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The new narrative of Europe after the MSC

Europe must become a global power!

About the Article

Main Question: What role must Europe play following the shifts in global stability highlighted by the Munich Security Conference? Argument: Discrepancies in values with the USA and threats from Russia necessitate that Europe pursues "European Sovereignty" through independent security and military integration. Conclusion: Europe must urgently implement its own crystal-clear security guarantees and standardized armaments to ensure its survival as a global power.

About the Authors

Dr. Ingo Friedrich is a highly influential German politician (CSU) and a committed European. From 1979 to 2009, he significantly shaped EU policy as a Member of the European Parliament, serving as its Vice-President from 1999 to 2007. A doctor of economics, he currently serves as President of the European Economic Senate and Executive President of the Union of Medium-Sized Companies. Friedrich is a staunch advocate for the "European Way of Life" and was awarded the Grand Cross of the Order of Merit of the Federal Republic of Germany.

About the Authors

Theodor Himmel connects students with experts in diplomatic and economic affairs. Together with his colleagues, he built EPIS Think Tank into one of the largest student-led think tanks in Europe and also initiated the EPIS Network. He currently serves as Chairman of EPIS. Alongside this, after completing an LL.M. at Leiden University, he is finalizing his legal training as a law clerk at the Regional Court of Baden-

aden. Currently, he works as a consultant in a Munich-based family office.

The

results of the Munich Security Conference are:

The USA and Europe are and remain parts of the same Western cultural sphere but they no longer share all values: For example, in the USA, regarding freedom of expression, the right of free speech (meaning of the speaker) stands in the foreground according to the motto "everything may be said," while in Europe the right of the listener to information that is at least somewhat truthful and does not only spread hate and insult must also be respected. And: The Europeans want a rules-based world order while Trump regards the "right of the stronger" as normal. There are therefore large differences but still also large intersections, meaning commonalities between the USA and Europe. It still exists, the West, even if in a different form.

A similar "partial equality" applies to the planned accession of Ukraine to the EU. Ukraine

is indeed to become a member of the EU swiftly, but not in all policy fields (e.g., not in agriculture) and also not with all rights and obligations. We had a comparable situation, by the way, in the first years of German reunification when the then-GDR simultaneously also joined the EU.

European Sovereignty: The concept of the European Union achieving strategic autonomy and the capacity to act independently in key areas like security, defense, and foreign policy.

Putin's Russia has, with the Ukraine war, undertaken a kind of last attempt at force in order to still become a global world power through the conquest of Ukraine with its significant reserves and natural resources. The attempt has – this can already be said now – gone thoroughly wrong.

For the expected Russian-Ukrainian ceasefire, the following consequences are emerging:

- Ukraine will survive as a sovereign state and join the West;
- the global influence of Russia has sunk dramatically after formerly friendly states and regions (also because of Trump) have turned away: Venezuela, Syria and probably soon also Cuba and Iran.

- the global reputation and the international image of Russia have reached a low point. "One" only enters into business relations with Russia if really no other alternative is available.
- Russia is already paying an immense, indeed dramatic economic and human price for the war. The estimates indeed vary widely but the dimensions are enormous. 100,000s of dead young men, further 100,000s of severely injured, and the economy and citizens suffer ever more strongly under inflation, high taxes, and high interest rates.

the nuclear umbrella is to be officially maintained. It remains a kind of friendship alliance in which the previous hegemon USA then helps when good deals can be negotiated. The previous absolute NATO mutual assistance obligation according to Art 5 must unfortunately be questioned to some extent. Therefore, the EU must formulate its own crystal-clear security guarantee, which fills the mutual assistance obligation already existing in the EU treaties with concrete life, in order to appear credible for deterrence.

Europe is challenged like never before!

Trump and Putin are – even if unintentionally – midwives of a newly forming world power named Europe, officially: "European Sovereignty." The realization that Europe must go this independent way has steadily grown and is today the "dominant" doctrine. That such a goal is associated with great efforts and also sacrifices is obvious, but the gain in stability and security undoubtedly compensates for this.

Maintaining jurisdictional control over data storage and cloud infrastructure ensures national data remains governed under domestic legal frameworks

Decisive now will be whether and how Europe finds the strength to also concretely implement the desired European Sovereignty in practice. Thus, the states ready for this should go forward now and, for example, establish a joint high command for important armed forces, or they should begin to implement security policy decisions even without unanimity. Armaments must be standardized.

NATO as an unbreakable alliance is losing importance without disappearing entirely, even if