CEAFE — Centro de Estudios y Análisis sobre el Futuro de Europa

WORLD

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- **Section:** World / Actualidad
- **Window covered:** 15 November 2026, 15:00 Europe/Madrid (14:00 UTC) to 16 November 2026, about 05:10 Europe/Madrid (the end of the previous brief to this run).
- **Compiled from:** the CEAFE World section brief, the shared logs and @F_CEAFE posts.

Ukraine peace talks: Europe's "E5 + EU" team takes shape as Russia tests whether it gets a seat

European leaders meeting in Dublin on 13 November named Europe's team for any Russia–Ukraine talks.

It is made up of the E5 of the Coalition of the Willing (France, Germany, Italy, Poland and the UK, at national-security-adviser level) plus the European Commission and the European Council, "in full coordination with NATO" (António Costa, as reported by Agence Europe, Euronews and Kyiv Independent). On the evening of 15 November Ursula von der Leyen said she had discussed the peace talks with Finland's President Alexander Stubb, and that "Europe will closely engage in this process through the E5 + EU format", while keeping "maximum support for Ukraine and maximum pressure on Russia". Former Commissioner Thierry Breton objected that leaders had named "7 representatives" for the talks "in place of the one provided for by the treaties". A Reuters podcast post says Zelenskyy has stated that US negotiators floated the idea of Kyiv ceding Donbas in return for NATO membership. UK Defence Secretary Wes Streeting answered that "Russia is in no position to dictate policy" (Sky News) and said Britain's nuclear deterrent is "not up for negotiation" as HMS Vengeance came home from what the Daily Mail called a record-length patrol. EU foreign ministers meet in Brussels today (16 Nov) with Ukrainian FM Andrii Sybiha. According to Ireland's foreign ministry, the meeting will adopt 113 new sanctions listings.

Russia's side: TASS reported von der Leyen's statement as "European countries are seeking a role" in the talks. It also gave space to a US op-ed (The American Conservative) arguing that "Russia has, in fact, won". The Kremlin had earlier said it first wanted to understand Europe's "real intentions" (AFP, quoted by Kyiv Post). @F_CEAFE reposted a post mocking the line "Russia must have no seat at the table" as "European diplomacy in the age of incompetent warmongers" (a quote of Estonian MP @markomihkelson).

Why it matters for Europe. Europe is finally at the table, but as an ad hoc group of five capitals (one of them, the UK, outside the EU) plus two institutions, with the High Representative left out. Breton's point is CEAFE's: the treaties already provide a single EU voice. A continent of 27 split into national envoys is

easier to divide, and harder for Washington or Moscow to take seriously. Streeting's "not up for negotiation" deterrent rests on US-supplied Trident II D5 missiles, a reminder that Europe's ultimate security guarantee is still not fully sovereign.

What to watch. FAC conclusions and the 113 listings today; whether Moscow accepts European negotiators; the 26–27 Nov summit on Ukraine financing and frozen Russian assets (Belgium's position).

Sources

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- Breto
- Reuters, Donbas-for-NATO
- Streeting reposts (1)
- Streeting reposts (2)
- Zelensk
- agenceurope.eu
- euronews.com
- browser check; read via search snapshot
- gov.ie
- TASS (Russian state media):
- @F_CEAFE repost of quoting (1)
- @F_CEAFE repost of quoting (2)
- @F_CEAFE repost of quoting (3)

Xi to host Putin and Trump in Shenzhen on 19 November, with Europe absent

China's foreign ministry announced that President Xi Jinping will hold a "China-Russia-U.S.

Summit" with Vladimir Putin and Donald Trump in Shenzhen on 19 November, alongside the APEC Economic Leaders' Meeting (18–19 Nov). Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov confirmed it to TASS. Xinhua and Global Times (Chinese state media) frame APEC around "openness, innovation, and cooperation". Reuters says Ukraine, trade and AI will hang over the meeting. Bloomberg says Trump arrives "politically weakened at home, yet perhaps even more eager to flex his power abroad". @F_CEAFE reposted the Chinese MFA announcement. Canada's Mark Carney will meet Xi on Tuesday and said Canada "has other partners for auto manufacturing" if Washington does not want an integrated North American supply chain (Bloomberg).

Why it matters for Europe. The three powers whose choices decide the war in Ukraine, global trade rules and AI will meet without any European present, just days after the EU finally named its negotiating team. The lesson for CEAFE: only a Union that acts as one actor, with its own defence, technology and trade weight, gets invited to tables like this. Canada's open hedging with China is the kind of collective leverage the EU rarely uses with Washington.

What to watch. whether Ukraine terms are discussed over Europe's head; any US–China trade or export-control deal (chips, rare earths) that EU firms would then have to follow.

Sources

- MFA Chi
- Peskov via Russian Embassy USA, reposted by Russian MFA
- Xinhua; Chinese state medi
- Reuters
- Bloomberg (1)
- Bloomberg (2)
- Takaichi

Gaza: Australia, Canada, Italy and the UK say 150,000 tents are held at the border

On 15 November the foreign ministers of Australia, Canada, Italy and the UK urged Israel's government to "stop the delays now and allow immediate, rapid and unimpeded humanitarian access throughout Gaza".

They said "150,000 tents and other vital supplies are being held at the border" as winter floods hit, asked for dual-use items for early recovery to be let in, and called on all parties to implement the Comprehensive Plan for Gaza. The EU issued its own statement on 14 November urging Israel to reopen all crossings (Al Jazeera). Ireland's Helen McEntee will press the FAC today to "intensify pressure" on Israel. Haaretz reports that Israel's own figures show aid deliveries fell far short of its commitments. Israel's MFA amplified an Israeli diplomat's UN speech calling UNRWA "the arsonist" and criticised the Palestinian Authority. Inside Israel, Haaretz reports coalition talks between Netanyahu's camp and Gadi Eisenkot's bloc. @F_CEAFE reposted Eisenkot's post calling Netanyahu's conduct a direct threat to Israeli democracy.

Why it matters for Europe. Italy is the only EU member among the four signatories. The EU again speaks through separate national statements and a Council text, not one policy with consequences. Europe is Israel's first trading partner, so its leverage is real but unused.

What to watch. FAC language on Israel; whether crossings open; Israeli coalition outcome.

Sources

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- aljazeera.com
- Haaretz, aid figures; paywalled, headline onl
- Israel MFA / UNRWA

- @F_CEAFE repost of Eisenkot

Rubio: “Stop quoting laws to men with swords”, and the ICC drops US troops from its Afghanistan probe

In a keynote at the Federalist Society on 13 November, Secretary of State Marco Rubio said that “for this global elite, international law is not a neutral body of rules… it is an instrument”.

He defended the US sanctions on the International Criminal Court and warned that if the court tries to enforce “paper decrees” on Americans, the answer will be Pompey’s: “Stop quoting laws to men with swords” (transcript, Reuters, AFP). The State Department’s X account then amplified friendly coverage from Breitbart, Daily Caller and American Greatness. Iran’s FM Abbas Araghchi replied that the Roman general behind that phrase died “beheaded after fleeing the battlefield”. Separately, ICC judges are closing the parts of the Afghanistan investigation that could have looked at US troops, to focus only on the Taliban (Defense News). Reuters says the US sanctions on the ICC take effect in April unless the court’s supporters reach an agreement with Washington.

Why it matters for Europe. The ICC sits in The Hague and is funded mainly by European states. Washington’s message is that law binds others, not the US, while it asks Europe to follow its sanctions on third countries. This is the double standard CEAFE highlights. Europe has a legal tool (the EU Blocking Statute) and the economic weight to protect institutions it hosts; whether it uses them before April is a test of strategic autonomy.

What to watch. EU/Dutch response to the April sanctions deadline.

Sources

- singjupost.com
- Reuters pages often return 401 to automated reads; snippet via search
- afp.com
- State Dept (1)
- State Dept (2)
- State Dept (3)
- Araghchi
- “Judges close part of ICC Afghanistan investigations that could look at US troops”

Asia: ASEAN and China fail to close the South China Sea code, Canada concludes an FTA with ASEAN

At the 49th ASEAN Summit in Manila, ASEAN and China failed to conclude the South China Sea code of conduct despite tentative agreement on about 80% of the draft.

The Philippine FM Theresa Lazaro said key issues remain, including whether the code is legally binding (Al Jazeera). The 29th ASEAN–China Summit was held with Premier Li Qiang. Canada announced the substantial conclusion of a free trade agreement with ASEAN, a market of “nearly 700 million people”

(Carney). Bloomberg says leaders came to Manila seeking trade links "as a hedge against the rising US protectionism". Taiwan's defence ministry reported 4 PLA aircraft sorties, 7 PLAN vessels and 3 official ships around Taiwan; all 4 sorties crossed the median line. Hundreds of protesters against the Middle East conflict and Trump's expected visit clashed with police in Manila (Reuters).

Why it matters for Europe. Middle powers (Canada, ASEAN, India) are diversifying away from US trade pressure. The EU, the world's largest trading bloc, should be leading this, not following.

Sources

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- ASEAN
- Carney), (Canada FP (1)
- Carney), (Canada FP (2)
- Bloomberg
- Taiwan MND
- Reuters

See also

- Estonia to close its Russian border on 1 December after GRU-ordered sabotage — see Conflicts.
- Iran–US war: three US carriers in CENTCOM — see Conflicts.
