

The Geopolitics of Peace

Speech at European Parliament on February 19, 2025

by Professor Jeffrey D. Sachs,* USA

*(CH-S) In a much-acclaimed speech to EU parliamentarians at the invitation of MEP and German ex-diplomat Michael von der Schulenburg,** world-renowned economist Professor Jeffrey D. Sachs characterised the development of the war in Ukraine as a product of US foreign policy. He calls on the Europeans to emancipate themselves today and to shape an independent policy towards peace and economic prosperity. The "Swiss Standpoint" documents the full text of the speech¹ on its homepage – in three languages.*

Jeffrey Sachs has actively experienced the past four decades of US foreign policy from a leading position. He has never hesitated to use his extensive knowledge and convictions to promote humanity and common sense. This is what makes his speech so extraordinarily important.

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Introduction

Michael [von der Schulenburg], thank you so much, and thanks to all of you for the chance to be together and to think together. This is indeed a complicated and fast-changing time and a very dangerous one. So, we really need clarity of thought. I'm especially interested in our conversation, so I'll try to be as succinct and clear as I can be.

I've watched the events very close-up in Eastern Europe, the former Soviet Union, Russia and Ukraine, very closely for the last 36 years. I was an adviser to the Polish government in 1989, to President Gorbachev's economic team in 1990



Jeffrey D. Sachs addressing the EU Parliament on 19 February 2025. (Screenshot European Parliament)

and 1991, to President Yeltsin's economic team in 1991 to 1993, and to President Kuchma's economic team in Ukraine in 1993 to 1994. I helped introduce the Estonian currency.

I helped several countries in former Yugoslavia, especially Slovenia. After the Maidan, I was asked by the new government to come to Kyiv, and I was taken around the Maidan, and I learned a lot of things firsthand.

I've been in touch with Russian leaders for more than 30 years. I also know the American political leadership close-up. Our previous Secretary of Treasury, Janet Yellen, was my wonderful macroeconomics teacher 52 years ago. We have been friends for a half century. I know these people.

I say this because what I want to explain in my point of view is not second-hand. It's not ideology. It's what I've seen with my own eyes and experienced during this period. I want to share with you my understanding of the events that have befallen Europe in many contexts, and I'll include

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**Michael von der Schulenburg, born in 1948, is a former Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations. He worked and lived for 34 years in peace and development missions of the UN and briefly of the OSCE in many countries that were weakened and torn apart by wars, by conflicts with armed non-state actors and/or by foreign military interventions. These included long-term missions in Haiti, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Iran, Iraq and Sierra Leone, as well as shorter missions in Syria, Somalia, the Balkans, the Sahel and Central Asia. He published numerous articles on UN reforms, intrastate armed conflicts, Afghanistan, Iraq and Ukraine.

not only the Ukraine crisis, but also Serbia 1999, the wars in the Middle East, including Iraq, Syria, the wars in Africa, including Sudan, Somalia, Libya.

These are to a very significant extent the result of deeply misguided US policies. What I will say may well surprise you, but I speak from experience and knowledge of these events.

The Geopolitics of Peace

1) U.S. Foreign Policy

These are wars that the United States has led and caused. And this has been true for more than 30 years now. The United States came to the view, especially during 1990–91, and then with the end of the Soviet Union, that the US now runs the world, and that the US does not have to heed anybody's views, red-lines, concerns, security viewpoints, international obligations, or any UN framework.

I'm sorry to put it so plainly, but I do want you to understand.

I tried very hard in 1991 to get financial help for Gorbachev,² who I think was the greatest statesman of our modern time. I recently read the archived memo of the National Security Council discussion of my proposal on June 3, 1991, reading for the first time how the White House completely dismissed it, and essentially laughed off the table my plea for the US to help the Soviet Union with financial stabilization and with financial aid to make its reforms.

The memo documents that the US Government decided to do the very minimum to prevent disaster, but just the minimum.³ They decided that it's not the US job to help. Quite the contrary.⁴

When the Soviet Union ended in 1991, the view became even more exaggerated. And I can name chapter and verse, but the view was we [the US] run the show. *Cheney, Wolfowitz* and many other names that you will have come to know literally believed this is now a US world, and we will do as we want.

We will clean up from the former Soviet Union. We will take out any remaining Soviet-era allies. Countries like Iraq, Syria, and so forth will go. And we've been experiencing this foreign policy for now essentially 33 years.

Europe has paid a heavy price for this because Europe has not had any foreign policy during this period that I can figure out. No voice, no

unity, no clarity, no European interests, only American loyalty.

There were moments where there were disagreements and, I think, very wonderful disagreements. The last time of significance was 2003 in the lead-up to the Iraq war when France and Germany said we don't support the United States going around the UN Security Council for this war. That war was directly concocted by Netanyahu and his colleagues in the US Pentagon.⁵

I'm not saying that it was a link or mutuality. I'm saying it was a war carried out for Israel. It was a war that Paul Wolfowitz and *Douglas Feith* coordinated with Netanyahu. And that was the last time that Europe had a voice.

I spoke with European leaders then, and they were very clear, and it was quite wonderful to hear their opposition an unacceptable war. Europe lost its voice entirely after that, but especially in 2008.

What happened after 1991, and to bring us to 2008, is that the United States decided that unipolarity meant that NATO would enlarge somewhere from Brussels to Vladivostok, step by step.

2) NATO Expansion

There would be no end to eastward enlargement of NATO. This would be the US unipolar world. If you play the game of Risk as a child like I did, this is the US idea: to have the piece on every part of the board. Any place without a US military base is an enemy, basically. Neutrality is a dirty word in the US political lexicon.

Neutrality is perhaps the dirtiest word according to the US mindset. If you're an enemy, we know you're an enemy. If you are neutral, you are a subversive, because you're really against us, but just not telling us. You're only pretending to be neutral. So, this was indeed the mindset, and the decision was taken formally in 1994 when President Clinton signed off on NATO enlargement to the east.

You will recall that on February 7, 1990, *Hans-Dietrich Genscher* and *James Baker III* spoke with Gorbachev. Genscher gave a press conference afterwards where he explained that NATO will not move eastward.⁶

Germany and the US would not take advantage of the dissolution of the *Warsaw Pact*. Understand, please, that this commitment was made in a juridical and diplomatic context, not a

casual context. These commitments were core to the negotiations to end World War II that made way for German reunification.

An understanding was reached that NATO will not move one inch eastward.⁷ And it was explicit, and it is in countless documents. And just look up *National Security Archive* of George Washington University, and you can get dozens of documents.⁸

It's a website called "What Gorbachev Heard About NATO." Take a look, please, because everything you're told by the US about this promise is a lie, but the archives are perfectly clear.

So, the decision was taken by Clinton in 1994 to expand NATO all the way to Ukraine. This is a long-term US project. This is not due to one administration or another. This is a US government project that started more than 30 years ago. In 1997, *Zbigniew Brzezinski* wrote *The Grand Chessboard*, describing the NATO enlargement eastward.

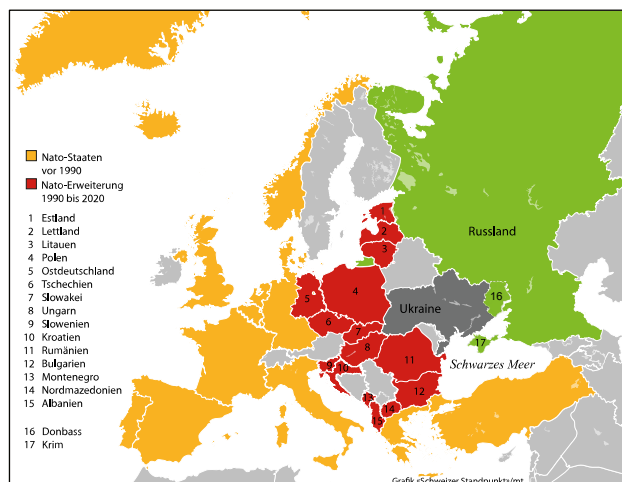
That book is not just the musings of Mr. Brzezinski. That is his presentation to the public of decisions *already made* by the United States government, which is how a book like this works. The book describes the eastward enlargement of Europe and of NATO as simultaneous and conjoined events. And there's a good chapter in that book that asks, what will Russia do as Europe and NATO expand eastward?

I knew Zbig Brzezinski personally. He was very nice to me. I was advising Poland, and he was a big help. He was also a smart man, and yet he got everything wrong in 1997.

In 1997, he wrote in detail why Russia could do nothing but accede to the eastward expansion of NATO and Europe.⁹ In fact, he says the eastward expansion of Europe and not just Europe, but NATO. This was a US plan, a project. And Brzezinski explains how Russia will never align with China. Unthinkable. Russia will never align with Iran.

According to Brzezinski, Russia has no vocation other than the European vocation. So, as Europe moves east, there's nothing Russia can do about it. So, says yet another American strategist. Is it any question why we're in war all the time? Because one thing about America is we always "know" what our counterparts are going to do, and we always get it wrong!

And one reason we always get it wrong is that in the non-cooperative game theory that the American strategists play, you don't actually talk



to the other side. You just know what the other side's strategy is. That's wonderful. It saves so much time. You simply don't need any diplomacy.

3) The Black Sea Strategy

So, this project began in earnest in 1994, and we have had a continuity of government policy for 30 years until maybe yesterday, perhaps.¹⁰ A thirty-year project. Ukraine and Georgia were the keys to the project. Why? Because America learned everything it knows from the British.

We are the wannabe British Empire. And what the British Empire understood in 1853, with *Mr. Palmerston*, excuse me, *Lord Palmerston* [together with *Napoleon III*], is that you surround Russia in the Black Sea, and you deny Russia access to the Eastern Mediterranean.

What you're watching is an American project to do the same in the 21st century. The US idea was that there would be Ukraine, Romania, Bulgaria, Turkey, and Georgia all in NATO, that would deprive Russia of any international status by blocking the Black Sea and essentially by neutralizing Russia as little more than a local power. Brzezinski is clear about this geography.

After Palmerston and before Brzezinski, there was of course *Halford Mackinder* in 1904: "Who rules East Europe commands the Heartland; who rules the Heartland commands the World-Island; who rules the World-Island commands the world."¹¹

I've known the presidents and/or their teams. Nothing changed much from *Clinton* to *Bush Jr.* to *Obama* to *Trump* to *Biden*. Maybe they got worse step by step. Biden was the worst in my view. Maybe this is also because he was not *compos mentis* for the last couple of years. I say that seriously, not as a snarky remark.

The American political system is a system of image. It's a system of media manipulation every day. It is a PR system. You could have a president that basically doesn't function and have that person in power for two years and run for reelection.

The one thing is he had to stand on a stage for 90 minutes by himself, and that was the end of it. Had it not been that glitch, he would have gone on to have his candidacy, whether he was sleeping after 4 PM in the afternoon or not. So, this is the reality. Everybody goes along with it. It's impolite to say what I'm saying because we don't speak the truth about almost anything in this world right now.

So, this project went on since the 1990s. Bombing Belgrade 78 straight days in 1999 was part of this project. Splitting apart that country when borders are "sacrosanct," aren't they? Except for Kosovo, that is. Borders are sacrosanct except when America changes them.

Breaking apart Sudan was another related US project. Consider the South Sudan rebellion. Did that just happen because South Sudanese rebelled? Or shall I give you the CIA playbook?

Let us please understand as grown-ups what this is about. Military campaigns are costly. They require equipment, training, base camps, intelligence, finance. That support comes from big powers. It doesn't come from local insurrections.

South Sudan did not defeat Sudan in a tribal battle. Breaking Sudan was a US project. I would go often to Nairobi and come across US military or Senators or others with a "deep interest" in Sudan's internal politics. That war was part of the game of US unipolarity.

4) U.S. Foreign Policy and NATO Expansion

And so, NATO enlargement, as you know, started in 1999 with Hungary, Poland, and the Czech Republic. Russia was extremely unhappy about it, but these were countries still far from Russia's border. Russia protested, but, of course, to no avail. Then George Bush Jr. came into office. When 9/11 occurred, President Putin pledged all support to the US. And then the US decided around September 20, 2001, that it would launch seven wars in five years!

You can listen to General Wesley Clark on video speak about that.¹² He was NATO's Supreme Commander in 1999. He went to the Pentagon around September 20, 2001. He was

handed a piece of paper explaining the prospect of seven US wars of choice. These were, in fact, Netanyahu's wars.

The US Government plan was partly to clean up [remove] old Soviet allies and partly to take out supporters of Hamas and Hezbollah.

Netanyahu's idea was and is that there will be one state, thank you, in all pre-1948 Palestine. Yes, only one state. It will be Israel. Israel will control all the territory from the Jordan River to the Mediterranean Sea. And if anyone objects, we will overthrow them.

Well, not Israel, exactly, but more specifically our friend, the United States. That's been US policy until this morning. We don't know whether it will change. Now the only wrinkle is that maybe the US will "own Gaza" [according to President Trump] instead of Israel owning Gaza.

Netanyahu's idea has been around at least for 25 years. It goes back to a document called "Clean Break" that Netanyahu and his American political team put together in 1996 to end the idea of the two-state solution. You can also find that document online.¹³

So, these are long-term US projects. It's wrong to ask, "Is it Clinton? Is it Bush? Is it Obama?" That's the boring way to look at American politics, as a day-to-day or year-to-year game. Yet that's not what American politics is.

After 1999, the next round of NATO enlargement came in 2004 with seven more countries: the three Baltic states, Romania, Bulgaria, Slovenia, and Slovakia. At this point, Russia was pretty upset.

This second-wave of NATO enlargement was a complete violation of the post-war order agreed at the time of German reunification. Essentially, it was a fundamental trick, or defection, of the US from a cooperative arrangement with Russia.

As everybody recalls, because we just had the *Munich Security Conference* (MSC) last week, President Putin went to the MSC in 2007 to say, "Stop, enough is enough." Of course, the US did not listen.¹⁴

In 2008, the United States jammed down Europe's throat its long-standing project to enlarge NATO to Ukraine and to Georgia. This is a long-term project. I listened to Mr. Saakashvili in New York City in the Spring of 2008, when he spoke at the *Council on Foreign Relations*. He told us that Georgia is in the heart of Europe and as such would join NATO. I walked out and called

my wife, and said, "This man's crazy; he's going to blow up his country."

A month later, a war broke out between Russia and Georgia, in which Georgia was defeated. The most recent events in Tbilisi are again not helpful for Georgia, with your MEPs going there to prod protests. That doesn't save Georgia; that gets Georgia destroyed, completely destroyed.

In 2008, as everybody knows, our former CIA director *William Burns*, who at the time was the US Ambassador to Russia, sent a long diplomatic cable back to Secretary of State *Condoleezza Rice*, which was famously entitled "Nyet means Nyet."¹⁵ Burns' message was that NATO enlargement was opposed by the entire Russian political class, not just President *Putin*.

We know about the cable only from *Julian Assange*. Believe me, not one word is told to the American people about anything of this by our government or our leading newspapers these days. So, we have Julian Assange to thank for the memo, which we can read in detail.

As you know, *Viktor Yanukovich* was elected as President of Ukraine in 2010 on the platform of Ukraine's neutrality. Russia had no territorial interests or designs in Ukraine at all.

I know. I was there off and on during these years. What Russia was negotiating during 2010 was a 25-year lease to 2042 for Sevastopol naval base. That's it. There were no Russian demands for Crimea, or for the Donbas. Nothing like that at all.

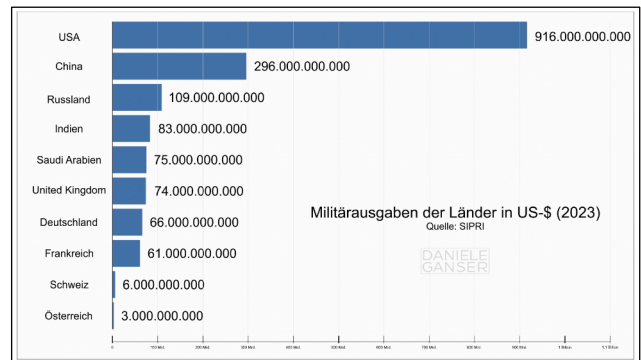
The idea that Putin is reconstructing the Russian empire is childish propaganda. Excuse me.

If anyone knows the day-to-day and year-to-year history, this is childish stuff. Yet childish stuff seems to work better than adult stuff.

So, there were no territorial demands at all before the 2014 coup. Yet the United States decided that Yanukovich must be overthrown because he favored neutrality and opposed NATO enlargement. It's called a regime change operation.

There have been around one hundred regime-change operations by the US since 1947, many in your countries [speaking to the MEPs] and many all over the world.¹⁶ That's what the CIA does for a living. Please know it. It's a very unusual kind of foreign policy.

In the American Government, if you don't like the other side, you don't negotiate with them, you try to overthrow them, preferably, covertly. If



it doesn't work covertly, you do it overtly. You always say it's not our fault. They're the aggressor. They're the other side.

They're "Hitler." That comes up every two or three years. Whether it's *Saddam Hussein*, whether it's *Assad*, whether it's *Putin*, that's very convenient. That's the only foreign policy explanation the American people are ever given.

Well, we're facing Munich 1938. We can't talk to the other side. They're evil and implacable foes. That's the only model of foreign policy we ever hear from our government and mass media. The mass media repeats it entirely because it's completely suborned by the US government.

5) The Maidan Revolution and Its Aftermath

Now in 2014, the US worked actively to overthrow Yanukovich. Everybody knows the phone call intercepted by my Columbia University colleague, Victoria Nuland, and the US ambassador, Peter Pyatt. You don't get better evidence. The Russians intercepted her call, and they put it on the Internet. Listen to it.¹⁷

It's fascinating. By doing that, they all got promoted in the Biden administration. That's the job. When the Maidan occurred, I was called soon after. "Professor Sachs, the new Ukrainian prime minister would like to see you to talk about the economic crisis." So, I flew to Kyiv, and I was walked around the Maidan. And I was told how the US paid the money for all the people around the Maidan, the "spontaneous" revolution of dignity.

Ladies and gentlemen, please, how did all those Ukrainian media outlets suddenly appear at the time of the Maidan? Where did all this organization come from? Where did all these buses come from? Where did all those people come from? Are you kidding? This is an organized effort.

And it's not a secret, except perhaps to citizens of Europe and the United States. Everyone else understands it quite clearly.

Then after the coup came the *Minsk agreements*, especially *Minsk II*, which, incidentally, was modeled on *South Tyrolean autonomy* for the ethnic Germans in Italy. The Belgians too can relate to Minsk II very well, as it called for autonomy and language rights of the Russian speakers of Eastern Ukraine. Minsk II was supported unanimously by the UN Security Council.¹⁸ Yet the United States and Ukraine decided it would not be enforced. Germany and France, the guarantors of the *Normandy process*, also let it be ignored.

This dismissal of Minsk II was another direct American unipolar action with Europe as usual playing a completely useless subsidiary role though it was guarantor of the agreement.

Trump won the 2016 election and then expanded arms shipments to Ukraine. There were many thousands of deaths in the shelling by Ukraine in the Donbas. There was no implementation of the Minsk II agreement.

Then Biden came into office in 2021. I hoped for better but was profoundly disappointed once again. I used to be a member of the Democratic Party. I now am a member of no party because both are the same anyway. The Democrats became complete warmongers over time, and there was not one voice in the party calling for peace. Just as with most of your parliamentarians, the same way.

At the end of 2021, Putin put on the table a last effort to reach a *modus operandi* with the US, in two security agreement drafts, one with Europe and one with the United States. He put the Russia-US draft agreement on the table on December 15, 2021.

Following that, I had an hour-long call with [National Security Advisor] *Jake Sullivan* in the White House, begging, "Jake, avoid the war. You can avoid the war. All the US has to do is say, 'NATO will not enlarge to Ukraine.'" And he said to me, "Oh, NATO's not going to enlarge to Ukraine. Don't worry about it."

I said, "Jake, say it publicly." "No. No. No. We can't say it publicly." I said, "Jake, you're going to have a war over something that isn't even going to happen?" He said, "Don't worry, Jeff. There will be no war."

These are not very bright people. I'm telling you, if I can give you my honest view, they're not very bright people. They talk to themselves. They don't talk to anybody else. They play game theory.

In noncooperative game theory, you don't talk to the other side. You just make your strategy. This is the essence of non-cooperative game theory. It's not negotiation theory. It's not peace-making theory. It is unilateral, noncooperative theory, if you know formal game theory.

That's what they play. That kind of game theory started [in application] at the *RAND Corporation*. That's what they still play. In 2019, there's a paper by RAND, "Extending Russia: Competing from Advantageous Ground".¹⁹

Incredibly, the paper, in the public domain, asks how the US should annoy, antagonize, and weaken Russia. That's literally the strategy. We're trying to provoke Russia, trying to make Russia break apart, perhaps have regime change, maybe unrest, maybe an economic crisis.

That's what you in Europe call your ally. So, there I was with my frustrating phone call with Sullivan, standing out in the freezing cold. I happened to be trying to have a ski day. "Oh, there'll be no war, Jeff."

We know what happened next: the Biden Administration refused to negotiate over NATO enlargement. The stupidest idea of NATO is the so-called open-door policy, based on Article Ten of the NATO Treaty (1949). NATO reserves the right to go where it wants, as long as the host government agrees, without any neighbor – such as Russia – having any say whatsoever.

Well, I tell the Mexicans and the Canadians, "Don't try it." You know, Trump may want to take over Canada. So, the Canadian Government could say to China, "Why don't you build a military base in Ontario?" I wouldn't advise it. The US would not say, "Well, it's an open door. That's Canada's and China's business, not ours." The US would invade Canada.

Yet grownups, including in Europe, in this Parliament, in NATO, in the *European Commission*, repeat the absurd mantra that Russia has no say in NATO enlargement. This is nonsense stuff. This is not even baby geopolitics. This is just not thinking at all. So, the Ukraine War escalated in February 2022 when the Biden Administration refused any serious negotiations.

6) The Ukraine War and Nuclear Arms Control

What was Putin's intention in the war? I can tell you what his intention was. It was to force Zelensky to negotiate neutrality. This happened within days of the start of the invasion. You

should understand this basic point, not the propaganda that's written about the invasion claiming that Russia's aim was to conquer Ukraine with a few tens of thousands of troops.

Come on, ladies and gentlemen. Please understand something basic. The idea of Russia's invasion was to keep NATO out of Ukraine. And what is NATO, really? It is the US military, with its missiles, its CIA deployments, and all the rest.

Russia's goal was to keep the US away from its border. Why is Russia so interested in this? Consider if China or Russia decided to have a military base on the Rio Grande or in the Canadian border, not only would the United States freak out; we'd have war within about ten minutes. When the Soviet Union tried this in Cuba in 1962, the world nearly ended in nuclear Armageddon.

All of this is gravely amplified because the United States unilaterally abandoned the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty in 2002 and ended the relative stability nuclear arms control framework by doing so. This is extremely important to understand.

The nuclear arms control framework is based, in large part, on trying to deter a first [decapitation] strike. The ABM Treaty was a critical component of that stability. The US unilaterally walked out of the ABM Treaty in 2002. This blew a Russian gasket.

So, everything I've been describing about NATO enlargement has occurred in the context of the US destruction of the nuclear framework. Starting in 2010, the US began to put in *Aegis* anti-ballistic missile systems in Poland and then later in Romania. Russia doesn't like that.

One of the issues on the table in December and January, December 2021, January 2022, was whether the United States claimed the right to put missile systems in Ukraine. According to former CIA analyst *Ray McGovern*, *Blinken* told *Lavrov* in January 2022 that the United States reserves the right to put missile systems in Ukraine.

That's, my dear friends, is your putative ally. And now the US wants to put intermediate missile systems in Germany. Remember that the United States walked out of the INF treaty in 2019. There is no nuclear arms framework right now.²⁰ Essentially, none.

When Zelensky said a few days after Russia's invasion that Ukraine was ready for neutrality, a peace agreement was in reach. I know the de-

tails of this because I talked to key negotiators and mediators in detail and have learned much from public pronouncements of others.

Shortly after the start of negotiations in March 2022, a document was exchanged between the parties that President Putin had approved, and that *Lavrov* had presented. This was being managed by the Turkish mediators. I flew to Ankara in the spring of 2022 to hear first-hand and in detail what happened in the mediation. The bottom-line is this: Ukraine walked away, unilaterally, from a near agreement.

7) The End of the Ukraine War

Why did Ukraine walk away from the negotiations?

Because the United States told them to and because the UK added icing to the cake by having *BoJo* [*Boris Johnson*] go to Kyiv in early April to Ukraine to make the same point. *Keir Starmer* turns out to be even worse, even more of a war-monger. It's unimaginable, but it is true.

Boris Johnson explained, and you can find it on the web, that what's at stake here is nothing less than Western hegemony! Not Ukraine but Western hegemony.

Michael von der Schulenburg and I met at the Vatican with a group of experts in Spring 2022, and we wrote a document explaining that nothing good can come out of continued war.²¹ Our group argued strenuously, but to no avail, that Ukraine should negotiate immediately, because delays will mean massive deaths, risk of nuclear escalation, and possibly an outright loss of the war.

I wouldn't want to change one word from what we wrote then. Nothing was wrong in that document. Since the US talked Ukraine out of the negotiations, perhaps one million Ukrainians have died or been severely wounded.

And American senators who are as nasty and cynical as imaginable say this is a wonderful expenditure of US money because no Americans are dying. It's the pure proxy war.

One of our senators nearby New York State, Connecticut's *Richard Blumenthal*, said this out loud. *Mitt Romney* said this out loud. It's the best money America can spend. No Americans are dying. It's unreal.

Now, just to bring us up to yesterday [18 February 2025], the US Ukraine Project has failed. The core idea of the project all along was that Russia would fold its hand. The core idea all along was Russia can't resist, just as *Zbigniew*

Brzezinski argued in 1997. The Americans thought the US surely has the upper hand.

The US will win because we're going to bluff them. The Russians are not really going to fight. The Russians are really going to mobilize. We'll deploy the economic "nuclear option" of cutting Russia out of SWIFT. That will destroy the economy.

Our sanctions will bring Russia to their knees. The HIMARS will do them in. The ATACMS, the F-16s, will do them in. Honestly, I've listened to this kind of talk for more than 50 years. Our national security leaders have spoken nonsense for decades.

I begged the Ukrainians: stay neutral. Don't listen to the Americans. I repeated to them the famous adage of *Henry Kissinger*, that to be an enemy of the United States is dangerous, but to be a friend is fatal. Let me repeat that for Europe: To be an enemy of the United States is dangerous, but to be a friend is fatal.

8) The Trump Administration

Let me end with a few words about President Donald Trump. Trump does not want Biden's losing hand. This is why Trump and President Putin are likely to agree to end the war. Even if Europe continues with its warmongering, it won't matter. The war is ending. So, please, get it out of your system. Please tell your colleagues. "It's over." It's over because Trump doesn't want to hold on to a loser. The one that will be saved by the negotiations taking place right now is Ukraine. The second is Europe.

Your stock market is rising in recent days because of the "horrible news" of negotiations and potential peace. I know this prospect of a negotiated peace has been met with sheer horror in these chambers, but this is the best news that you could get.

I've tried to reach out to some of the European leaders. I've said, don't go to Kyiv, go to Moscow. Negotiate with your counterparts. You're the European Union. You're 450 million people and a \$20 trillion economy. Act like it.

The European Union should be the main trading partner of Russia. Europe and Russia have complementary economies. The fit for mutually beneficial trade is very strong. By the way, if anyone would like to discuss how the US blew up Nord Stream, I'd be happy to talk about that too.

The Trump administration is imperialist at heart. Trump obviously believes that the great

powers dominate the world. The US will be ruthless and cynical, and yes, also vis-à-vis Europe. Don't go begging to Washington. That won't help. It would probably spur the ruthlessness. Instead, have a true European foreign policy.

So, I'm not saying that we're at the new age of peace, but we are in a very different kind of politics right now, a return to great power politics. Europe needs its own foreign policy, and not just a foreign policy of Russophobia. Europe needs a foreign policy that is realistic, understands Russia's situation, understands Europe's situation, understands what America is and what it stands for, and that tries to avoid Europe being invaded by the United States.

It's certainly not impossible that Trump's America will land troops in Greenland. I'm not joking, and I don't think Trump is joking. Europe needs a foreign policy, a real one. Europe needs something different from, "Yes, we'll bargain with Mr. Trump and meet him halfway." Do you know what that will be like? Give me a call afterwards.

Please have a European foreign policy. You're going to be living with Russia for a long time, so please negotiate with Russia. There are real security issues on the table both for Europe and Russia, but the bombast and the Russophobia is not serving your security at all. It's not serving Ukraine's security at all. This American adventure that you signed on to and for which you are now the lead cheerleader has contributed to around 1 million Ukrainian casualties.

9) On the Middle East and China

On the Middle East, incidentally, the US completely handed over foreign policy to Netanyahu 30 years ago. The Israel lobby dominates American politics. Please, have no doubt about it.

I could explain for hours how it works. It's very dangerous. I'm hoping that Trump will not destroy his administration, and far worse, the Palestinian people, because of Netanyahu, whom I regard as a war criminal who has been properly indicted by the ICC.²²

The only way for Europe to have peace on your borders with the Middle East is the two-state solution. There is only one obstacle to it, and that is the veto of the United States in the UN Security Council, at the behest of the Israel Lobby. So, if you want the EU to have some influence, tell the United States to drop the veto. In this the European Union would be together with around 160 other countries in the world.

The only ones that oppose a Palestinian state are basically the United States, Israel, Micronesia, Nauru, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Argentina, and Paraguay.²³

The Middle East is a place where the European Union could have a big geopolitical influence. Yet, Europe has gone silent about the JCPOA²⁴ and Iran and around half of Europe has gone silent over Israel's war crimes and blockade of the two-state solution.

Netanyahu's greatest dream in life is the war between the United States and Iran. And he's not given up. It's not impossible that a US-Iran War will also come. Yet Europe could stop it – if Europe has its own foreign policy.

I'm hoping that Trump will end Netanyahu's grip on American politics. Even if not, the EU can work with the rest of the world to bring peace to the Middle East.

Finally, let me just say with respect to China, China is not an enemy. China is merely a great success story. That's why it is viewed by the United States as an enemy, because China has a bigger economy than the United States (measured in international prices). The US resists reality. Europe should not do so. Let me repeat, China is no enemy and no threat. It is a natural partner with Europe in trade and in saving the global environment.

That's all. Many thanks.

Source: <https://www.other-news.info/edited-transcript-professor-jeffrey-sachs-the-geopolitics-of-peace/>, 24 February 2025

¹ Edited transcript of Professor Jeffrey Sachs' speech in the European Parliament at an event titled "The Geopolitics of Peace", hosted by former UN Assistant Secretary General and current BSW MEP Michael von der Schulenburg, on February 19, 2025. The transcript has been edited for clarity and annotated in footnotes and hyperlinks. The unedited transcript and audio version is here: <https://singjupost.com/transcript-jeffrey-sachs-on-the-geopolitics-of-peace-in-the-european-parliament/>

² Which became part of a project led by Prof. Graham Allison at the Harvard Kennedy School of Government with Gorbachev economic advisor Grigory Yavlinsky and published in the book "Window of Opportunity: The Grand Bargain for Democracy in the Soviet Union", Pantheon Books, 1991.

³ Richard Darman, at the OMB, put it this way. "In defining the U.S. interest, we need to be somewhat Machiavellian. What is the minimum amount necessary to mollify a regime with which we wish to work on other matters? In other words, what is the bare minimum to keep things moving. I don't believe we need to worry about the USSR's decomposition. If this is our internal understanding, then we can go ahead publicly." Later, Darman adds, "I want to seem serious while not fooling ourselves. We have enough ingredients already for a good PR pack-

age." (Emphasis in original)

⁴ See also my paper "How the Neocons Chose Hegemony Over Peace in the Early 1990s", available here: <https://www.jeffsachs.org/newspaper-articles/bfsmbpe4plx7c-c6lgxhf37lx249r22>

⁵ See Dennis Fritz, "Deadly Betrayal: The Truth about why the United States Invaded Iraq", OR Books, 2024. Link here: <https://orbooks.com/catalog/deadly-betrayal/>

⁶ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ogM0EjYbPRk>

⁷ It was an agreement, albeit verbal, as Gorbachev emphasized to the US and Germany the importance of the US- German pledge not to expand NATO eastward.

⁸ Many of the key documents are here <https://nsarchive.gwu.edu/briefing-book/russia-programs/2017-12-12/nato-expansion-what-gorbachev-heard-western-leaders-early> and here <https://nsarchive.gwu.edu/briefing-book/russia-programs/2018-03-16/nato-expansion-what-yeltsin-heard>

⁹ Here is what Brzezinski writes: "Russia's only real geostrategic option—the option that could give Russia a realistic international role and also maximize the opportunity of transforming and socially modernizing itself—is Europe. And not just any Europe, but the transatlantic Europe of the enlarging EU and NATO. Such a Europe is taking shape, as we have seen in chapter 3, and it is also likely to remain linked closely to America. That is the Europe to which Russia will have to relate, if it is to avoid dangerous geopolitical isolation." Brzezinski, Zbigniew. *The Grand Chessboard: American Primacy and Its Geostrategic Imperatives* (p. 118). Basic Books. 1997.

¹⁰ I refer to the Trump-Putin phone call of February 12, 2025 and the statements that followed in quick succession.

¹¹ Mackinder wrote in 1919 the book "Democratic Ideals and Reality", building upon his earlier work "The Geographical Pivot of History from 1904".

¹² See the interview of Former NATO Supreme Commander General Wesley Clark, in 2011 with "Democracy", where he was told by Pentagon official "we're going to attack and destroy the governments in 7 countries in five years— we're going to start with Iraq, and then we're going to move to Syria, Lebanon, Libya, Somalia, Sudan and Iran".

¹³ In 1996, Netanyahu and his American advisors issued the document "Clean Break: A New Strategy for Securing the Realm" with the Institute for Advanced Strategic and Political Studies. This new "clean break" strategy called upon Israel to reject the framework of "land for peace". This effectively advocated that Israel would not withdraw from the Palestinian occupied lands of 1967 in exchange for regional peace. Instead, Israel would continue with its policy of occupation until securing "peace for peace", by reshaping the Middle East to its liking. Redrawing the map of the region consisted of toppling governments that were opposed to Israel's dominance. Link here: https://www.dougfeith.com/docs/Clean_Break.pdf

¹⁴ On February 10, 2007, Russian President Vladimir Putin delivered a speech at the 43rd Munich Security Conference. The speech can be found here <http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/24034>

¹⁵ Ambassador William Burns' memo *Nyet Means Nyet: Russia's NATO Enlargement Redlines*. The memo can be

found here https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/08MO-SCOW265_a.html

- ¹⁶ Political scientist Lindsey O'Rourke documented 64 U.S. covert regime-change operations between 1947 and 1989, and concluded that "Regime change operations, especially those conducted covertly, have often led to prolonged instability, civil wars, and humanitarian crises in the affected regions." O'Rourke, "Covert Regime Change: America's Secret Cold War", 2018. Aser 1989, there is ample evidence of the CIA involved in Syria, Libya, Ukraine, Venezuela, and many other countries.
- ¹⁷ Link to the transcript of the leaked phone call between Assistant Secretary of State Victoria Nuland and the US Ambassador to Ukraine, Geoffrey Pyatt: <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-26079957>
- ¹⁸ The Minsk II agreement was endorsed by the United Nations Security Council through Resolution 2202, which was adopted unanimously on February 17, 2015. <https://press.un.org/en/2015/sc11785.doc.htm>
- ¹⁹ Link to RAND paper: https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR3063.html
- ²⁰ The United States formally withdrew from the *Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces* (INF) Treaty on August 2, 2019, following a six-month suspension period that began on February 2, 2019
- ²¹ The meeting at the Vatican was the Fraternal Economy Session on Jubilee 2025: Hope in the Signs of the Times. Link here: https://www.pass.va/content/dam/casinapioiv/pass/pdf-booklet/2024_booklet_fraternal_economy.pdf
- ²² "Benjamin Netanyahu, the Prime Minister of Israel, and Yoav Gallant, the Minister of Defence of Israel, bear criminal responsibility for the following war crimes and crimes against humanity committed on the territory of the State of Palestine." Link to ICC: <https://www.icc-cpi.int/news/statement-icc-prosecutor-karim-aa-khan-kc-applications-arrest-warrants-situation-state>
- ²³ The United Nations can end the Middle East conflict by welcoming Palestine as a member. Link to my article here: <https://www.aljazeera.com/opinions/2025/1/10/the-un-can-end-the-middle-east-conflict-by-welcoming-palestine-as-a-member>
- ²⁴ The nuclear deal with Iran, known as the *Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action* (JCPOA) on the Iranian nuclear programme, was endorsed by the UN Security Council on 20 July 2015 with Resolution 2231 (2015). On 31 July, the Council of the EU adopted the legislative acts that implemented the first of these provisions into EU law.