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Slaying the dragon

We must re-address arms control

BY HEIKO MAAS

When you walk past the United Nations headquarters on Manhattan's 1st Avenue, it's hard to overlook the massive sculpture on the front lawn: a larger-than-life Saint George slaying a giant dragon. You could easily mistake it for a medieval monument, if the dragon weren't made of fragments from Soviet SS-20 and US Pershing nuclear missiles – weapons destroyed under the INF Treaty of 1987.

For more than 30 years, the treaty was an essential building block of European security and a cornerstone of international arms control architecture. By developing a new ground-based mid-range nuclear missile, Russia has violated and de facto suspended it. The ball is in Russia's court. During my recent visits to Moscow and Washington, I proposed criteria against which Russian transparency proposals should be tested. Regrettably, everything Russia has offered so far falls far short of those benchmarks. Six months remain for Moscow to return to full and verifiable compliance with the INF. Germany will do whatever it can to make this happen.

An end to the INF Treaty would affect us all, and Europe would be less secure. Perhaps even worse, an end to the treaty would also damage the prospects for arms control in general. A new arms race looms large on the horizon, while a key lesson of international policy is undermined, namely that lasting security requires both military strength and cooperative security.

This realization is even more alarming when we look at the challenges ahead. The digital revolution offers potential for changing human lives for the better. But it also has a profound impact on tomorrow's weapons systems, on international warfare, on domestic security and global stability. In a nutshell, the wars of the future will most likely not be fought with mega bombs, but with megabits and megabytes.

The Cold War is over. Security today is less about counting nuclear warheads than about understanding the security challenges linked to future technological developments:

- 5G networks, which are currently being tendered in Germany and many other countries, will fundamentally alter cyber capacities and the daily routines of household management. But how do we prevent their misuse for cyber warfare?

- Biotechnology offers the potential to improve human life – from tackling genetic

diseases to mitigating the impacts of climate change. But how can we ensure that access to biotechnology doesn't enable terrorists, criminals or states to weaponize biological agents?

- Artificial intelligence is set to take unmanned aerial vehicles to the skies above our cities. But how can we stop autonomous weapons from building on this technology to select and attack targets without human involvement?

- New frontiers in long-distance travel will soon be pioneered by hypersonic carriers, drastically cutting travel times. But how can we deal with hypersonic missiles that reduce reaction times to just a few seconds, thus eroding the ability for human control?

These fundamental questions remain unanswered today. To address them, I have invited colleagues, military experts and scientists to attend an international conference in Berlin on March 15 of this year. We want to launch an international dialogue that captures technology and rethinks arms control. It will be informed by an in-depth analysis of technological trends,

We must prevent a world in which we cannot tell good from evil

a clear assessment of the security landscape and an open debate between affected countries. Our European neighbors need to be at the heart of this dialogue, since Europe is particularly affected by the current arms control crisis. Defining a common European position will also be necessary, as we are including global powers such as China, India, Japan and our trans-Atlantic partners in our discussions. We will also engage with the private sector, which is pioneering many of these technological developments. Together, we must put arms control back on the international agenda.

The sculpture of Saint George and the dragon on the UN's front lawn bears the title "Good Defeats Evil." If we don't take action now, we risk waking up to a world where we won't be able to tell good from evil, or right from wrong – where high-tech weapons are used in undefined gray zones and where the choice between war and peace has slipped from human control. To avoid such a catastrophic scenario, we must take new technological challenges into account in our arms control architecture. That would be a major step towards preserving peace in the 21st century – and a manifestation of pure *realpolitik*.

HEIKO MAAS
is the foreign minister of Germany.

With friends like these ...

The EU-US relationship is in crisis

BY JULIANNE SMITH

The relationship between the European Union and the United States has always been complicated and riddled with disagreements. It is, after all, an unconventional pairing between one of the most powerful countries on earth and a set of institutions that do their best to represent the often disparate views of 28 individual member states. Whether on trade, counter-terrorism cooperation or Iran, fostering EU-US cooperation is a never-ending exercise in patience, diplomacy and bureaucratic acrobatics. Yet, however challenging and tense the EU-US relationship has become, the relationship has persevered and in many cases prospered. Leaders on both sides have long understood the benefits of working through EU-US channels. That is, until now. Today, thanks to a mix of external and internal forces exerting unprecedented pressure on the EU, the EU-US relationship is ailing, weakening both sides of the Atlantic as both the EU and US compete with Russia and China.

For the first time in the history of the EU-US relationship, the president of the United States is regularly and openly expressing disdain for the European project. Unlike his Republican and Democratic predecessors, President Donald Trump doesn't appear to see any value in America's relationship with the EU, nor does he appear to appreciate the historical circumstances that led to its creation. He believes that the EU was "formed in order to take advantage" of the US. "Nobody treats us much worse than the European Union," he said last November. In his eyes, the EU is more adversary than ally; last summer he labeled the EU a "foe." He has also asserted that EU High Representative for Foreign and Security Policy Federica Mogherini "hates America."

During the first year of the Trump administration, Europeans tried to reassure themselves that the president was isolated in his anti-EU views and that other members of his cabinet saw enough value in the EU-US relationship to prevent Trump from doing any significant damage. Senior-level members of the Trump administration pushed that narrative every chance they got by con-

tinually urging Europeans to "look at the policies not the tweets." The administration's policies, administration officials argued, were in stark contrast to the president's disparaging language on Europe and demonstrated a firm commitment to the trans-Atlantic relationship. The policy that Trump administration officials often cite in support of this argument is the decision to significantly increase support for the European Deterrence Initiative (EDI).

Near the end of Trump's first year in office, in November 2017, then Secretary of State Rex Tillerson delivered his first speech on Europe, which was generally well-received on the other side of the Atlantic. With Trump's notoriously soft positions on Russia, which had triggered concerns on both sides of the Atlantic that he might strike some kind of grand bargain with Moscow, Europeans found Tillerson's sobering language on Russia reassuring. Many Europeans

Trump doesn't appear to see any value in the relationship with the EU

also applauded Tillerson's special emphasis on "shared principles." But observers in Brussels noted a glaring omission in that speech,

notably the lack of any significant reference to the EU. While Tillerson included passing mentions of the EU's work in the Balkans, its humanitarian support surrounding the conflict in Syria and a US commitment to maintain ties with the EU after Brexit, there was no mention of the multibillion-dollar EU-US trade relationship, long heralded as the cornerstone of the trans-Atlantic relationship. Still, a number of Atlanticists hoped the omission was just a case of benign neglect.

Those hopes came crashing down just a few months into year two of the Trump administration. Tillerson, considered to be one of the "adults in the room," was fired just days after claiming that Russia was responsible for the poisoning of a former Russian spy living in London, for which the White House had declined to assign blame. With the subtraction of one of the moderating forces on Trump's style and substance, Trump's tweets increasingly morphed into actual policy decisions. For example, after complaining about the trade imbalance with Europe for over a year, Trump imposed steel and aluminum tariffs in March of 2018. Since Trump argued that the tariffs

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