

2023 Young Leaders Conference: Key Issues in Transatlantic Relations

“Aligning Transatlantic Strategies on China”

Over the last few years, the United States, Germany, and Europe more broadly have faced heightened tensions in their relationships with the People’s Republic of China. At the same time, respective and joint approaches to China have played an increasingly important role in the transatlantic relationship. While differences in each country’s strategy on China remain, it is critical to strengthen transatlantic coordination and exchange on how to address China’s increasingly assertive role in the world in all its dimensions. To think about this more holistically, Members of the Atlantik-Brücke Young Leaders Conference’s Working Group on China identified three topics and corresponding policy solutions.

We propose a high-level EU-US Summit where heads of state from both sides of the Atlantic come together to discuss a broad range of issues, with a strong focus on aligning approaches to China, especially as they pertain to climate, technology, and Taiwan.

Climate: Harnessing Green Tech & Adaptation Strategies

On climate change mitigation and adaptation, China is both a partner and competitor. China is the largest global carbon emitter, but is also a leader in clean tech. The transatlantic partners must show stronger global leadership on addressing climate change, leveraging the green transition for economic growth, and identifying opportunities for stronger cooperation with China. We must balance the need to cooperate with China on addressing climate change, while removing economic dependencies on Chinese green tech.

At the Summit, leaders will agree on how to more closely align their approaches, for example by setting common climate standards in areas such as emissions and green technology. Further, they must identify global solutions, potentially in cooperation with China, to address damages caused by climate change and promote access to adaptation strategies, especially in the Global South.

Protecting Critical Technologies & Fostering Transatlantic Trade:

We seek to leverage and strengthen the EU-US Trade and Technology Council, which has great untapped potential as a platform for transatlantic cooperation on critical issues. Thus, the TTC should map critical sectors to deepen cooperation on de-risking from China. Leaders will use this mapping at the Summit to set clear, high-level targets for the TTC.

The Summit should identify how to align goals on a number of tech topics, with different approaches based on how critical these technologies are. We propose the following framework to map these issues:

	Critical/ Essential	Profitable	Nice-to-have
Topic examples	data	solar	gaming
Potential policy examples	EU-US shared standards on AI	EU-US clean tech free trade agreement; shared R&D programs	consultations to monitor & evaluate

Resilience of Taiwan & Conflict Deterrence

China seeks to isolate Taiwan and divide US and European partners; the US and Germany should build linkages with Taiwan to strengthen Taiwan’s resilience and deter a potential conflict. At the Summit, they will identify priority areas for cooperation across diplomatic, information, military, and information (DIME) spheres, such as:

- **Diplomatic:** The US and EU should speak with a unified voice regarding political shows of support to Taiwan, such as high-level visits. They should leverage multilateral institutions to coordinate with Taiwan as well.
- **Information:** The US and Germany should counter mis- and disinformation regarding activities related to Taiwan and should increase public messaging on why Taiwan’s security is important to Americans and Germans.
- **Military:** The US and Germany should increase intelligence sharing between themselves and with Taiwan related to indicators and warnings. Regarding munitions, they should collaborate on R&D and procurement in order to increase interoperability, improving readiness.
- **Economic:** The US and Germany should coordinate on economic policy towards Taiwan and increase supply chain resiliency.