



EU-CELAC AGENDA



Defining the place of Ukraine

Policy Opinion

General background

The third CELAC-EU Summit is to be held on July 17-18 after an eight-year break. It will be the second summit in a row to be held in Brussels. It will be co-chaired by the President of the European Council, Charles Michel, and the Prime Minister of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Ralph E. Gonsalves, who is the interim chair of CELAC.

In January 2013, the first CELAC-EU Summit was held in Santiago, Chile. In a joint declaration, both parties confirmed their commitment to pursue policies that promote trade and investment between the EU and LAC countries, as well as the resolution of environmental and social problems. The document titled 'Action Plan for 2013-2015' outlined the priority of gender issues in the context of interregional relations, aiming to ensure gender equality, protection, and promotion of women's rights. During the Second Summit, which took place on June 10-11, 2015 in Brussels, it was agreed to enhance cooperation on climate change and the fight against drugs. As a result, the new 2015 Action Plan was adopted, which included key areas such as 'education' and 'citizen security'. After an eight-year hiatus, the third CELAC-EU Summit is scheduled to take place on July 17-18. This will be the second consecutive summit held in Brussels and it will be co-chaired by the President of the European Council, Charles Michel, and the Prime Minister of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Ralph E. Gonsalves, who is currently the interim chair of CELAC.

The importance of the EU-CELAC summit:

- This meeting will serve as an indicator of the future development of interregional cooperation, revealing the strategy to be adopted (whether more practical or declarative in nature) and the priority areas of cooperation to be identified. Given the People's Republic of China's aim to enhance cooperation with Latin American countries, the Brussels summit could potentially serve as a milestone in determining whether the EU's position in the region will be strengthened.
- Previous EU-CELAC summits primarily emphasized economic cooperation and the implementation of technological projects. Issues of a political or security nature, such as the EU's stance towards regimes in the LAC region, human rights, and etc., were not prioritized, which aligned with the preferences of Latin American countries. However, the current meeting involves the EU raising concerns regarding political and security matters, including the war in Ukraine and the Latin American states' position on Russian aggression, violations of state sovereignty, and humanitarian disasters.

- Some countries in the LAC region have a historical trauma stemming from the colonial period. Hence, they might seize this opportunity to draw comparisons between Russian imperialism, which Ukraine is currently opposing, and European colonialism, which impacted the region's population. The objective is to seek acknowledgment, condemnation, and potential financial support from EU countries as a form of moral and financial reparations.
- For Spain, which currently holds the EU presidency, hosting the summit will serve as a test of its capacity to be an effective mediator between Europe and the Spanish-speaking world across the Atlantic. This role is based on the linguistic and civilizational commonality it shares with most countries in the LAC region
- For Ukraine, this summit will provide insight into the effectiveness of the EU as a whole, serving as a "bridge" to convey Ukraine's position, especially the Peace Formula, to the political elites of the region.

Addressing the participants of the EU-CELAC Summit:

- We propose to support Ukraine's Peace Formula, which encompasses provisions of universal significance. Similar to the Atlantic Charter, which was signed by nations fighting against Nazi Germany and later served as the foundation for the UN Charter, shaping the post-war world's security architecture, Ukraine's Peace Formula responds to the current security challenges humanity has faced, regardless of geographical location. Each country has the opportunity to demonstrate its leadership qualities by implementing these provisions and contributing to the development of a new global security framework.
- We call on the summit participants to issue a joint statement on the inadmissibility of the use of nuclear weapons and the complete demilitarization under international control of the territory of the Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant - the largest nuclear power plant in Europe, which is currently fully controlled by Russian troops. Ukraine believes that Russia is not just blackmailing the world, being at the station, but also cannot guarantee nuclear safety, given the events of the June military coup in Russia itself, which revealed the regime's instability. Russia is able to cross the border and exploit potentially hazardous facilities that carry a man-made threat as a weapon in Russian aggression against Ukraine, as exemplified by the events with its detonation of the Kakhovka dam. At the same time, we take into account the security traditions of Latin American countries that are signatories of the Tlatelolco Treaty (1967) on the prohibition of nuclear weapons in the region. Considering the LAC countries emphasis on their neutrality, this mediation initiative would not only address nuclear safety concerns globally but also enhance the LAC's role in the global system of international relations.
- We urge the summit participants, particularly the countries from the LAC region, to act as mediators in ensuring global food security. As the validity period of the "grain initiative" coincides with the start of the EU-CELAC summit, we propose that Latin American countries, which heavily rely on food imports, take on the role of guaranteeing the security of commercial shipping in the Black Sea for uninterrupted agricultural product supply to the global market. With their own merchant fleet, they

could organize a joint flotilla of ships to transport agricultural products and/or provide inspectors to monitor compliance with the "grain agreement." This initiative will also enhance the LAC region's standing on the world stage.

- We call on the summit participants to issue a declaration condemning the mass deportations of the population from illegally occupied regions in Ukraine, with particular emphasis on the criminal transfer of individuals to the territory of the Russian Federation and the adoption of children.
- We expect that Spain, as the current EU presiding country, along with the LAC countries, will provide assistance in identifying and attracting investments for the post-war reconstruction of Ukraine.
- We urge the participants of the summit to address the issue of historical responsibility regarding the era of colonialism. Ukraine is also currently defending its independence, resisting Russian imperialism, and fighting for the right to independently determine its own vector of democratic development. We count on our Latin American friends, who have historically faced injustice from individual states in the past, to definitely support us on this path.
- We kindly request your support for the idea of organizing a Ukraine-Latin America summit, which would serve as a platform for discussing not only political and security matters. Ukraine offers promising investment opportunities for Latin American countries, both in post-war reconstruction and due to our geographical proximity to the EU (membership in which is a strategic goal for us), thus creating favorable conditions for Latin American businesses. Furthermore, Ukraine can propose joint actions and initiatives to enhance cooperation with the states of the region in the fields of security, combating transnational crime, terrorism, and drug proliferation.
- We kindly request your support for Ukraine's initiative to organize a global Peace Summit. For the LAC countries, this will not only present an opportunity to participate in a significant diplomatic event on a global scale but also to express their vision of world order and advocate for a fair distribution of roles in the global system of international relations.

The current EU-CELAC summit presents a significant opportunity to enhance interaction not only between the EU and the countries of the region but also on a broader global scale. However, it can also be as a "disillusionment" due to different perceptions regarding the prioritization of security threats in Europe and the LAC region within the context of the modern world, as well as the enduring "complex of images" stemming from a shared past that still hinders an optimistic and unbiased view of a common future.

Furthermore, the "Ukrainian factor", a decisive joint counteraction to Russian aggression, which poses a security challenge to the entire system of international law, can also serve as a catalyst for historical reconciliation between regions, fostering further technological and economic progress.

The brief of the Latin America and the Caribbean Studies Program of the Council of Foreign Policy "Ukrainian Prism" was prepared with the support of the International Renaissance Foundation. The views expressed are the sole responsibility of the Ukrainian Prism and do not necessarily reflect the position of the International Renaissance Foundation.