

## **Goodbye Obama, Goodbye Britain**

### **Opinion**

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By Judy Dempsey for Carnegie Europe, Jan 19, 2017 Barack Obama's last press conference as U.S. president and British Prime Minister Theresa May's first speech spelling out her plans for taking the UK out of the EU have thrown down the gauntlet to Europeans. Yet it is far from certain that EU governments have the leadership and foresight to prepare for the immense shifts taking place in the transatlantic relationship and Europe itself.

Obama's valedictory news conference on January 18 and another he gave earlier in Chicago, his hometown, resonated openness, honesty about foreign policy mistakes, and commitment to America's European allies—in both NATO and the EU. By contrast, May's defensive speech on January 17, in which she focused on how Britain would positively thrive once it left the EU, had many contradictions. Can a Britain that espouses openness to the world realize that aim when it wants to close its doors to EU citizens—2.26 million of whom worked in Britain as of September 2016. [⋮]

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