

More unity, 'collective action' needed to maintain international order, EU leader tells UN Assembly

Rules-based international order is under "great strain," Donald Tusk, President of the European Council of the European Union (EU), told the United Nations General Assembly on Thursday, saying that his organization is "fighting intensely" to preserve it.

"We say this not only as countries strongly supporting the United Nations, but as a continent that cares deeply about respect, mutual understanding and solidarity between nations," he stressed.

Currently, trade, security, climate change and human rights are in jeopardy, according to Mr. Tusk, who urged the world's leaders to better equip the UN with the means to successfully fulfil its mandate.

"More unity and collective action are needed in the struggle against conflict, poverty and famine, terrorism and mass displacement," he said, voicing support for "badly needed and overdue" UN reforms.

The EU is taking on more security responsibilities, he said, noting new, ambitious cooperation among its own militaries and its readiness to "step-up help to our neighbours through crisis management missions, capacity building and peacekeeping, in cooperation with others."

Turning to democracy, he explained that Europe has acted against disinformation and outside propaganda in open democratic elections.

However, many countries have experienced the anonymity of cyberspace used by external actors "to cloak malicious political interference."

"The United Nations should help expose this phenomenon, attribute responsibility and increase democratic resilience," maintained Mr. Tusk.

Turning to migration, he pointed to the excellent cooperation between the African Union, EU and UN, noting by example that "we have until today helped over 30,000 people to leave Libya through voluntary humanitarian returns."

Hoping to expand its partnering work in other areas, he said that "education, investment in development, climate change and free trade will be at the heart of our future relations."

Pointing out that instability in Libya has shined a light on human smugglers and traffickers who take advantage of vulnerable people, he pledged to "work diligently and in good faith with our North African partners on search and rescue efforts in the Mediterranean."

“Only collective responsibility can offer effective solutions to global phenomena such as migration and forced displacement,” he said. “And I truly hope that the recent UN debates on the future governance of migration and refugee protection represent a step in the right direction.”

Meanwhile, the Syrian people are suffering as the war continues.

“The European Union leads global resettlement efforts, including through resettlement from Turkey, which is hosting refugees displaced by the fighting in Syria, as are Jordan and Lebanon,” he said, adding that a “meaningful political process” under UN auspices is “especially needed to bring about a resolution to the conflict.”

[*Full statement available here*](#)