

**Question for written answer E-003863/2026
to the Commission**

Rule 144

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Subject: New associated country status for Canada

In her State of the Union address on 16 September 2026, Ursula von der Leyen proposed that Canada become ‘the first associate member of the Union’.

This new ‘status’, which comes on top of existing arrangements such as association agreements, appears to be driven by the current tensions characterising bilateral relations between the United States and Canada, but its precise nature does not yet seem to be clearly defined.

In the context of the EU-Canada Summit on 29-30 October:

1. Apart from Canada, is the Commission prepared to extend this new statutory framework – the nature of which is uncertain, whether the outcome will be cooperation or a step towards integration – to other third countries that apply for it?
2. To what extent might the institutionalisation of a special status, subject to transatlantic geopolitical fluctuations, undermine European strategic autonomy, particularly in the context of a potential future bilateral rapprochement between Canada and the United States?
3. What practical implications will this new status have in the field of defence, particularly with regard to access to funding programmes and compliance with the principle of European preference?

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