
BROKEN AND DEFEATED, URSULA VON DER LEYEN'S EUROPEAN COMMISSION IS A SINKING SHIP

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This weeks European Council meeting was supposed to be Ursula von der Leyens finest hour. After a bitter succession of public humiliations [] that great stain on her probity and credibility that was the Pfizergate debacle to a wave of no-confidence votes in the European Parliament and, more recently, the scandalous arrest of former EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs Federica Mogherini [] was meant to have been her triumphant return. Under her decisive leadership, things would now finally get done: the EU-Mercosur trade deal would, after a gargantuan two and a half decades of negotiations, be signed just in time for the Commission president to fly to South America for a caipirinha-filled self-congratulatory tour. Most importantly, she would implement her great obsession, prevail in her preferred moral battle: punish the Russians by giving Kyiv Moscows financial reserves. Who, then, would think of impeaching her?

Things turned out somewhat differently. Von der Leyen had time and again claimed that the only way to keep Kyiv afloat financially would be by tapping into the hundreds of billions of euros held by the Russian Central Bank at Euroclear, in Belgium. European Council President António Costa had even [] rather buffoonishly [] to effectively kidnap Europes heads of government in Brussels until a decision was reached. The same with the Mercosur deal, which Commission officials had attempted, until the very last second, to force down Europes throat. But it was all to no avail. Italian Prime Minister Georgia Meloni put an end to any lingering hope of a hastened approval of the trade deal when she, too, agreed that the guarantees it would give to Europes farmers would still be insufficient. Von der Leyen shamefully had to postpone her Brazilian holiday to a later date.

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