



**European Council**  
The President

Brussels, 20 November, 2024

Dear Colleagues,

I invite you to our European Council Meeting in Antwerp, Belgium on Thursday, 2 January – Sunday, 5 January to engage in discussions on several pressing issues affecting our Union.

Our meeting is of critical importance: the agenda addresses the short-term with concerns regarding the arduous position of Ukraine, but also long-term regarding external accelerated technological development and our Union's environmental challenges.

We must prioritize investments and policies that will improve competitiveness, such as implementation of overarching industrial policy that will create protective measures and strengthen innovation within the Union. We must strive towards greater defence collaboration, aiming for 35 % joint procurement across the Union to reduce overlap with uncoordinated defence procurement. Timely cooperation is crucial in addressing these time sensitive matters.

It is essential that the Union discuss expansion of aid to Ukraine, utilizing an integrated defence policy to cement our position against Russia's aggression. It is also imperative to consider methods of reinforcing unity complementary to the NATO framework, focusing on expansion of defence budgets, and gauging the continued support from the United States after the recent election.

Within the discussion of expanding industrial competitiveness, we must restate our commitment to the Green Deal and Net-Zero Act, ensuring Union efforts towards the Paris Agreement are adhered to, and that all nations are on track for their 2030 deadline. In

correlation with these positions, we must examine expanding decarbonization through inexpensive, sustainable means whilst also investing in the foundations of the Union's economic competitiveness. It is essential to the European Union's survival that all parties come together, addressing issues ranging from climate change to defence and industrial cooperation in order to ensure to success of the Union, and its citizens for decades to come.

I look forward to fruitful discussions at our session in Antwerp.

*Antonio Costa*

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