

Marshall Center, Munich Security Conference Host Russia-Focused Policy Discussions

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GARMISCH-PARTENKIRCHEN, Germany, Dec. 11, 2017 — The George C. Marshall European Center for Security Studies and the Munich Security Conference's Loisach Group met here Dec. 5-7 to discuss transatlantic policy solutions focused on Russia.

Invited national security experts and Marshall Center faculty evaluated the extent to which current U.S. and German policies toward Russia are coherent and structured to reduce tension between Russia and the West, officials said.



The group looked to identify U.S. and German collaborative approaches to diverse challenges such as the Ukraine, cybersecurity and Arctic security, officials explained, as well as ways to overcome or mitigate current disagreements among the transatlantic partners.

Foundation of the Loisach Group

The Marshall Center and the Munich Security Conference created a partnership in August to commit to mutual cooperation in the European security dialogue, leading to establishment of the Loisach Group, which seeks to provide U.S. and

German defense policymakers with sound recommendations on deterring Russian aggression and building a constructive relationship with Moscow.

“The Loisach Group is the perfect platform for German and the U.S. to come together and speak frankly to one another on these issues,” said Ian Brzezinski, senior fellow of the [Brent Scowcroft Center on International Security's Atlantic Council](#). “I think it is part of the process that German Minister of Defense Ursula von der Leyen and U.S. Secretary of Defense James Mattis wanted to create.”

This process was further strengthened in June, when [Mattis and von der Leyen visited the Marshall Center](#) on the 70th anniversary of the foundation of the Marshall Plan, officials said, noting that both defense leaders stated the need to establish a strategic dialogue between their countries.

Wide Circulation of Recommendations

The policy ideas produced in the upcoming papers will be published through collaboration between the Marshall Center and Munich Security Conference to give the recommendations the widest possible circulation, officials said.

“We think that the Loisach Group is the ideal platform for making a reality out of the concepts developed during a strategic dialogue.” said Jack Clarke, the Marshall Center's lead professor for the Loisach Group.

The group will publish its findings in three separate papers at the end of the Munich Security Conference in February, bringing together conference speakers, Marshall Center faculty and other strategic policy experts to summarize what was accomplished during the conference and how to best use those findings

in the future. The group will host a similar joint event with the Munich Security Conference during July's NATO summit in Brussels, with the goal of addressing emerging security challenges.