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United States Mission to the OSCE

On Europe Day

As delivered by Ambassador James S. Gilmore III
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
May 7, 2020

Let us add our voice to the congratulations on Europe Day. On May 9, the world will mark Europe Day. The United States offers our best wishes to the citizens of the European Union. A strong and free Europe is of vital importance to the United States. We are bound together by our shared commitment to democracy, human rights, and the rule of law. The Transatlantic relationship – built on decades of mutual prosperity and security – remains a principled and powerful force for addressing regional and global challenges.

This year has been a difficult one for both the people of Europe and the United States, currently the two areas that have been hardest hit by the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite unprecedented challenges, the promise that is embodied in Europe Day – that people can unite and rise above narrow national interests – is alive and well, and we see many examples of solidarity, both across Europe and around the globe, in extending a helping hand during these extraordinary times.

Moving examples of Transatlantic cooperation have arisen in the face of adversity, whether they be through direct aid, such as the health and humanitarian assistance that U.S. agencies are providing Italy or aid directed through existing Transatlantic institutions, such as the extensive work NATO has done across the continent. The Transatlantic spirit here at the OSCE has also helped contain the pandemic, with countries such as Canada and Lithuania teaming up to provide the OSCE's Special Monitoring Mission in Ukraine vital supplies to keep the monitors safe from the disease.

As we commemorate Europe Day, the pandemic also reminds us of the deep friendship and cooperation between the United States and the European Union. The collegiality that our mission enjoys with its EU and member state counterparts here in Vienna further indicates the strength of those bonds. The United States recognizes and appreciates the European Union for its tireless commitment to our shared values and for the leadership it has contributed to the OSCE.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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