

## Europe and Canada Can't Afford to Wait for Trump's Plan - A Coalition of the Willing Must Secure Ukraine

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Instead of worrying about Donald Trump, Europeans and Canadians should follow the lead of [Donald Tusk](#). When the going gets tough, the tough get going. While many are anxiously waiting to see what Trump will do, Poland's Prime Minister has followed [expert advice](#) and called for a coalition of willing states to secure Ukraine and deter further Russian aggression.

It's not hard to imagine such a coalition, pioneered by the states that have been clearest about the Russian threat and the need to secure Ukraine to forge a stable Euro-Atlantic security order. Poland could be joined by the Baltic states, Nordic Countries, the UK, France, Canada and the Netherlands. The UK-led [Joint Expeditionary Force](#) could be extended to form a vanguard, but ultimately the format matters less than the actions they take. By changing policy and facts on the ground, the coalition would spur others to join them and embrace Europeans' and Canadians' power to defend ourselves and our interests, regardless of what the US does.

Here, we propose five things that a European-Canadian coalition of the willing should - and can - do:

- 1. Arm Ukraine to Win:** The coalition can get Ukraine what it needs to win: from their own stocks, procurement on the open market as well as, most cost effectively, by technology transfer to and investment in Ukraine's own [defence industry](#). The coalition's focus should be on war-winning capabilities including long-range precision strike (with no restrictions on targeting), electronic warfare, command and control, intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance capabilities, as well as emerging defence technologies that offset traditional Russian advantages, and core basics like artillery, 155mm ammunition, anti-air, anti-ship and anti-tank systems and munitions.
- 2. Seize ALL the frozen Russian assets to fund Ukraine's victory:** Confiscating frozen Russian assets is [economically feasible](#), [legal](#) under the international principle of [countermeasures](#) – and would establish a [financial deterrent](#) to future aggression. The 300bn USD of frozen assets is four times US military aid to Ukraine since 2022 and roughly 75 percent of total Western assistance to date. Seizing the full amount would be the best way to get Ukraine the money it needs to defend itself and seriously degrade Russian morale. Canada has ready legislation and most of these frozen assets are in Europe. The coalition states should seize those in their jurisdiction without delay, to set a clear precedent that other NATO allies can follow.
- 3. Extend Air Defence over Western Ukraine and Use It to Cover Coalition Troops on the Ground:** Air defence assets based in coalition countries or sent to states bordering Ukraine can provide a [shield over Western Ukraine](#) and take some of the pressure off Ukrainian air defence assets. Russian missiles and drones are flying toward our borders and we can't take chances. Coalition states could then use this shield to put their own troops on the ground, as proposed by [French President Emmanuel Macron](#), to help train Ukrainian forces, provide logistical and de-mining support and conduct [other tasks](#) that would demonstrate our commitment to Ukraine's victory and security.

4. **Provide Real Security Guarantees, Including Mutual Defence, to Shepherd Ukraine Into NATO:** Much as [Sweden and Finland](#) needed guarantees from strong partners while they waited for their NATO membership to be concluded, [so too does Ukraine](#). The coalition can commit, now, to mutual defence with Ukraine in the intervening period after the end of the current hostilities. It can use that time to help drive interoperability and coordination, accelerating Ukraine's path into the alliance, which it would strengthen. An unambiguous coalition commitment, backed up by growing capabilities, would deter future Russian attacks on Ukraine – and ourselves.
5. **Show We Can Stand Up for Ourselves:** The coalition can commit to each spend at least 3 percent of GDP on defence annually, and to joint procurement of the critical enablers that Europe and Canada lack, including through common borrowing. But the war, and our credibility, must be won on other fronts too. Europeans' and Canadians' economic advantage over Russia must be leveraged and strategically targeted to be meaningful. The coalition should move to tighten – and enforce - sanctions, but also work to defeat Russia economically, turning the screws to cripple its creaking war machine. [China](#) must be shown that its support for Russia's war is unacceptable and that it cannot buy us off.

Whatever the final composition of the Trump administration, and whatever policies or predilections it pursues, a coalition of willing states can set the Euro-Atlantic area on a more secure path. By taking the steps outlined here, Europeans and Canadians would show how we can pull our weight in NATO while simultaneously insuring against any decrease in US capability commitment in Europe. We can show how to be good allies as the US pivots to keep China in check, and demonstrate that deterring China in Taiwan begins with deterring Russia across Europe and defeating it in Ukraine.

Time is of the essence and so we, the signatories of this letter, urge European states and Canada to embrace their power, quickly form a coalition of the willing and, together, take these steps - for Ukraine's security and our own.

### Signatories

1. **Toomas Hendrik Ilves**, President of Estonia (2006-2016); Professor, Tartu University
2. **Egils Levits**, President of Latvia (2019-2023), European Court of Justice (2004-2019)
3. **The Rt. Hon Sir Ben Wallace**, fmr Secretary of State for Defence of the United Kingdom
4. **The Rt. Hon. Sir David Lidington**, fmr. UK Minister of State for Europe and Deputy to the Prime Minister. Currently Chair of the Royal United Services Institute (RUSI)
5. **Kajsa Ollongren**, former Minister of Defence of the Netherlands
6. **Dr Artis Pabriks**, fmr. Foreign and Defence Minister of Latvia
7. **Hon. Chris Alexander PC**, former Minister for Citizenship and Immigration, Parliamentary Secretary for National Defence and Canadian Ambassador to Afghanistan
8. **Lt.Gen (retd.) Ben Hodges**, fmr. Commander US Army Europe
9. **Air Marshal (retd.) Greg Bagwell**, Royal Air Force
10. **Air Marshal (retd.) Edward Stringer**, Royal Air Force
11. **Maj. Gen. (retd.) Mick Ryan AM**, fmr. Commandant, Australian Defence College
12. **Margaret Atwood**, Writer
13. **Prof. Eliot Cohen**, former Counsellor of the Department of State (USA, 2007-2009)
14. **Dr. Anna Wieslander**, Director for Northern Europe, Atlantic Council & Chair of the Board, ISDP

15. **Garry Kasparov**, Founder of the Renew Democracy Initiative and fmr World Chess Champion
16. **Dr Thomas Enders**, President, German Council on Foreign Relations (DGAP), Berlin
17. **François Heisbourg**, Special Advisor, Fondation pour la Recherche Stratégique, Paris
18. **Prof. Phillips O'Brien**, University of St. Andrews
19. **Lt.Col (retd.) Dr Alexander Vindman**, fmr US Army and National Security Council
20. **Prof. Katarzyna Pisarska**, Chair of the Warsaw Security Forum & the Pulaski Foundation
21. **Prof. Nathalie Tocci**, Director, Istituto Affari Internazionali (IAI), fmr special advisor to EU HRVP
22. **Žygmantas Pavilionis MP**, Deputy Speaker of the Lithuanian Parliament, and Lithuanian Ambassador to the US (2010-15)
23. **Marko Mihkelson MP**, Chair of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Estonian Parliament
24. **Prof. Stephen Gethins MP**, University of St Andrews and UK House of Commons
25. **Mr Alex Vanopslagh MP**, Chair of the Liberal Alliance Party, Denmark
26. **Lia Quartapelle MP**, Partito Democratico, Italian Chamber of Deputies
27. **The Hon. Senator Ratna Omidvar**, Senator for Ontario, Senate of Canada
28. **Rihards Kols MEP**, Committee on Foreign Affairs, European Parliament & fmr Chair of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Latvian parliament (2018-24)
29. **Dr. Ivars Ijabs MEP**, Industry, Energy & Research Committee & Delegation for US Relations, European Parliament
30. **Prof. Marlene Wind**, Professor of Politics & Law, University of Copenhagen & Special Advisor to EU HRVP
31. **Roman Waschuk**, fmr. Canadian Ambassador to Serbia and to Ukraine
32. **Adam Kinzinger**, former member, US House of Representatives
33. **André Gattolin**, former French Senator
34. **Viola von Cramon-Taubadel**, former Member of the European Parliament, Germany
35. **Edward Lucas**, CEPA Senior Fellow & Columnist, The Times
36. **Roland Paris**, Professor, University of Ottawa & fmr foreign policy advisor to Canada's Prime Minister
37. **John Sipher**, fmr. CIA clandestine service & Nonresident Senior Fellow, Atlantic Council
38. **Dr Benjamin Tallis**, Director, Democratic Strategy Initiative, Berlin
39. **Dr Nona Mikhelidze**, Senior Fellow, EU, Politics and Institutions (EU and Eastern Neighbourhood) Global Actors (Russia), Istituto Affari Internazionali (IAI)
40. **Paul Mason**, Journalist and Author
41. **Aaron Gasch Burnett**, Fellow and Project Manager, Democratic Strategy Initiative, Berlin
42. **Jacob Kaarsbo**, Independent Security Policy Advisor and former Danish intelligence officer.
43. **Dr Edward Hunter Christie**, Senior Research Fellow Finnish Institute of International Affairs
44. **Rosemary Thomas**, fmr. British Ambassador to Belarus
45. **Nicolas Tenzer**, guest professor at Sciences Po Paris, author of Our War: Crime and Oblivion
46. **Prof. Maximilian Terhalle**, Visiting Scholar, Hoover Institution, Stanford University
47. **Minna Ålander**, Research Fellow, Finnish Institute of International Affairs (FIIA)
48. **Prof Carlo Masala**, University of the Bundeswehr, Munich.
49. **Dr Gustav Gressel**, Senior Fellow European Council on Foreign Relations, Berlin
50. **Fredrik Wesslau**, Distinguished Policy Fellow, Stockholm Centre for Eastern European Studies
51. **James Nixey**, Director of the Russia and Eurasia Programme, Chatham House
52. **Dr Andreas Fulda**, Associate Professor, University of Nottingham

53. **Ian Bond**, Deputy Director, Centre for European Reform
54. **James Sherr OBE**, International Centre for Defence Studies, Tallinn
55. **Jonathan Berkshire Miller**, Director of Foreign Affairs, National Security & National Defence, Macdonald Laurier Institute
56. **Terry Virts**, Colonel USAF (retd.) Former Astronaut and ISS Commander
57. **Denver Riggelman**, fmr member, US House of Representatives & fmr US Air Force intelligence officer
58. **Stewart McDonald**, former MP for Glasgow South, former SNP spokesperson for defence
59. **Dr Jochen Kleinschmidt**, Chair of International Politics, TU Dresden
60. **Dr Emma Salisbury**, Senior Fellow, Council on Geostrategy
61. **Ed Arnold**, Senior Research Fellow for European Security RUSI
62. **Michael Weiss**, Investigative Journalist and Author
63. **Alex Finley** (pen name), Author and CIA (retd.)
64. **Ed Bogan**, CIA (retd.)
65. **Marc Polymeropoulos**, CIA (retd.)
66. **Dr Ruth Deyermund**, King's College London
67. **Dr Balkan Devlen**, Transatlantic Program Director & Senior Fellow, Macdonald-Laurier Institute
68. **Dr Jan-Willem Roepert**, Lt.Col (ret.) Bundeswehr & Non-Resident Senior Fellow, Democratic Strategy Initiative, Berlin
69. **Dr Alexander Lanoszka**, Associate Professor, University of Waterloo
70. **Dr Benjamin L. Schmitt**, Senior Fellow, University of Pennsylvania; Associate, Harvard-Ukrainian Research Institute
71. **Dr Pierre Haroche**, Assoc Prof. European & International Politics, Université Catholique de Lille
72. **Dr Matthew Ford**, Associate Professor in War Studies, Swedish Defence University, Stockholm
73. **Dan Kaszeta**, Fellow of the Royal Historical Society
74. **Dr Ian Garner**, Assistant Professor, Pilecki Institute, Warsaw
75. **Alun Davies MS**, Member of the Senedd/ Welsh Assembly
76. **Mick Antoniw MS**, Member of the Senedd/ Welsh Assembly, fmr Counsel General Wales
77. **Prof. Richard Whitman**, Professor, University of Kent, Canterbury
78. **Richard Shimooka**, Senior Fellow, Macdonald-Laurier Institute, Canada
79. **Dr Andreas Umland**, Stockholm Centre for East European Studies