

Europe's Defense without the U.S.: A defining moment



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Recent diplomatic setbacks from U.S. officials have led European leaders to confront the growing reality of an unreliable transatlantic ally. From Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth's missteps in Brussels to President Trump's critique of Ukraine's war efforts, Washington's shifting stance leaves Europe to reassess its defense strategies.

At the Munich Security Conference, former Lithuanian foreign minister Gabrielius Landsbergis warned that Europe must take charge. Eastern European countries, long wary of Russian ambitions, have demanded stronger action, while Western Europe, particularly Germany, has been slower to respond. As the U.S. disengages, European leaders are scrambling to address defense needs, but pledges of increased spending and peacekeeping missions remain largely symbolic.

With Ukraine at the center of this crisis, Europe faces a pivotal moment. The war represents Russia's broader imperial ambitions, and without substantial European intervention, Ukraine's defeat could destabilize the region. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky emphasized the urgency, warning that Ukraine's survival depends on sustained support. Europe must prove it can provide that, stepping up military aid and strategic involvement.

Germany's reluctance to supply crucial Taurus missiles reflects a broader issue—European military arsenals are underprepared. To fill the U.S. gap, European nations must rapidly boost defense production, invest in modern weaponry, and form stronger alliances. A unified European military structure with coordinated command is essential. Moreover, Europe must reevaluate its nuclear deterrence strategy in response to U.S. withdrawal from extended deterrence policies.

The challenge is formidable, but the opportunity is immense. Europe's response over the coming

months will determine whether it can secure its future without reliance on American military support.