



European Council
The President

PRESS
EN

STATEMENT
EUCO 259/14
PRESSE 617
PR PCE 228
Brussels, 1 December 2014

**Statement by European Council President Donald Tusk
after his telephone call with U.S. President Barack Obama,
1 December 2014**

I was pleased today to speak to the President of the United States, Barack Obama. That the phone call takes place on my first day in office as President of the European Council underlines the importance I attach to our relations with the U.S. I was happy to hear the American President's equally strong commitment to our transatlantic bond.

We discussed the important work ahead of us in negotiating the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP). The TTIP is not just about free trade; it is an expression of our geopolitical partnership. We agreed to step up our efforts towards reaching agreement.

We touched upon the global economic situation. I highlighted the upcoming European Council discussion on Europe's investment plan.

We shared our concerns over the crisis in Ukraine and agreed on how important it is for Russia to withdraw from eastern Ukraine, to stop supplying troops and equipment, to allow effective control of the border and to allow the OSCE to carry out its mission. All hostages should be released. The European Union and the United States continue working together closely, including on sanctions as well as on financial support to Ukraine. We agreed to stay united and to keep a steady course.

We touched on security matters and the need to further strengthen EU-NATO ties.

Finally, President Obama thanked the European Union for its more than euro 1 bn pledge to fight the terrible spread of Ebola.