

The Geopolitics of Peace

Professor Jeffrey Sachs' Speech at European Parliament on February 19, 2025 ^(*1)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VjcMoDFU1xg&ab_channel=MichaelvonderSchulenburg

Edited Transcript:

Introduction

Michael, thank you so much, and thanks to all of you for the chance to be together and to think together. This is indeed a complicated and fast-changing time and a very dangerous one. So, we really need clarity of thought. I'm especially interested in our conversation, so I'll try to be as succinct and clear as I can be. I've watched the events very close-up in Eastern Europe, the former Soviet Union, Russia and Ukraine, very closely for the last 36 years. I was an adviser to the Polish government in 1989, to President Gorbachev's economic team in 1990 and 1991, to President Yeltsin's economic team in 1991 to 1993, and to President Kuchma's economic team in Ukraine in 1993 to 1994. I helped introduce the Estonian currency. I helped several countries in former Yugoslavia, especially Slovenia. After the Maidan, I was asked by the new government to come to Kyiv, and I was taken around the Maidan, and I learned a lot of things firsthand. I've been in touch with Russian leaders for more than 30 years. I also know the American political leadership close-up. Our previous Secretary of Treasury, Janet Yellen, was my wonderful macroeconomics teacher 52 years ago. We have been friends for a half century. I know these people. I say this because what I want to explain in my point of view is not second-hand. It's not ideology. It's what I've seen with my own eyes and experienced during this period. I want to share with you my understanding of the events that have befallen Europe in many contexts, and I'll include not only the Ukraine crisis, but also Serbia 1999, the wars in the Middle East, including Iraq, Syria, the wars in Africa, including Sudan, Somalia, Libya. These are to a very significant extent the result of deeply misguided US policies. What I will say may well surprise you, but I speak from experience and knowledge of these events.

*(*1) Edited transcript of Professor Jeffrey Sachs' speech in the European Parliament at an event titled "The Geopolitics of Peace", hosted by former UN Assistant Secretary General and current BSW MEP Michael von der Schulenburg, on February 19, 2025. The transcript has been edited for clarity and annotated in footnotes and hyperlinks.*

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i. U.S. Foreign Policy

These are wars that the United States has led and caused. And this has been true for more than 30 years now. The United States came to the view, especially during 1990-91, and then