

The following text is signed by the Directors of the Jacques Delors Institutes: Sylvie Matelly (Paris), Johannes Lindner (Berlin), Geneviève Pons (Brussel) and by Enrico Letta, Pascal Lamy and Etienne Davignon who chair their respective boards.

One month into Trump: Europe's hour

We knew that Trump's election would not be good news for us. After one month of provocations, aggressions and contempt, the new President of the US confronts us with an unprecedented series of major and interrelated dangers to which we need to react in a strategic way.

Dangers for Europe, starting with its security on the Eastern front. Trump has opened his bilateral negotiation with Putin by paying upfront most of what Moscow is now looking for, thus weakening Ukraine's position. With attacks on European values and support for extremist political forces in some of our countries. With trade sanctions to address his economic problems, the roots of which lie in the US, not with us. Not to mention his dreams about Greenland or Gaza, which are nightmares for us.

Dangers for the rest of the world in demolishing the main pillars of a rules-based international system, disdain for sovereignty (of others), international trade and the environment, which will damage many countries in need of peace, growth, and health for their populations. Dangers for migrants and refugees.

Dangers for the US, as Trump's orders will push up inflation and weaken the traditional checks and balances between the executive, the legislative and the judicial branches of government. While an immediate reaction from the Europeans might have been premature with the hope of saving the transatlantic relations which are so essential to our history and memories, we now have to face a harsh reality: Trump must be stopped.

In the US, if Americans so decide.

Elsewhere, Europe is the only place capable of doing it with the strategic, economic, political weight of the European Union and its Member States combined. Together, we can bring together and mobilise a large part of the world which thinks like us but has too little leverage to act decisively.

We see this, of course, as a formidable challenge given that we do not yet have not a strategy in place to unite European countries and their neighbours, and no agreement to use our many available instruments to deploy it. Building such a defensive and dissuasive strategy is now an existential issue. It needs to rest on four pillars: a clear, bold objective, the means to deliver it, decisions at the EU level, and a decisive stance against those within the Union who decline to follow.

We are where Jacques Delors once said we were: Europe has to choose between "survival or decline".