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## NO MORE MR. NICE EUROPE

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By Hans Kribbe

Some 15 years ago, European Commission President Romano Prodi proposed a vision of Europe surrounded by a ring of friends. His words did not age well. Today, instead, the Continent finds itself encircled by czars, sultans and emperors, ruthlessly playing the EU.

Another standoff with Russian President Vladimir Putin looms. Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan is redrawing the map of the eastern Mediterranean. Chinese President Xi Jinping is expanding his influence in the Balkans. Then theres Donald Trump, who calls the EU almost as bad as China, just smaller.

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