

In 1903, the Dutch established the Netherlands Chamber of Commerce in the United States and the Netherlands Club of New York. Theodore Roosevelt was the U.S. President, the second American of Dutch descent to hold this office (1901-1909). In 1933, Franklin Delano Roosevelt became the third American of Dutch descent to serve as President (1933-1945), rallying the nation to overcome deep economic depression and later mobilizing the nation to be victorious in the war against tyranny on two continents.

- **Allies in WWII**

Following the war, the U.S. Marshall Plan helped the Netherlands' economic recovery.

- **Founding members of NATO**

Mutual support has been the watchword of Dutch-American relations, with economic and political interests intertwined. Over the years, soldiers from both countries have served side-by-side in international conflicts from the Korean War to the Gulf War to Kosovo.

- **Partners in global commerce**

In 1988, the Netherlands business community in the United States created the European-American Business Council to provide a platform for multinational corporations to discuss trade and investment issues of mutual interest. Currently, the European-American Business Council is chaired by Ambassador Stu Eizenstat, former U.S. Deputy Secretary of the Treasury, State and Commerce.

The United States and the Netherlands often take similar positions on issues of global import. Interested in enhancing trade opportunities and economic growth on both sides of the Atlantic, Dutch and American interests continue to be well served by policies of both governments and corporations that support opportunities for economic, political and cultural expansion.

### **About Randstad North America**

Headquartered in Atlanta, Randstad North America is a wholly owned subsidiary of Randstad Holding nv. Randstad entered the U.S. in 1993, and today operates 459 branches and client-dedicated locations across the U.S. In 2003, Randstad North America employed more than 193,000 Americans.

As a wholly owned subsidiary of Netherlands-based Randstad Holding nv, Randstad North America is able to capitalize on the company's rich history and global network of offices. Randstad Holding is listed on the Euronext Amsterdam stock exchange (Reuters: RAND.AS), where options for Randstad Holding shares are also traded. More information is available at the company's website, [www.us.randstad.com](http://www.us.randstad.com). Investment information is available at [www.randstadholding.com](http://www.randstadholding.com).