

Europe on Its Own: Can the Continent Survive Without U.S. Protection?

For the first time in generations, Europe is preparing for a future without the U.S. as its main military backer. In just three months, the Trump administration has reversed decades of American foreign policy, scaling back its presence in Europe, questioning NATO's value, and pushing to end the Ukraine war, even at the cost of Ukrainian territory.

The message is clear: Europe is on its own.

"Europe has been living for 80 years in a situation in which peace was given for granted," said Roberto Cingolani, CEO of defense giant Leonardo. "Now we realize that peace must be defended."

The shock has triggered a continent-wide scramble. Germany is pledging billions to rebuild its military. Poland is rapidly expanding its armed forces. France is urging a joint European defense pact. Yet despite spending over \$300 billion annually on defense, Europe still suffers from fragmentation, underinvestment, and slow procurement.

"Europe has the money. It has a population. What it lacks is cohesion and speed," a NATO official warned.

The European Commission is now pushing for a unified defense strategy by 2026, but time is short, and the risks are rising.

Eighty years after defeating Nazi Germany, Europe again faces a defining moment: whether it can defend itself, with unity, strength, and urgency, in a world where U.S. protection is no longer guaranteed.