

## Un'iniziativa per la sicurezza europea

### Report finale del progetto realizzato dall'Ufficio di Roma dello European Council on Foreign Relations

Il progetto è stato realizzato attraverso le seguenti attività:

- 1) Un evento pubblico a Roma, dal titolo **Preventing War in Europe: Swift Action for Peace**, svoltosi in data 14 ottobre 2025, con 70 partecipanti a livello complessivo provenienti dall'Italia e dall'Europa (lista dei partecipanti e agenda a seguire);
- 2) **Nota finale** dell'incontro (a seguire)

L'evento è stato organizzato dall'Ufficio di Roma di ECFR con il sostegno del Ministero degli Affari esteri della Cooperazione internazionale, Fondazione Compagnia di San Paolo, Fondazione CSF e in partnership con Formiche.

Tra i partecipanti: **Ryan Benitez**, Chief Commercial Officer, NATO DIANA; **Carl Bildt**, Già Primo Ministro e già Ministro degli Esteri della Svezia; Co-chair del Consiglio ECFR; **Teresa Coratella**, Vicedirettrice dell'ufficio di Roma e Policy Fellow, ECFR; **Marta Dassù**, Senior Director Europe, The Aspen Institute; Editor-in-Chief, Aspenia; Membro del Board ECFR; Già Vice Primo Ministro degli Affari Esteri (2011-2014); **Enrico Della Gatta**, Vice Presidente, Geopolitical Studies & Advocacy, Fincantieri; **Flavia Giacobbe**, Direttrice Formiche Magazine & Airpress; Consigliera ECFR; **Gustav Gressel**, Senior Lecturer & Researcher, National Defence Academy in Vienna; **Mark Leonard**, Direttore e Co-fondatore, ECFR; **Jana Kobzova**, Co-Direttrice del Programma European Security e Senior Policy Fellow, ECFR; Già Consigliera Diplomatica del Presidente della Slovacchia (2019-2024); **Mustafa Nayyem**, Responsabile delle relazioni con il governo, GTX LLC; Responsabile dell'Agenzia Statale per la Ricostruzione e lo Sviluppo delle Infrastrutture dell'Ucraina (2023-2024); **Nicu Popescu**, Distinguished Policy Fellow e Co-Direttore, ECFR Programma European Security; già Vice Primo Ministro e Ministro degli Affari Esteri e dell'Integrazione Europea della Moldavia (2021-2024); **Jana Puglierin**, Direttrice dell'ufficio di Berlino e Senior Policy Fellow, ECFR; **Simonas Šatūnas**, Capo di Gabinetto del Commissario Europeo per la Difesa e lo Spazio Andrius Kubilius, Commissione Europea.

Per il Maeci, ha partecipato **Alessio Nardi**, Consigliere del Ministro degli Affari Esteri su Sicurezza, Giustizia, Cooperazione e Politiche di Sviluppo.



Fondazione  
Compagnia  
di San Paolo



In partnership with  **formiche**

## Preventing War in Europe: Swift Action for Peace

**Rome, 14 October 2025**

Spazio Vittoria, Via Vittoria Colonna, 11, 00193 Rome

**09:00-9:30 Welcome Coffee**

**09:30-09:45 A Dialogue with Carl Bildt**, Former Prime Minister and Former Foreign Minister of Sweden;  
Co-chair of ECFR's Council

- Chair: **Flavia Giacobbe**, Director, Formiche Magazine and Airpress; ECFR Council Member

**09:45-11:00 Panel 1: Bringing Peace Back to Europe**

*What role can Europe play in shaping the end of the war and the post-war order? Which political and strategic capabilities must the EU strengthen to succeed? How can we make European action for peace faster and more agile? This panel will explore critical gaps that risk undermining European security and discuss concrete steps to prevent future conflicts. We will also examine the evolving role of the transatlantic alliance and the transformation of NATO cooperation.*

- Speakers:
  - **Marta Dassù**, Editor-in-Chief, Aspenia; Senior Director Europe, The Aspen Institute; ECFR Board Member; Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Italy (2011-2014)
  - **Gustav Gressel**, Senior Lecturer & Researcher, National Defence Academy in Vienna
  - **Alessio Nardi**, Advisor of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Italy on Security, Justice, Cooperation, and Development Policies
  - **Simonas Šatūnas**, Head of Cabinet of Commissioner for Defence and Space Andrius Kubilius, European Commission
- Chair: **Mark Leonard**, Director and Co-founder, ECFR



Fondazione  
Compagnia  
di San Paolo



In partnership with  **formiche**

## **11:00-12:15 Panel 2: Peace Through Strength: Societal, Economic and Technological Needs for Europe's Defence**

*The war in Ukraine is a stark reminder that Europe must learn hard lessons to assume real responsibility for its own security. This panel focuses on the military and non-military dimensions of European defence, highlighting the vital role of technological innovation and rapid response in modern conflict. How can the EU accelerate decision-making and crisis management? What does the battlefield teach us about the necessity of staying ahead in the tech race, both to deter adversaries and to support allies? We will explore timely solutions which could transform Europe's defence posture and ensure it is prepared for the challenges ahead.*

- **Speakers:**
  - **Ryan Benitez**, Chief Commercial Officer, NATO DIANA
  - **Enrico Della Gatta**, Vice President, Geopolitical Studies & Advocacy, Fincantieri
  - **Jana Kobzova**, Co-Director of the European Security Programme and Senior Policy Fellow, ECFR; Diplomatic Advisor to the President of Slovakia (2019-2024)
  - **Mustafa Nayyem**, Head of Government Relations, GTX LLC; Head of the State Agency for Restoration and Infrastructure Development of Ukraine (2023-2024)
  - **Jana Puglierin**, Head of Berlin office and Senior Policy Fellow, ECFR
- **Chair: Teresa Coratella**, Deputy Head of Rome office and Policy Fellow, ECFR

**12:15-12:30 Concluding remarks by Nicu Popescu**, Co-Director of the European Security Programme and Distinguished Policy Fellow, ECFR; Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs and European Integration of Moldova (2021-2024)



*With thanks to*

*for kindly supporting this initiative*



Fondazione  
Compagnia  
di San Paolo



In partnership with  **formiche**

## Preventing War in Europe: Swift Action for Peace

**Rome, 14 October 2025**

Spazio Vittoria, Via Vittoria Colonna, 11, 00193 Rome

### Confirmed Participants

1. **Emiliano Alessandri**, Board Member, Fondazione CSF
2. **Petra Bartekova**, Political Office, Slovak Embassy in Rome
3. **Ryan Benitez**, Chief Commercial Officer, NATO Diana
4. **Davide Bergami**, Advisor of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Italy
5. **Joahn Berglund**, Deputy Ambassador, Swedish Embassy in Rome
6. **Luiza Bialasiewicz**, Professor of Political Geography, Ca' Foscari University of Venice
7. **Carl Bildt**, Former Sweden's Prime Minister (1661-1664) and Minister for Foreign Affairs (2006-2014)
8. **Vito Borrelli**, Field Officer at Commission Representation in Rome, European Commission
9. **Lorenzo Maria Castelli**, Junior Fellow, IAI
10. **Ludovica Castelli**, Project Manager, Nonproliferation and Disarmament Programme, IAI
11. **Paola Chiarelli**, Institutional Affairs, Intesa Sanpaolo
12. **Sibeles Chiari**, External Relations and Partnerships Associate, International Development Law Organization (IDLO)
13. **Andrea Cirelli**, Graduate student, University of Bologna
14. **Teresa Coratella**, Deputy Head of Rome Office and Policy Fellow, ECFR
15. **Valerio Cucci**, External Affairs, Airbus
16. **Alfonso Da Pozzo**, Student, SIOI
17. **Marta Dassù**, Editor-in-Chief, Aspenia; Senior Director Europe, The Aspen Institute; ECFR Board Member; Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Italy (2011-2014)
18. **Enrico Della Gatta**, Vice President, Geopolitical Studies & Advocacy, Fincantieri
19. **Giuseppe Dentice**, Analyst, Istituto di Studi Politici S. Pio V
20. **Rita Duca**, Head of Global Security Section, Federal Department of Foreign Affairs of Switzerland
21. **Rachael Evans**, Student, Università Cattolica; Member, WIIS Italy



*With thanks to*

*for kindly supporting this initiative*



Fondazione  
Compagnia  
di San Paolo



In partnership with  **formiche**

22. **Giulia Ferraro**, Project Manager, Agency for Peacebuilding
23. **Jon Elvedal Fredriksen**, Director for Security Policy, Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs
24. **Fabiola Garello**, Private Office of the Minister, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Italy
25. **Massimo Gaudina**, Special Advisor, European Commission; European Training Foundation
26. **Flavia Giacobbe**, Director, Formiche Magazine and Airpress; ECFR Council Member
27. **Marija Golubeva**, Henrik Ederlein Fellow, Hertie School; former Latvian Minister of Interiors
28. **Gustav Gressel**, Senior Lecturer s Researcher, National Defence Academy in Vienna
29. **Wiktoria Kaminska**, Marketing and Communications Officer, Luiss Women in International Affairs
30. **Jana Kobzova**, Senior Policy Fellow and Co-Director, ECFR European Security Programme; Diplomatic Advisor to the President of Slovakia (2016-2024)
31. **Anna Kuchenbecker**, Senior Director for Partnerships and Programmes, ECFR
32. **Mark Leonard**, Director and Co-Founder, ECFR
33. **Riccardo Leoni**, Journalist, Formiche
34. **Leo Litra**, Visiting Fellow, ECFR
35. **Federica Mangiameli**, Programme Manager and Policy Fellow, Future of Security Programme, GLOBSEC
36. **Tiziano Marino**, Senior Analyst, Geopolitics s EU Affairs, Deloitte
37. **Karolina Muti**, Senior Researcher, Defence, Security and Space Programme, IAI
38. **Thibault Muzergues**, Political Director, Shared Ground
39. **Alisa Muzergues**, Programme Lead – Ukraine, International Development Law Organization (IDLO)
40. **Alessio Nardi**, Advisor of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Italy on Security, Justice, Cooperation and Development Policies
41. **Mustafa Nayyem**, Head of Government Relations, GTX LLC; Head of the State Agency for Restoration and Infrastructure Development of Ukraine (2023-2024)
42. **Riccardo Pennisi**, Editor, Aspen Institute Italia
43. **Filippo Perticara**, Student, Università Roma Tre
44. **Federico Petrangeli**, Head of Foreign policy and Defence office, Servizio Studi del Senato della Repubblica
45. **Magdalena Piecuch Kesha**, Diplomat, Polish Embassy



*With thanks to*

*for kindly supporting this initiative*



In partnership with  **formiche**

46. **Lorenzo Pili**, Institutional Affairs, Intesa Sanpaolo
47. **Nicu Popescu**, Distinguished Policy Fellow and Co-Director, ECFR European Security Programme; Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Moldova (2021- 2024)
48. **Umberto Profazio**, Associate Fellow, IISS
49. **Jana Puglierin**, Head of Berlin office and Senior Policy Fellow, ECFR
50. **Rosaria Puglisi**, Visiting Fellow, IAI
51. **Giovanni Riva**, Senior Reporter, REDD Intelligence
52. **Alberto Rizzi**, Policy Fellow, ECFR
53. **Emanuele Rossi**, Analyst, Formiche
54. **Alberto Rossi**, Geopolitical Affairs Specialist, Iveco Group
55. **Nicolò Russo Perez**, Director, Fondazione CSF; ECFR Council Member
56. **Pietro Sala**, Pan European Fellow, ECFR
57. **Simonas Satunas**, Head of Cabinet of Commissioner for Defence and Space Andrius Kubilius, European Commission
58. **Jacek Siewiera**, Head of the National Security Bureau of Poland (2022- July 2025); ECFR Council Member
59. **Maria Simeonova**, Head of Sofia Office, ECFR
60. **Martin Sklenar**, Senior Advisor DGA-Albright Stonebridge Group; Minister of Defence of Slovakia (May-October 2023)
61. **Leonardo Oto Tagliamonte**, Public Affairs, Thales Alenia Space Italia
62. **Fabio Tambone**, Deputy Head of Consumers Department, ARERA
63. **Vessela Tcherneva**, Deputy Director, ECFR
64. **Sinan Ülgen**, Chair, Centre for Economics and Foreign Policy Studies; Senior Fellow, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace; ECFR Council Member
65. **Paolo Valentino**, Columnist, Corriere della Sera
66. **Gabrielè Valodskaitė**, Program Coordinator, ECFR European Security Programme
67. **Arturo Varvelli**, Head of Rome office and Senior Policy Fellow, ECFR
68. **Angelica Vascotto**, Post-doc Researcher, University of Padua
69. **Katrine Westgaard**, Research and Programme Assistant, ECFR European Power Programme
70. **Angela Ziccardi**, National Office, Assistant, ECFR Rome office



*With thanks to*

*for kindly supporting this initiative*



Fondazione  
Compagnia  
di San Paolo



In partnership with  **formiche**

## **FINAL REPORT**

### **Preventing War in Europe: Swift Action for Peace**

Rome, 14 October 2025

#### **INTRODUCTION**

Europe is fighting a war on two fronts: the war in Ukraine and the hybrid attacks on the European continent. Europeans agree that more needs to be done to ensure the security of the continent but remain divided on what the ideal outcome in Ukraine is, and where to concentrate limited resources to combat Russian incursions. Also, Europe is still not prepared for the conflict to spill over into its own borders. This became clear after the drone incursions into Polish, Danish and Norwegian airspace in September 2025. Europeans should look to the Ukrainians, who have managed to adopt their entire economy and societies to be prepared for war, and start taking steps in the same direction to deter against Russia. But consensus within Europe on these measures is fractured.

#### **PANEL 1 – Bringing Peace Back to Europe**

The frontline of European security lies in Ukraine. Yet the situation on this frontline is grim. Russia continues to ramp up their military production capabilities and attacks despite the battered state of their military and economy alike. According to experts from Ukraine, as of October 2025, Russia is preparing to have the capabilities to use between 1,000-1,5000 drones per night during an attack. Thus, Putin does not show any signs of slowing down and experts are doubtful around how long Europeans can sustain their support to Ukraine on the battlefield.

It became clear from our discussions in Rome that Europe is divided on what the path forward for support to Ukraine should be. It was briefly mentioned that frozen assets could be mobilized to continue the financial flow in the short-term, but most of the debate centered around an eventual ceasefire. Perhaps most influenced by President Trump's push for a "stop to the killing" and his approach at the Alaska summit, there seemed to be more willingness to discuss sitting down at the table with Putin than before. In fact, one of the speakers emphasized that military equipment to Ukraine will not last forever and that there is an urgent need for dialogue with Russia to achieve peace. The proposed elements to persuade Putin to come to the table were 1) partial dismissal of sanctions and 2) guarantee of non-entrance of Ukraine to NATO (though EU membership would remain on the table). He saw discussions with Putin as



*With thanks to*

*for kindly supporting this initiative*



Fondazione  
Compagnia  
di San Paolo



In partnership with  **formiche**

more feasible because Russia had been weakened sufficiently by economic sanctions. This opinion was not shared by all speakers.

Another Italian expert fought the perception that Italians writ large are ready for negotiations with Putin to commence. Instead, Europe needs to establish a credible deterrence and defence capability first before starting negotiations. However, this Italian representative also agreed that Ukraine should not enter NATO. It is worth remembering that the discussion took place less than a week before Trump announced his plans to meet Putin in Europe to end the war in Ukraine. Since then, leaders of many European nations, including Prime Minister Meloni, have supported Trump's position to end the fighting in Ukraine along the current frontlines to be the basis for negotiations with Putin.

If there is an end to the war in Ukraine, then Europeans will need to continue to provide ample support to Kyiv. The Ukrainian army will likely be forced to demobilize as part of a peace-deal and it will be up to Europeans to insert a credible support force. Europeans may be able to sustain this support but providing a European backstop with air or maritime support will require a sustained ramp-up of the European defence industry. EU member states are still struggling to reach joint defence procurement targets, although there is hope that SAFE instruments will give the necessary signal for defence industries to produce.

Critical capability gaps will remain also if European defence industry invest in the “wrong” equipment and will incur a massive cost for Ukraine and Europe. For example, using EU artillery for 5 minutes on the battlefield costs between 180k-450k USD versus using Ukrainian technology and drones for 5 minutes costs 3,000 USD. Another point of contention would be if Europeans also deploy troops in Ukraine as these militaries are facing a manpower shortage. If Europe's limited number of troops are deployed in Ukraine this will diminish any credible European deterrent for the rest of the continent. Thus, if a peace deal was negotiated now, Europeans may not be able to ensure a sustainable peace for Ukraine nor the entire European continent. If this is the case, there will be nothing stopping another war from breaking out.

## **PANEL 2: Peace Through Strength: Societal, Economic and Technological Needs for Europe's Defence**

Europe is already facing an entirely different type of war. Russia is launching hybrid attacks against the continent on a regular basis. This goes beyond the drone incursions observed along NATO's North-Eastern flank, it also encompasses methodology like election interference (via sophisticated mis and disinformation campaigns), GPS jamming of commercial aircrafts, as well as via cryptocurrency manipulation to fund proxies and destabilise European economies, to name a few. Thus, it is a fallacy for



*With thanks to*

*for kindly supporting this initiative*



Fondazione  
Compagnia  
di San Paolo



In partnership with  **formiche**

Europe to continue to view Russia as a problem that can be solved or go away with time. This view ultimately hampers Europe's ability to respond and win this war.

The drone incursions in September 2025 have pointed out the chinks in Europe's armor. Though Europeans may soon have the technology and capabilities to respond to these incursions, they are already too late. If Europeans continue to prepare for today's war as opposed to tomorrow's, then they will always be on the backfoot against Putin's Russia. Europe must learn to react to these crises in a similar fashion to the Ukrainians. For example, the Ukrainians are now producing 8 drones per second to defend their territory. However, these shifts do not take place overnight as mechanisms meant to speed up innovation and procurement, like NATO DIANA, take a while to be established and are oftentimes hindered by political, social, and economic considerations.

Many countries in Europe are facing political and economic upheaval. On several occasions, Italy was praised as the most stable government in Europe, especially by representatives from Germany and the United Kingdom. Yet, Italians themselves noted that this stability did not mean that Rome was always capable to lead nor that they would be impermeable to foreign influence. There was also a palpable fear that domestic shifts, such as change of political parties in key countries like France, would undermine Europe's future security. These domestic shifts are particularly important in terms of hybrid warfare as EU member states want to be in the driver's seat of how they respond to these threats and thus do not cooperate as well with one another.

The lack of cohesion between EU member states on how to respond to Russia's hybrid warfare is also informed by responses from the public. Countries along NATO's Northern and Eastern flank have begun preparing their societies by sending pamphlets that clearly state Europe is at war. This same type of preparedness document in Germany does not mention war until the third page, and such a pamphlet was not prepared in Italy. The lack of unity from within the EU on how to respond to the threat Russia poses has also worsened with the new U.S. administration.

Setting aside the Trump administration's goal to undermine European unity themselves, the biggest threat is that U.S. domestic policy is directly weakening Europe's ability to fight this second war. Europe has been overly dependent on the United States' intelligence services and with Tulsi Gabbard as the director of the National Intelligence Service, Europeans are being indirectly impacted by the lack of coordination on detecting and responding to subversive operations by Russia and other malign actors. If Europe does not step up in this regard, then the second war will already be lost.



*With thanks to*

*for kindly supporting this initiative*



In partnership with  **formiche**

## CONCLUSION

Amidst this two-front battle, Europeans cannot afford to hope for the best anymore. The continent needs to present a unified front on support to Ukraine and continue to invest in the necessary capabilities to be able to ensure the continent's security. Unfortunately, a strong level of division and war fatigue emerging across the alliance was emphasized during the conference, but this should serve as an important trigger to ensure that Europe does not give up the fights before they are won. Ultimately, Europe's future depends on acknowledging the reality of two simultaneous wars: one raging in the open kill zone of Ukraine, and another waged invisibly from within, against its very unity and values.



*With thanks to*

*for kindly supporting this initiative*