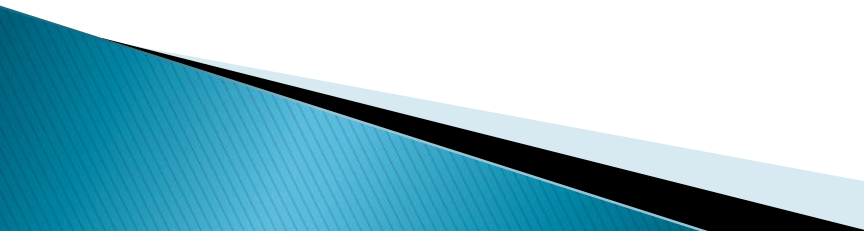


# Prospects for Russia–West Relations: A Way Out of the Confrontation

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# US–Russia Relations: A New Cold War

- ▶ US–Russia relations are confrontational, adversarial and worst since 1970s.
- ▶ **Striking similarities with the previous Cold war, despite very different context.**
  - ▶ Russia is accused of not just challenging, but trying to destroy the West
  - ▶ Russia is accused of almost all internal troubles of the West (“Reds under the beds”)
  - ▶ Both sides (especially the US) view internal state of the other as the reason for problems and root of it’s bad behavior

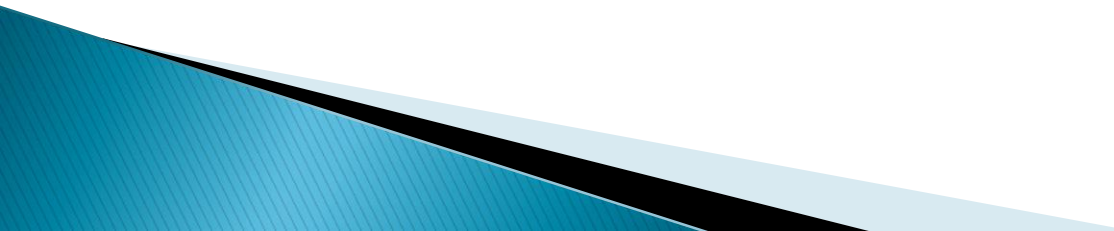
# US–Russia Relations: A New Cold War

- ▶ Both sides describe the other as malevolent actors, pursuing malevolent policies
  - ▶ Both sides put all the blame for deterioration of relations on the other
  - ▶ Both sides describe each other's actions (Ukraine, Syria), as a direct challenge to themselves and a systemic challenge to the international order they promote
  - ▶ Both sides demand a serious transformation of the opponent as a prerequisite for ending the confrontation
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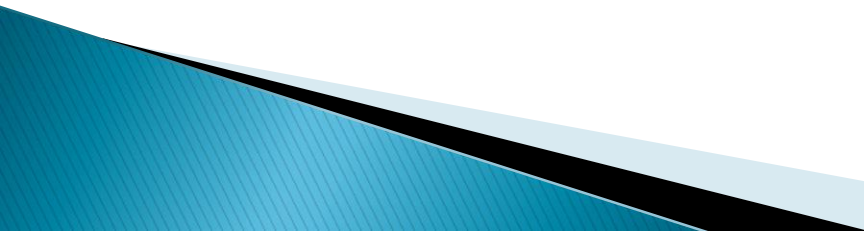
# US–Russia Relations: A New Cold War

- ▶ Russia is officially proclaimed “adversary to the US” by law
- ▶ Sanctions are for years, if not decades to come
- ▶ Cooperation reduced to unprecedented minimum, and is exceptional. If happens – out of necessity, rather than will. Even in Syria – deconfliction, rather than cooperation.
- ▶ Cascading collapse of remaining arms control regimes (INF Treaty and New START under threat)
- ▶ Demonization of the Russian President. Putin = evil.
- ▶ Re–militarization of European security (deployments, containment)

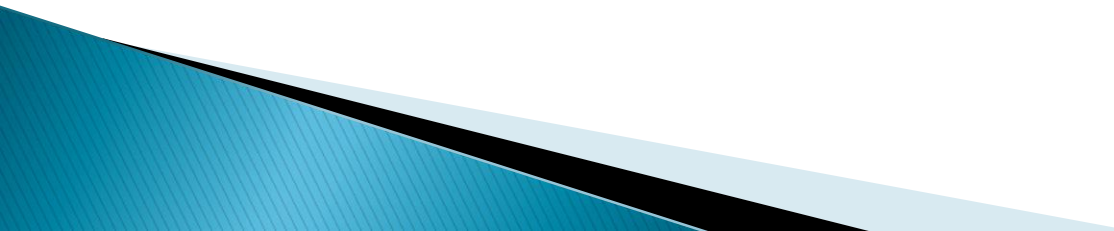
# US–Russia Relations: A New Cold War

- ▶ The 1<sup>st</sup> time since the end of the Cold war, when a change in the US Administration did not result in even a temporary improvement of relations – despite a mutual desire of both Russian government and the Trump Administration.
  - ▶ Instead, relations got worse.
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# US–Russia Relations: A New Cold War

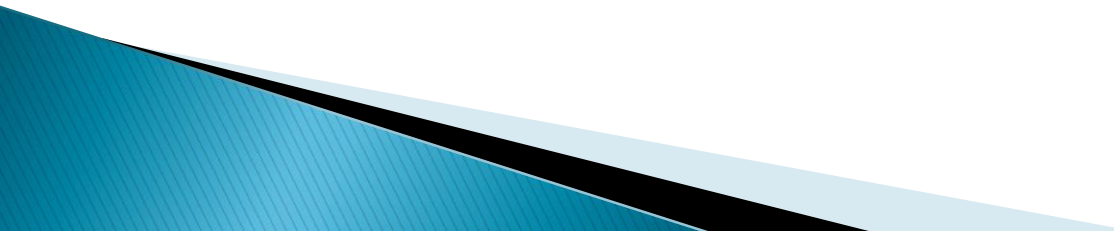
- ▶ This confrontation has a cost and is dangerous
  - ▶ **Costs:** weakening vis-à-vis the 3<sup>rd</sup> players; failure to cooperate on common challenges and weakening of global governance; failure to resolve major conflicts; destruction of arms control regimes; return to 1950s.
  - ▶ **Danger:** direct military clash. The world is much more complicated and less governable than in 1950s, and strategic environment much more complex.
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# EU–Russia Relations: Systemic Crisis and Stagnation

- ▶ **Paradox:** Russia and the EU are economically compatible and historically and culturally close.
  - ▶ But 27 years after the fall of Berlin wall, Europe is split again.
  - ▶ EU–Russia current relations are worst in their history.
  - ▶ They are in systemic crisis and stalemate since 2014
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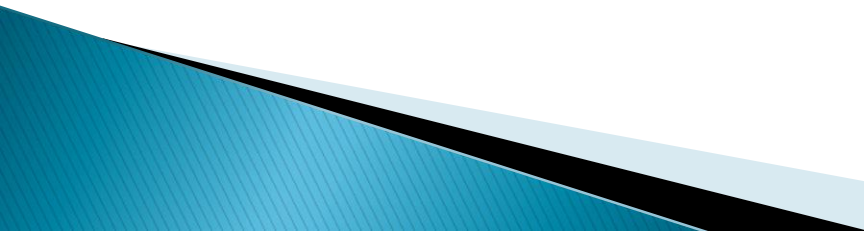
# EU–Russia Relations: Systemic Crisis and Stagnation

- ▶ Sharp competition at the Post–Soviet space (Ukraine crisis, before – Georgia crisis)
  - ▶ Russia perceived as challenger of European and International order, and challenge to the EU
  - ▶ EU sanctions against Russia, and Russian counter–sanctions against the EU
  - ▶ Securitized energy relations at the EU–Russia level. Energy became an area of sharp contradictions (control over pipelines, reducing energy dependence, 3<sup>rd</sup> Energy Package)
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# EU–Russia Relations: Systemic Crisis and Stagnation

- ▶ Stagnation of relations at strategic level (no negotiations on new strategic agreement, no EU–EAEU ties – EU refuses to recognize the EAEU)
- ▶ At the tactical level relations are frozen (visas, economic, etc.) and sporadic (management of Ukraine transit – not even EU, but Germany and France)
- ▶ No dialogue on security issues beyond management of Ukraine
- ▶ Bifurcation of relations: progress exists on bilateral level Russia – EU member–states, whereas Russia–EU relations are confrontational.

# How did we get here? Russia–US

- ▶ Major reason: US and Russia ended the Cold war, but did not reach a consensus on the peace after.
  - ▶ Different perceptions of the end of the Cold war, and thus:
  - ▶ Different perceptions of basic rules and norms of international relations, clashing visions of Post–Cold war international order.
  - ▶ Russia wanted to be a co–designer and manager of the Post–Cold war order on par with the West.
  - ▶ Instead, the West started to base post–Cold war order on enlargement of Western institutions, values and norms, and on the assumption, that all the rest, including Russia, would join.
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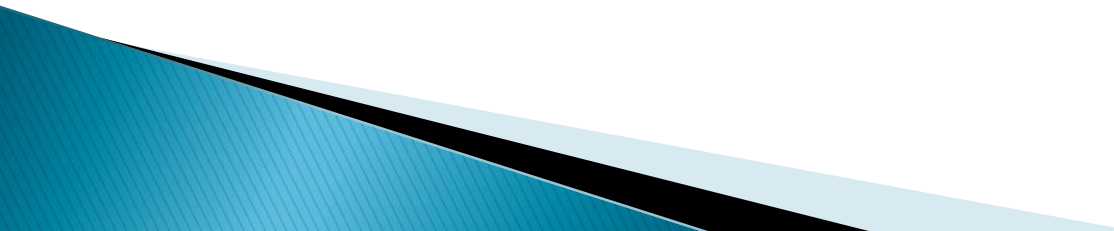
# How did we get here? Russia–US

- ▶ For Russia it was a collapse of all the expectations of becoming a co–designer and rejection of Russia as a great power.
- ▶ Russia undertook 2 attempts to join the Western system, and both times it was rejected: early 1990–s and early 2000–s.
- ▶ The 2<sup>nd</sup> failure coincided with profound power shift from the West to non–Western centers.
- ▶ Thus, Russia came to conclusion to drop these attempts and to promote itself as an independent center of the multipolar system.
- ▶ This brought Russia to perceiving Russia–centric integration at the Post–Soviet space as foreign policy priority No 1.

# How did we get here? Russia–US

- ▶ Each of the Russia–West crises – about the same problems: how should the order look like and who should establish it? Who should take decisions about use of force and sovereignty?
- ▶ For 2 decades Russia has been trying to reach a deal with the West on the rules of the game (limits of enlargement) and fix the status quo.
- ▶ The West ignored / engaged Russia and hoped that Russia would eventually succumb to the role of junior partner and periphery.
- ▶ Every time when Russian vital interests were ignored, Russia used force – 1999, 2008, 2014, and 2015.

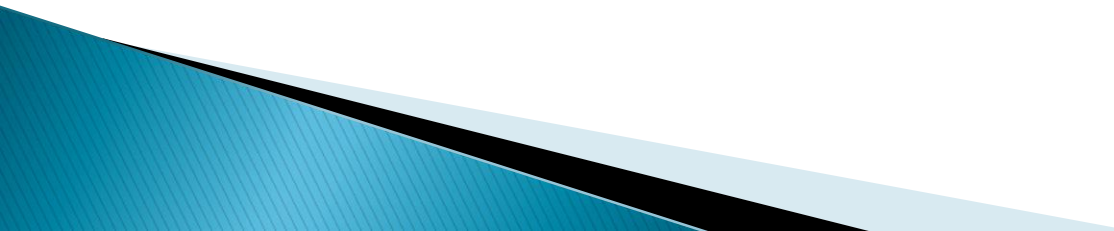
## How did we get here? Russia – EU

- ▶ There is a **systemic contradiction**, which sparked or strengthened all the other contradictions (former USSR, energy):
  - ▶ **Fundamentally different perceptions of “Wider Europe”**, economic and security order in Europe and post–Soviet space, and the roles that Russia and the EU should play in these orders. **Clashing visions of Europe.**
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# How did we get here? Russia – EU

- ▶ **EU vision and policy:**
- ▶ EU-centric “Wider Europe”, system of concentric circles.
- ▶ This approach – since the unification of Germany in 1989: unification of Europe – as EEC joining Western institutions.
- ▶ The EU monopolized the idea of Europe.
- ▶ EU as the only pole of integration in “Wider Europe” and the center of the EU-centric community from Lisbon to Vladivostok.
- ▶ Acceptance of EU’s normative superiority, approximation with the EU’s *acquis* became criteria of “europeanness”.
- ▶ All former Soviet and post-communist countries, including Russia, were perceived as either potential members or associated with the EU.
- ▶ EU enlargement – expansion of the zone of peace, security and prosperity.
- ▶ Europeanization – universal way to resolve conflicts (Balkans, Post-Soviet space).

# How did we get here? Russia – EU

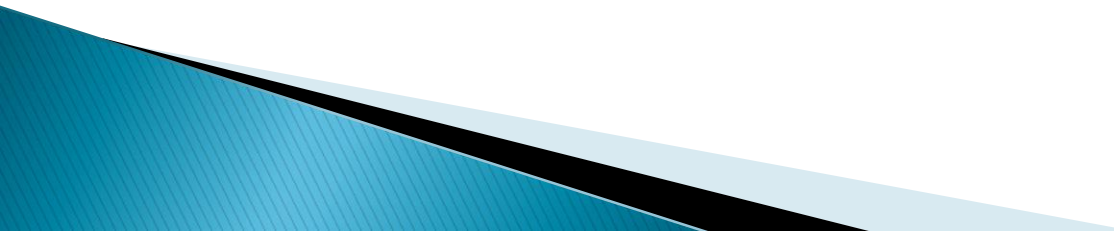
- ▶ **The same approach was applied to Russia.**
  - ▶ It was supposed to follow the path of CEE
  - ▶ Russia was invited in the EU's neighborhood policy.
  - ▶ Romano Prodi's formula: "unification of everything, but institutions". This is association.
  - ▶ **This approach is fundamentally at odds with the Russian vision of Europe and Russia–EU relations**
  - ▶ It failed already 10 years ago, and since then Russia–EU relations started to stagnate.
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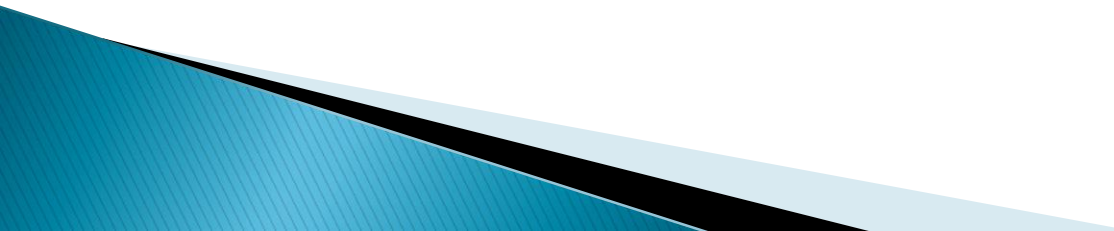
# How did we get here? Russia – EU

- ▶ **Russian approach:**
- ▶ Russia is a part of Europe, but in no way junior to the EU.
- ▶ **Europe ≠ the EU**, but should be constituted by two major pillars: the EU and Russia–centric integration arrangement (EAEU).
- ▶ EU and Russia/EAEU should have relations of strategic partnership or “integration of integrations” of equals: mutual approximation/development of new acquis/mutual recognitions of the acquis
- ▶ Cooperatively bipolar Europe
- ▶ This is strongly rejected by the EU.

# How did we get here? Russia – EU

- ▶ As a result, Russia started to perceive EU enlargement and expansion of the EU–centric orbit as challenges, as interference into Russia–centric space and attempts to drag certain countries away from Russia, thus weakening it.
  - ▶ EU, on its own part, perceived enlargement and associations as necessary steps in building “Europe whole and free”, in unifying Europe.
  - ▶ The clash of two mutually excluding integration projects eventually resulted in the Ukraine crisis.
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# Ukraine crisis – beginning of confrontation

- ▶ Support of regime change in Ukraine = a war against Russia
  - ▶ The West decided to pull Ukraine to the Western orbit.
  - ▶ Throw Russia back to the 1990–s
  - ▶ Russia reacted with annexation of Crimea and support of separatists in Donbas
- 

# Ukraine crisis – beginning of confrontation

- ▶ **Donbas – two goals:**
- ▶ Impede the precedent of the West supporting and encouraging forceful regime change
- ▶ Crash post-Maidan status quo and confirm a rule that sustainable order can exist just with Russian consent, and should be co-designed by Russia.
- ▶ **Crimea – three goals:**
- ▶ Avert war on Crimean land;
- ▶ Make NATO membership even less possible.
- ▶ Send a clear message to the West: stop, otherwise Europe and the world could get in chaos;

# Ukraine crisis – beginning of confrontation

- ▶ For the US – open challenge to the US-led order and to the US itself, and a dangerous precedent of great power behavior.
- ▶ US narrative: Russia is turning to re-establishing of empire with the use of force, and challenging US role as global leader and guarantor of international stability and security
- ▶ For the EU – assault against EU-centric “Wider Europe”.
- ▶ Thus, the new confrontation started. Collapse of cooperation, sanctions, etc.
- ▶ No return to *status quo ante* possible

# Syria – consolidation of confrontation

- ▶ Ukraine was the 1<sup>st</sup> front for rules of the game with the West. But it is difficult and might not be clear and visible.
- ▶ Thus, Syria – the 2<sup>nd</sup> front.
  - ▶ Preventing forceful regime change,
  - ▶ Promoting Russia as a great power
  - ▶ Preventing Syria turning into a black hole
- ▶ Russia succeeded
- ▶ Now – pursuit of political resolution based on compromise and multilateral cooperation of regional and global powers, including the US. **This manifests new rules.**
- ▶ US is very reluctant to cooperate. Likely to be a spoiler (military presence after ISIS, etc.).

# Trump victory and Russian expectations

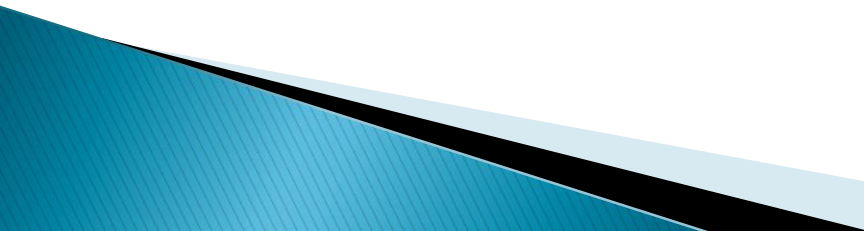
- ▶ Initially – a balanced assessment of Trump’s likely foreign policy: a “light” and a “dark” sides.
- ▶ **“Light side”:**
- ▶ Less ideology, rejection of regime change policy, narrow understanding of US interests ( “America First” ), anti-establishment approach, similar approach to international order.
- ▶ China, not Russia, regarded as the strategic adversary and rival. Thus, “getting along” with Russia. Original strategy: Russia remains neutral, as the US intensify containment of China.

# Trump victory and Russian expectations

- ▶ **“Dark side”**: unilateralism, disregard of international law and multilateral structures, skepticism towards arms control, propensity to increase defense spending substantially and to approach other players and situations “from the position of strength”, neo-Reaganite instincts, readiness to use military force as a FP instrument of 1<sup>st</sup> resort, confrontational stance on Iran.
- ▶ The balance – still preferable in comparison to Hillary Clinton.
- ▶ **Expectations**: better atmosphere, resumption of dialogue; quick resolution of Ukraine crisis (and lifting of sanctions); and more intensive military and political cooperation in Syria.



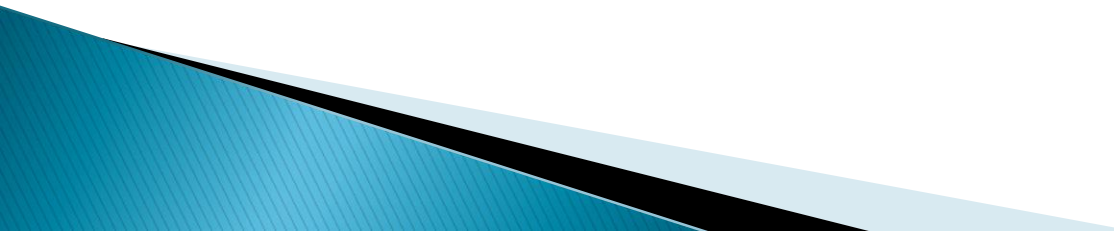
# Why did a new “reset” with Trump fail?

1. “Russiagate” in the US, which prevents any change of the US policy towards Russia in a positive way
    - ▶ Accusations are funny and by 99% artificial (RT, Facebook advertisements, etc.)
    - ▶ Establishment fails to recognize its defeat and depicts Trump’s victory as a result of “Russia meddling”
    - ▶ Russia is instrumentalized in US (and European) domestic politics as a tool to undermine and de-legitimize Trump and white-wash the establishment.
- 

# Why did a new “reset” with Trump fail?

2. Congress hijacked US policy-making towards Russia (the sanctions law).
3. Restoration of the US establishment in the Trump Administration.
4. “Normalization” and “mainstreamization” of the Trump Administration’s foreign policy
5. US global primacy never questioned. Thus, full commitment to military superiority, global military presence, global alliance system, and active containment of global and regional adversaries.
6. US perception of friends and adversaries did not change much. Russia – adversary.

# Why did a new “reset” with Trump fail?

7. Anti-Russian consensus in the US strengthened. Russia challenged the US in Ukraine and Syria, and then “elected” Trump in order to destroy the US and the West from the inside. “Democracy Dies in Darkness”.
  8. “Dark side” was realized on a full scale: US performance vis-à-vis Syria and North Korea.
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# Prospects of US–Russia relations: a way out?

- ▶ **Short-term prospects** (Trump period): managing confrontation, avoiding direct military clash, selective cooperation.
  - ▶ Prevent escalation in Ukraine
  - ▶ Prevent escalation in North–East Asia (North Korea)
  - ▶ Elaborate Rules of military engagement
  - ▶ Limit arms race in Europe
  - ▶ Prevent complete destruction of arms control
  - ▶ Establish cybersecurity dialogue and confidence–building measures.
  - ▶ Strategic stability talks
  - ▶ Preserve cooperation in space and in the Arctic

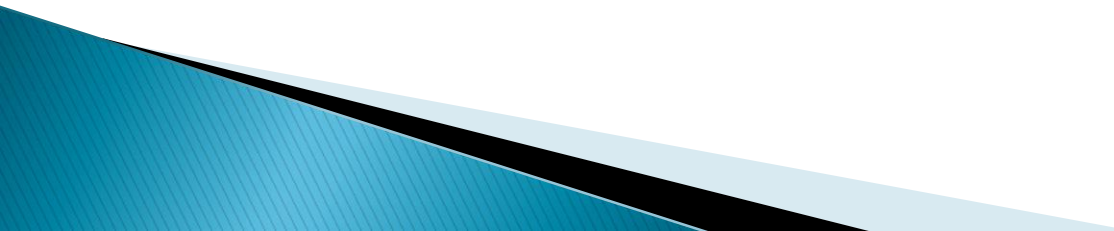
# Prospects of US–Russia relations: a way out?

- ▶ **Middle–term prospects** (1<sup>st</sup> cycle after Trump): preparing for further deterioration and escalation, avoiding US–Russian war.
- ▶ Establishment will take revenge and increase ideological component of the US FP, intensify containment of Russia and sanctions.
- ▶ Return of regime change and democracy promotion, including in Russia
- ▶ Punishing Russia for “installing” Trump.

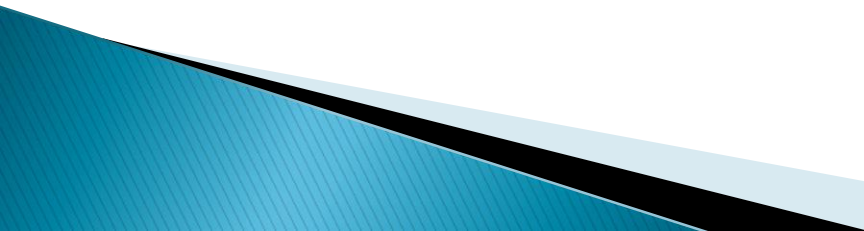
# Prospects of US–Russia relations: a way out?

- ▶ **Long-term prospects** (2<sup>nd</sup>–3<sup>rd</sup> cycles after Trump): gradual improvement of relations as a result of profound change of US FP in 15–20 years.
  - ▶ US will adapt to the changing external (systemic) and internal factors.
  - ▶ This adaptation will demand gradual rejection of global leadership policy and diminishing of global privacy policy.
  - ▶ US will move from “global leader” to “great power” foreign policy logic.
  - ▶ US global military presence will be gradually revised.
  - ▶ This adaptation will be extremely difficult and contradictory, but it is inevitable.

# Prospects of EU–Russia relations: a way out?

- ▶ EU needs a fundamentally new approach to Russia and the common neighborhood.
  - ▶ This could be possible only after the EU overcomes its own internal crisis.
  - ▶ But US foreign policy evolution creates a **new external context of EU–Russia relations**, which might compel the sides to look for rapprochement.
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# Prospects of EU–Russia relations: a way out?

- ▶ 1. Transatlantic relations change and will continue to change.
  - ▶ In economic terms the US perceives Europe as competitor and withdraws from non–military commitments
  - ▶ US military commitment to Europe remains, but is increasingly questioned
  - ▶ This will push Europeans to diversify their security relations. “Permanent Structured Cooperation” (PESCO).
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# Prospects of EU–Russia relations: a way out?

- ▶ 2. Some features of US foreign policy will push Russia and key member–states of the EU together – just as in 2003.
- ▶ 3. Europeans don't need a new aggravation of US–Russian confrontation, new arms race and missile crisis.
- ▶ 4. EU itself will continue to change – multi–speed Europe.
- ▶ 5. **Global environment will change, which will create incentives for EU–Russia rapprochement.**
- ▶ Deconstruction of the “liberal international order”, to which the EU got used, and on which the EU largely depends. Both politically and economically the world will be becoming less favorable towards the EU.

# Prospects of EU–Russia relations: a way out?

- ▶ **This puts the EU in a limbo.**
  - ▶ The concept of Greater Europe based on EU–centric model of Wider Europe failed in 2014.
  - ▶ Western Atlantic alternative – consolidation of the Euro–Atlantic without Russia – is failing nowadays.
- ▶ This is a very unstable position, which might push the EU towards revision of the EU’s eastern policy:
  - ▶ Accepting Russia and EAEU as adjacent, but independent poles of integration, pursuing “integration of integrations” instead of EU–centric “Wider Europe”.

**Thank you for Your  
attention.**

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