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In today's final session, we are discussing the "Geopolitics of Europe and European Defence" with @Isabelle_kumar (@euronews), the French Minister of State for European Affairs @CBeaune, and experts from the TEPSA network

Here are the best bits■■

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"It feels like Europe is at a watershed moment, when we look at all the crises we face. I will ask each of our speakers asking where we think Europe is today"

- @Isabelle_kumar, from @euronews

/2

French Minister of State for European Affairs @CBeaune is the first to speak, clarifying the French perspective of European Security: "Our aim is not to go out of the existing frameworks, the idea is to get the tools to act - ultimately - when we need to act"

/3

"It is clear that in the next years we will have to recognise that the US itself goes beyond President Trump. It is prudent to have frameworks for action which are independent of the White House"

- @CBeaune, French Minister of State for European Affairs @francediplo

/4

"We need to start with common budgetary tools at the EU level. Already we have funds to co-finance research in this area"

- @CBeaune, French Minister of State for European Affairs @francediplo

/5

"The second element is to have common means of action. This does not mean an 'EU Army', but we need to have some tools to act together when needed"

- @CBeaune, French Minister of State for European Affairs @francediplo

/6

"The third element is about strategic analysis: you can develop a lot of tools. But if you have no strategic analysis, you cannot work together at the EU-level"

- @CBeaune, French Minister of State for European Affairs @francediplo

/7

"The European Intervention Initiative of @EmmanuelMacron's Sorbonne Speech is an initial step in that direction"

- @CBeaune, French Minister of State for European Affairs @francediplo

/8

"When we asked the US to be always our protector in cyber security, they quite legitimately say, 'why don't you protect yourself: you have the functional means'. I think they are right."

- @CBeaune, French Minister of State for European Affairs @francediplo

/9

"This doesn't mean turning our backs on the US, but to build on our existing tools in this way"

- @CBeaune, French Minister of State for European Affairs @francediplo

/10

"We shouldn't focus too much on getting unanimity all the time. It is therefore practical to have some level of #Differentiation. It is about flexibility"

- @CBeaune, French Minister of State for European Affairs @francediplo

/11

"Does this create a tension with the rest of the EU? I don't think so. This European Intervention Initiative is such an example: it does not involve all Member States, and creates no such tension"

- @CBeaune, French Minister of State for European Affairs @francediplo

/12

The Minister's references to #Differentiation are super interesting - if they peak your interest, be sure to check out our #InDivEU project on precisely that topic.

#InDivEU even has a panel at #PPCLisbon tomorrow!
/13

On this point, we move over to @IAIonline's @NicolePirozzi who speaks primarily about the Sahel region

/14

"The Sahel reveals our remaining strategic obstacles in identifying common opportunities. France is active in the region, but has lamented the lack of support from other Member States...

/15

... at the same time we have not been able to identify a common strategy in this region. One priority, in particular for France, is to include the other Member States in a European - rather than Paris driven - strategy for the region"

- @NicolePirozzi from @IAIonline

/16

Our moderator @Isabelle_kumar from @euronews now turns to @AnaSantosPinto from @iprinova on the topic of how this plays in to #EU2021PT

/17

"Today we are risking that the next months and years could focus on the social economic and finances for the EU rather than foreign policy and geopolitics. This is a balance that the Member States should work on"

- @AnaSantosPinto from @iprinova

/18

"We have a technological gap which gives us an opportunity. In the future we may not have the capability to act when we need to act"

- @AnaSantosPinto from @iprinova

/19

"We need to try not only to develop common policies, but also operationalise these policies effectively. This is a question of negotiation"

- @AnaSantosPinto from @iprinova

/20

Speaking of financing and consensus, @Isabelle_kumar turns to @FIIA_fi's @JuhaJokela1 to speak to the citizens' feelings towards European security and defense

/21

"There is perhaps more consensus among the citizens on threat perceptions than what we might see coming from the Member States's policies"

- @JuhaJokela1 from @FIIA_fi

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"Terrorism and #COVID19 are both issues where the citizens feel strongly should be a European issue"

- @JuhaJokela1 from @FIIA_fi

/23

.@SenemAydnDzgit from @sabanciu has a unique perspective from Turkey: @Isabelle_kumar asks "how does Turkey view the EU in terms of its security apparatus?"

/24

"The Turkish government doesn't really view Europe as a serious geopolitical player. One of the reasons they are so bullish in the Eastern Mediterranean is because they count on the EU being too divided to respond in coordination"

- @SenemAydnDzgit from @sabanciu

/25

"It would be an understatement to call Turkey a 'thorn' - it's a large geopolitical situation. But the current deadlock attests to the EU's inefficiency in handling the Turkey question in the last decade or so"

- @SenemAydnDzgit from @sabanciu

/26

"Thinking of the EU's leverage on Turkey is wrong: the Turkish government doesn't view it as such, and since the EU-Turkey migration, it's been clear that this is a transactional relationship, not a rules based one"

- @SenemAydnDzgit from @sabanciu

/27

Our moderator @Isabelle_kumar from @euronews now turns back to French Minister of State for European Affairs @CBeaune to address the points raised by our other speakers thus far

/28

"The way we relate to our direct environment - particularly Turkey - is seen as extremely important by citizens. To be frank, the EU is not a security provider in the current institutional framework."

- @CBeaune, French Minister of State for European Affairs @francediplo

/29

"Whenever I visit people on the ground, they bring up bigger international strategic issues. We should not therefore give up on strengthening the EU's capabilities in this field"

- @CBeaune, French Minister of State for European Affairs @francediplo

/30

"This is not to take power away from NATO, but to increase our relevance on the international stage"

- @CBeaune, French Minister of State for European Affairs @francediplo

/31

.@Isabelle_kumar pushes the Minister for an answer: "As @SenemAydnDzgit said, the EU has little leverage over Turkey. Is this not a failure on behalf of the EU?"

/32

"The idea in general is that the more accommodating the EU is, the best way this is to settle situations with our difficult partners...

/33

...But we have maybe done this too much: if you do not defend values strongly, the more they push in a tough direction themselves"

- @CBeaune, French Minister of State for European Affairs @francediplo

/34

If you're interested in EU-Turkey relations in particular, be sure to check out the @viaduct_eu project on just that topic!

/35

.@Isabelle_kumar raises the question to @JuhaJokela1 from @FIIA_fi: "Turkey is a part of NATO: how can we reconcile this with the EU-Turkish animosity?"

/36

.@JuhaJokela1 mentions also that Russia is a significant geopolitical issue - speaking of NATO - which is a neighbouring power and where the view in Helsinki is that the EU sent a powerful message with sanctions

/37

"I tend to agree that #DifferentiatedIntegration could bring in solutions, but when we come to these major challenges posed by Russia, then unified action and consensus is important"

- @JuhaJokela1 from @FIIA_fi

/38

"European citizens haven't come to terms with geopolitics returning to the continent. We can see in Belarus for example that there has been difficulty in finding a joint position and action"

- @JuhaJokela1 from @FIIA_fi

/39

"And how do we develop capabilities when we have no common understanding of what is needed"

- @JuhaJokela1 from @FIIA_fi

/40

The current discussion revolves around EU-US relations in the wake of #Trump's loss earlier this month. How will @JoeBiden's administration either reset US relations with the EU or evolve them?

/41

Another question of course is how the new US administration will affect the triangle between Europe, America, and Britain caused by #Brexit

/42

On this note our moderator @Isabelle_Kumar opens the floor to questions: the first concerns China

"How can the EU deal with a country as formidable as China?"

/43

"There was an EU-China summit in September under the German Presidency. #EU2021PT has different tasks than its predecessor, but China will remain important. Portugal will debrief and continue this work"

- @AnaSantosPinto from @iprinova

/44

On that note, after a dynamic Q&A session, our moderator @Isabelle_Kumar from @euronews closes today's final session. Thank you @CBeaune (@francediplo), @NicolePirozzi (@IAIonline), @AnaSantosPinto (@iprinova), @JuhaJokela1 (@FIIA_fi), and @SenemAydnDzgit (@sabanciu)

/45

Make sure to tune in tomorrow for even more from #PPCLisbon, including two more Parallel Sessions and the #InDivEU panel!

/ENDS

@threadreaderapp please unroll