FOREIGN AND SECURITY POLICY 08.12.2025 | Christos Katsioulis & Filip Milačić

The US is no longer with us

Perhaps Trump's new National Security Strategy will finally open Europe's eyes to this simple reality

The idea of regime change is back on the world stage. This time, however, Europe isn't the starting point, but rather the target region itself, where the Trump administration wants to apply its ideas of good and proper governance. This marks a redefinition of the much-heralded 'transatlantic community of values'.

The US National Security Strategy 2025 (NSS 2025) clearly demonstrates this, in which President Trump sets out his ideas for foreign policy under the banner of 'America First'. The document is written in a completely different way to previous US security strategies. It is significantly more ideological and at the same time more blunt in its focus on the country's own interests. At times, it reads almost like a caricature of the US, as seen in films or in anti-American left-wing circles. In this respect, it is quite ironic that the strategy also talks about expanding the soft power of the US.

Fundamentally, it revolves around preserving and expanding the greatness of the US. Simply put, America First. This ranges from a tough anti-immigration policy with enforced border protection to the expansion of the US military, to international relations geared towards American prosperity. All instruments are to be used to achieve these goals, be it economic relations, the American financial market and technology, or even the military and allies. American companies are to benefit directly from this, especially from countries that are most dependent on the US and on which Washington can exert the most pressure.

With us or against us, Europe!

For Europe, with its numerous states that boast a 'special relationship' with the US, the strategy envisages a very specific role. This could have an impact on Europe's economic and security policy, but also on its domestic policy.
In terms of security policy, this strategy marks a shift away from a world

order based on common rules. Instead, it posits that stronger nations have more influence. For the US to continue to have the strongest influence in this logic, its allies, and above all Europe, must contribute to this.

This means, first, that they must do more for their own security, but not entirely at their own risk. The US wants to continue to act as a driving force and guide its allies in these efforts. Secondly, US allies must continue to contribute to America's exceptional economic position. This means reducing trade deficits, opening their markets to the US, and ensuring that the taxation or regulation of American companies is measured against what the White House considers fair and appropriate. And third, American energy exports will be used to deepen relations with allies. Conversely, this means that if you depend on the US, it will be better to buy oil and gas from Donald Trump in the future and to shelve misguided ideologies (sic!) such as climate change and net zero.

With regard to the Middle East, there is explicit mention of respecting regional traditions and not attempting to impose one's own ideas on other states. This clearly does not apply to Europe at all.

While these three conclusions apply to all allies regardless of geography, the NSS still contains some specific clauses for European security policy, partly because Europe is located in the Western Hemisphere, which is particularly important to the US. Stability is cited as the highest priority in Europe. However, according to the NSS, this is not threatened by Russia, which is defined as neither a threat nor a danger. The problem is rather seen in the fact that many Europeans regard Russia as an existential threat. Therefore, strategic stability in relations with Moscow should be established and the war in Ukraine should end. As the only concrete step in this direction, the NSS states that one of the priorities of the US is to prevent NATO from being a permanently expanding alliance. In doing so, the US, which in 2008 had advocated for Ukraine and Georgia to join NATO, is now closing this door *coram publico*. Although there is talk of Ukraine's survival, it is only referred to as a 'viable state'; the otherwise much-cited sovereignty is missing here.

The NSS 2025 states that cooperation must also be possible with states that do not share American values. For example, with regard to the Middle East, there is explicit mention of respecting regional traditions and not attempting to impose one's own ideas on other states. This

clearly does not apply to Europe at all. As the Bible says in Genesis 1, 'And God created man in his own image', the Trump administration apparently intends to shape Europe in its own image.

'The extinction of its civilisation'

What does this mean for Europe in concrete terms? The NSS reveals that Trump is not only interested in transactional relationships, but also in ideological interests. After Latin America, where Trump directly supported his allies Jair Bolsonaro and later Javier Milei by imposing high tariffs on Brazil and linking a loan to Milei's election victory, this now clearly applies to Europe. Trump's ideological agenda obviously cannot be 'softened' by flattery, as Europe's heads of government had hoped. Under this administration, the US poses a twofold threat: to the EU as a project and to European liberal democracies.

In several places, the NSS emphasises the primacy of nation states and reads like a declaration of war on international organisations, especially the EU. It not only undermines political freedom and national sovereignty, but is also an obstacle to American interests. And yet, this assessment should come as no surprise. The rejection of international organisations, including the EU, was already evident in the Heritage Foundation's Project 2025, the Trump administration's unofficial government programme. Perhaps the NSS 2025 will finally succeed in opening the eyes of all Europeans to this fact.

Furthermore, this ideological agenda undermines liberal democracy. The NSS 2025 equates European identity with white ethnicity and the Christian religion, which are allegedly threatened by immigration. If Europe, as the NSS claims, is threatened with 'the extinction of its civilisation', this should give decision-makers free rein to protect their states by any means necessary. 'He who saves his country does not violate any law', as Trump posted on X in February. In other words, this legitimises attacks on liberal democracy. It is justified to strengthen the power of the executive at the expense of other institutions in order to protect the allegedly threatened national identity and sovereignty. Critical media, opposition parties and civil society are denigrated as 'foreign agents', and state authorities are purged as 'enemies of the nation'. The rights of minorities are restricted because they do not belong to the nation, and freedom of expression is selectively limited to protect the reputation of the threatened nation.

Anyone who is serious about the sovereignty of

For the current European leadership, this document is therefore a revelatory statement. It ends the transatlantic relationship of the last 80

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years. The benevolent hegemon on the other side of the Atlantic is now becoming a world power that, like Russia, is attempting to weaken the EU and arrange the political conditions in Europe as it sees fit. There is no sign of a compromise or middle ground. Anyone who is serious about the sovereignty of European states must therefore work towards a European Rütli Oath. This requires a forced dismantling of Europe's security policy dependencies, the establishment of a European arms industry for central systems that enable Europe to act jointly, a strengthening of economic and political relations with other regions, and the consolidation of international institutions and their resilience against influence from Washington.

For heads of government such as Orbán and Meloni, but also parties such as the AfD and the Rassemblement National, the new NSS 2025 is a premature Christmas present and cause for rejoicing. Their agenda has been chosen by the US as the goal of its security policy, giving them an extremely powerful ally. They all want to create an ethno-nationalist Europe. For Trump, this is primarily intended to serve the interests of the US. The great paradox, however, is that a Europe following this regime change programme would have significantly greater overlap with Russia. Trump's dream of an American-dominated Western hemisphere carries its own destruction within it from the moment it is conceived.



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