

# EUROPE

## **Thierry de Montbrial, Chairman and founder of the WPC**

I now suggest that we discuss the three regions one after another, and let us go from West to East and start with Europe. You mentioned the question of the post 1945 borders and the international law framework. This is a question for both of you. Do you not think that we, meaning the West, have made some quite significant mistakes in our behaviour vis à vis Russia? Do you not think that to some extent, we bear very significant responsibility for what has happened? The way I am putting the question is also a way of reflecting what I myself think.

## **Joseph Nye, University Distinguished Service Professor, Center for Public Leadership, Harvard Kennedy School**

If one could run the clock backward and ask whether we could have taken other decisions at the time of the collapse of the Soviet Union, there are other decisions that could have been made. We could have been more forthcoming with Russia and made more efforts. That was a historical opportunity that we did not fully capitalise on. However, the question of whether that excuses a country from moving into its neighbour's space and taking an area by force is a different proposition.

The policy question we now have in terms of the political and military situation in Europe is this: how do you reinforce the point that the current or recent action is expensive, and at the same time start thinking of how to reintegrate Russia into the international system? That is not easy, because the two messages tend to contradict each other, but it is going to require close cooperation between Europe and America. I would argue that it will be difficult, but it can be done.

On the European part of it, though, it seems to me that a good part of this is going to centre on providing support for Ukraine to become a viable state, economically. This is now a difficult proposition and Europe is going to have to play a large part in that. I guess what worries me about Europe is the question of the European economic situation. We all have a very strong interest in a strong European economy, so the ability to manage this situation in Ukraine will depend upon the capacity of the Europeans economically. We have to hope that the measures that are being discussed now about reflation of the European economy are successful.

## **Thierry de Montbrial, Chairman and founder of the WPC**

Before I give the floor to Richard, let me inject my opinion as a European. I think that Europeans will not have the resources to inject massive sums in Ukraine. That was very clear even before we pushed and fuelled the fire in playing the geo political Brzezinsky kind of game. This was that Ukraine should become part of the European Union, NATO and so forth. We have played with fire, but in fact, we are not able to do so, so unless someone in the room convinces me of the contrary, we will stick to that opinion. The most likely evolution is that Ukraine will continue to be in trouble, but maybe the United States will have the resources.

**Richard Haass, President of the Council on Foreign Relations**

My sense is that when you convene a year from now, the situation in Ukraine may not look fundamentally different from the way it looks now. Russia will still be in control of the Crimea and, at a minimum, large parts of Eastern Ukraine will be 'unstable.' I probably agree with your analysis of the past, that there was a bit of recklessness and incompetence in the whole relationship vis à vis Ukraine.

When you talk about the Russian relationship, a lot depends on where you go back to. There will be those who will say different things. If you had different people in the discussion rather than the two of us, you might have people say that NATO enlargement was wrong and that was responsible. As Joe pointed out, we could have been more forthcoming toward Russia. Even if we had done some of these things differently or 'better,' we do not know how Russia, particularly Mr Putin's Russia, would have responded. We do not know, but that said, we are where we are.

Giving more resources to Ukraine is a good idea in principle, but the problem is that in practise, there is zero evidence that more resources will be used well. If you think about it, if Ukraine were not threatened by Russia, we would attach the most profound conditionality to any help going to Ukraine. We are now in the situation where we are worried about Ukraine geo politically, to the point where we are prepared to give a lot of money without conditions. It is the domestic equivalent of throwing money at a problem, and it will work as well internationally as it tends to work domestically.

That said, we are not quite sure what to do. I think Joe made a point which is correct. We have got to give the Russians some sort of diplomatic package now, and it does mean giving them certain assurances about Ukraine's external orientation. However, I would also couple it with being stronger in our support of Ukraine militarily. I would provide lethal aid to Ukraine. I believe we make a mistake by not doing that. I do not see where our restraint has in any way worked out in the way we wanted.

I also think we have got to be much more robust in terms of strengthening the rest of NATO. It does not seem to me that we have internalised the lessons of Ukraine for NATO, regarding how we would deal with Ukraine like challenges in some of the other countries. For example, we ought to make sure that a lot of these countries, such as those in the Baltics, have gendarmerie that can deal with low order internal political and military challenges.

However, the good news is that I do not see a challenge to Europe, to what you might call core Europe, from Russia. This is not a return to the previous strategic situation, but it is still one that is very serious, and it is the unknown question. However, I tend to be more of an optimist here. This is not so much because of the sanctions of sanctions but the sanctions of \$60 oil, and that may focus Mr Putin's mind to some extent. It is possible that this would be an environment which might encourage greater restraint over time. However, I am prepared to hear the opposite argument, based upon that movie Wag the Dog. Mr Putin might be tempted to use foreign adventure to distract from domestic difficulties. My sense is that the current environment is more likely to encourage a degree of restraint than otherwise.

**Thierry de Montbrial, Chairman and founder of the WPC**

I also agree with you. A few years ago, actually at the first World Policy Conference in 2008 in Evian, President Medvedev, who at the time was President of Russia, made a good speech, I must say. He proposed to update the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE), the Helsinki Agreements. That proposal was also made in various places. To my knowledge it was never taken into serious consideration by the West. During the first session, I asked Ambassador Morgulov if that proposal was still on the table on the part of Russia. Ambassador Morgulov said that since he is in charge of Asia, he did not know the answer, but he said he would call Moscow to get the answer. Yesterday evening, he told me, 'I have the answer. Yes, it is still on the table.'

**Thierry de Montbrial, Chairman and founder of the WPC**

Next year will be the 40th anniversary of the Helsinki Treaty. I remind you that the Helsinki Treaty was a process elaborated during the Cold War, and that was a totally different setup. My question to both of you is this. Do you share the vision that some of us in Europe share, that it might make sense to review and update the Helsinki Treaty, 40 years after it was signed?

**Richard Haass, President of the Council on Foreign Relations**

I am always comfortable with reviewing things and the devil would be in the details. However, one of the principles is that borders cannot be changed by force. It is odd that the Russians would want to call for a review when they have just violated one. That is unless they propose to make that one of the updated provisions and henceforth, borders can be changed by force. That would not be a welcome or constructive modification.

Regarding the human rights part, I am trying to think of which parts of Helsinki, OSCE or CSCE, would necessarily be relevant to review. A different way to think about it would be less mechanistic and would just look at the totality of European security. You have got other agreements as well, including several arms control agreements which seem to have been ignored in terms of the positioning of forces and so forth.

The real question is whether it would be useful to do those things or whether the negotiations have now become so politically loaded or freighted, to use an American expression. This means they would be counter productive. Instead of trying to have some kind of formal review or grand renegotiation, it would be better to just do things through signalling, through a degree of NATO action and so forth. It is not obvious to me that this is a moment for a grand bargain, shall we say, on European political or security relationships.

**Joseph Nye, University Distinguished Service Professor, Center for Public Leadership, Harvard Kennedy School**

I tend to agree with what Richard said.