



**EUROPEAN UNION**  
DELEGATION TO THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

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**United States Senate Committee on Foreign Relations  
Hearing on**

**"The European Union as a Partner Against Russian Aggression:  
Sanctions, Security, Democratic Institutions and the Way Forward"**

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Chairman Corker, Ranking Member Cardin, Members of the Committee, thank you for your invitation to testify before the United States Senate Committee on Foreign Relations. I am honoured to have this opportunity.

As you know, the European Union recently celebrated the 60th anniversary of its founding document, the Treaty of Rome. I want to express my deep appreciation to Senator Shaheen, and her co-sponsor Senator McCain, for introducing a Senate resolution that commemorates this occasion. This year we also celebrate the 70th Anniversary of the Marshall Plan, which after two World Wars helped launch the common project of building a new Europe committed to peace and prosperity. I think I can speak for all Europeans when I say we are humbled by the sacrifice of American service men and women who gave their lives to help free Europe.

Since then, we have come a long way and Europe has always been U.S. closest global partner, and the other way around, to the benefit of our peoples on the two shores of the Atlantic.

And as the European Union, we are continuing to work with the new administration and the US Congress, in a relationship that is and will always be based on the friendship that ties our peoples, and on our respective values, principles and interests. Both European Council President Tusk and European Commission President Juncker have had very cordial discussions with President Trump. With EU High Representative Federica Mogherini, Presidents Tusk and Juncker hosted Vice President Pence for an early and very positive February visit to Brussels. High Representative Mogherini has visited Washington twice already this year to meet with Vice-President Pence, National Security Advisor McMaster, Secretary Tillerson, Secretary Mattis, and with many Members of Congress, including Chairman Corker, Ranking Member Cardin, and other Members of this Committee.

The United States and the European Union both benefit from this strategic alliance. This is self-evident for our economic

relationship. Fully 80% of U.S. Foreign Direct Investment comes from Europe. Some 15 million jobs on both sides of the Atlantic depend on our mutual trade. Together, we represent 50% of world GDP and 30% of world trade. The European Union alone is, and will be also once the UK will leave the EU - at the end of negotiations that will last two years - the second economy of the world and the first single market.

Of course, the links between Europe and the United States extend far beyond economics and trade. We are essential partners when it comes to foreign and security policy, counter-terrorism, and defence. The European Union is a global security provider: we have sixteen military and civilian missions. As the European Union, we have started last year a new partnership with NATO with 42 common actions, particularly to counter hybrid and cyber threats. Europe is your closest ally in the fight against Daesh. Europe stood in full solidarity with the United States following the 9/11 attacks and for more than a decade we have been closest partners in Afghanistan: our service men and women have always fought on the same side and sometime sadly lost their lives on the same battlefields. The European Union also plays a fundamental role in the Western Balkans, again in close cooperation with the United States, investing in security, democracy, rule of law, economic opportunities - and peace, in the Balkans. The European Union is the first donor when it comes to humanitarian and development aid worldwide. All this to say that the European Union is a reliable, trusted and credible global actor, a role we are on our way to increase along the lines HRVP Mogherini indicated last year in the EU global strategy.

It is in that context of increased EU capability and transatlantic partnership that we address also our policies toward Russia. After the end of the Cold War neither the European Union nor the United States have ever approached Russia as an adversary. Throughout a vast range of policies, development of mutually beneficial economic relations, cultural exchanges and thematic dialogues, as the European

Union we aimed at building a strategic partnership with Russia

Russia's illegal annexation of Crimea and the conflict in eastern Ukraine have seriously damaged EU-Russia relations. Sovereign equality, the non-use of force and territorial integrity are core principles for peace and security and their respect is and remains key for the European Union.

The European Union and the United States, along with others in the international community, have taken a principled position against the illegal annexation of the Crimean peninsula, which we do not recognise, and against Russia's actions in eastern Ukraine. We have adopted a package of restrictive measures that we have agreed to maintain till the full implementation of the Minsk agreement.

Close transatlantic coordination has been crucial for the effectiveness of these targeted measures.

Nonetheless, Russia is a permanent member on the UN Security Council and remains a strategic country when it comes to addressing many crises. As the US did in recent years, the European Union has cooperated with Russia on many dossiers, being on counterterrorism or on the crisis in Syria, on the Middle East peace process, on the Iranian nuclear file, on Libya.

That's why last year we unanimously decided as EU to be guided by five principles when it comes to our policy on Russia.

First and foremost, the EU will continue to support Ukraine and support a solution to the conflict in Eastern Ukraine based on the complete implementation of the Minsk agreements. The European Union is also politically and financially supporting reforms to consolidate Ukraine's democracy and governance. EU-US cooperation on support for the reform process in Ukraine is excellent, as is coordination within the G7 framework.

Second, we are strengthening the EU's relations with our Eastern neighbours, through the Eastern Partnership and our Neighbourhood Policy – cooperating with the institutions to promote democracy, rule of law, respect for human rights, and social and economic development.

Third, in light of disinformation operations the European Union is building up its resilience: as EU, we have set up one year ago a strategic communications unity in the external actions service that monitors and alerts on disinformation campaigns, and provides correct and factual information on European Union's policies.

Fourth, we will continue to selectively engage with Russia as necessary and in accordance with EU interests on foreign and security policy issues. For example Russia has been invited to attend the conference of the future of Syria and the region we will host tomorrow in Brussels. On these and other critical global issues, we will continue to engage Russia.

The fifth and final principle of the EU's approach is our continued strong support for Russian people, Russian civil society, and for contacts between EU and Russian citizens. This is why work continues on cross-border cooperation, education, science and research cooperation - among others.

Mr. Chairman, our transatlantic policy towards Russia has been united and credible. More than ever in this complex and fragile world, what is needed is cooperation and Partnership. This is true for the European Union and it's true for the United States.