

Europe and the World Order
Debate by the European Council of Foreign Affairs
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In February, a debate was organized by the European Council of Foreign Affairs (ECFR) in Warsaw in anticipation of the coming ECFR Warsaw office to open this summer. The discussion was given by six speakers focused on the need for the ECFR and what the goals should be for Europe to move forward. First, the reason for the creation of the ECFR was the topic. Many saw a need for the EU to have a permanent way to unify foreign policies and establishing a foreign affairs council could do that best. Once the ECFR came together the common principles to build on were quickly developed. These five principles are: 1) Europe needs one voice by European Union since the world is moving beyond its control; 2) By acting together, EU countries can pursue their interests from climate change, poverty reduction, defense of human rights, averting genocide, stopping the spread of deadly weapon, and addressing violent extremities; 3) The EU's commitment to multilateral international institutions must be matched by their influence in the; 4) Existing commitments to other nations must be honored to keep the spread peace and prosperity; 5) The EU's transforming power should expand beyond its neighbors.

However, before the EU transforms their neighbors, panelist Timothy Ash brings attention to the fact that the EU nations are demographically changing. Europe's population is diminishing and aging as others, particularly the one just below their borders, are growing. Bold steps are now needed by European leaders to maintain peace and power with a smaller population or Europe will diminish. The ECFR should have open debates, going beyond legalism and political correctness, to better face problems, find solutions, and build influence. Panelist, Krastew Ivan further noted the gap between Europe's potential for power compared to what little power they actual use. Thus, for the ECFR to be effective, all EU countries, in Ivan's opinion, must give concerns for each other's interest. This would mean Spain would have a specific policy for Poland regarding Ukraine, and Poland must have a specific policy addressing Spain's concern for Morocco, and so forth.

Each panelist had similar themes, articulating that the EU has often choose not be involved in the world and it is resulting in a less powerful, less influential EU. The hope, however, from this debate is for the ECFR to change that pattern by strengthening Europe with a united voice on policy and bring its cultural influence back into the world.