

Bundeskanzleramt
Bundeskanzlerin
Angela Merkel
Willy-Brandt-Straße 1
10557 Berlin

Brussels, 5 November 2018

Subject: Joint open letter regarding Nord Stream 2

Dear Madam Chancellor,

We write to you and to your government regarding the Nord Stream 2 pipeline - a project that continues to be developed in full speed despite all the concerns voiced from many of Germany's European neighbours and from European institutions.

Whatever the reasons behind Russia's efforts to build Nord Stream 2, one thing is clear: Russia is not building this pipeline alone. Several European companies are cooperating with Gazprom for the project. But even more importantly, Nord Stream 2 would not be built without the consistent support that your governments, Madam Chancellor, have lent to it for many years. It is more than obvious that Nord Stream 2 would fall, wasn't there the decision by the German government to ignore all opposition to this economic deal with far-reaching political implications. It might benefit a few, but it would have severe economic down-sides on a larger scale and very destructive and corrupting political consequences.

Time has come to call a spade a spade. Germany's position on Nord Stream 2 runs counter to the goals of the European Energy Union. It antagonizes many of Germany's partners because it leaves their interests unaddressed, and it gives Russia additional strategic leverage over the EU because it increases the EU's energy dependency on Russia.

Your government, Madam Chancellor, is allowing a major rift between EU member countries to fester at a time when the EU needs cohesion more than ever before. Europe cannot afford this. Nor can Germany.

Germany, by relying for up to 80% of its gas supplies solely on Gazprom, would automatically reduce its own energy independence. The impact on the energy security of the EU would also be negative, with significant impacts beyond the realm of energy policy. Germany is ignoring the security concerns that countries around the Baltic, NATO and the United States of America have been warning against. Germany's own security is obviously intimately connected to that of its neighbours and partners. Germany, by holding on to Nord Stream 2, would continue to act as a divider. Germany would act against the will of the European Commission, the European Parliament and the majority of the Council of the European Union.

We ask you, Madam Chancellor, that your government reconsiders and changes its policy on Nord Stream 2. Stop blocking the work on the Gas Directive. Support the course set by the European Commission and the European Parliament. Let Russia's President know that Germany will stand by its EU partners and by Ukraine. Choose the European way, not the "Germany first" way. Just recently, the bitter British experience with Russian meddling has demonstrated amply, how important it is for affected parties to be able to rely on the solidarity of their partners.

The benefits of Nord Stream 2 would go to the Kremlin, to Gazprom and, maybe, to a few Western companies. The heavy political cost for completing Nord Stream 2 would fall on Germany's shoulders. Is that in Germany's interest? Does Germany live up to its European responsibility by putting some very particular interests above our shared European interest? You know, Madam Chancellor, that the answer to both questions is "No".

Germany, by acting short-sightedly, would undermine the solidarity principle within the EU. That is the very principle on which the EU must be based, if it is to be successful. Your government is not following the right priorities, Madam Chancellor. Please, do change course!

Yours sincerely,

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