

# Remarks by President Trump and President Macron of France Before Bilateral Meeting | London, United Kingdom | The White House

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**PRESIDENT TRUMP:** Well, thank you very much. It's great to be with President Macron of France. And we've had a fairly long relationship and a very good one. And we were just discussing certain things, and then we're going to have a long conversation afterwards.

I want to, first of all, before we begin, I want to pay my respects to the great warriors that you lost in Mali — 13, and helicopters. It was very sad. I've gotten a report on it. We talked about it. And please give my condolences to the families and to France. And they're great fighters. You've done a fantastic job in that whole area. It's a tough area. So we appreciate it very much.

And we'll be talking about a lot of things, including NATO and including trade. We do a lot of trade with France, and we have a minor dispute. I think we'll probably be able to work it out. But we have a big trade relationship, and I'm sure that, within a short period of time, things will be looking very rosy, we hope.

And that's usually the case with the two of us. We get it worked out. We've had a lot of good — a lot of good things. We've done a lot of good things together, as partners. Our countries have been partners in many good ventures, including some having to do with radical Islam and others. And it's always worked out. So I look forward to our discussion.

We made a lot of progress in our first 25 minutes, and we intend to make a lot of progress in our next hour, maybe hour and a half.

So thank you very much, my friend.

**PRESIDENT MACRON:** (Speaks French.) (Translation inaudible.)

**PRESIDENT TRUMP:** Okay. Thank you very much.

**Q** President Trump, do you have a better understanding of what President Macron was saying about NATO?

**PRESIDENT TRUMP:** Well, we just began discussing NATO. And what I'm liking about NATO is that a lot of countries have stepped up, I think, really at my behest. And to — also, yourself, you're close to the level. But they've stepped up and they've put up a lot of money. I told you, it was \$130 million — \$130 billion. And that's a lot.

And they're now stepping up again. It's going to be \$400 billion over a very short — we have commitments for \$400 billion. And we just left the Secretary General. And he — he's got some things that are very important. And I discussed with him

the flexibility, so that we have it not just with one area of the world — you and I discuss this all the time — we have all areas of the world, because NATO is a lot different than it was. And now it's certainly a lot different over the last three years.

So we have a lot of countries stepping up and putting up a lot of money. The number, as of this moment, is exactly \$131 billion — that's a year. And that's a tremendous amount of money, but it's not enough. And they also raise and have commitments for \$400 billion.

So NATO, which was really heading in the wrong direction three years ago — it was heading down. If you look at a graph, it was to a point where I don't think they could have gone on much longer. Now it's actually very strong and getting stronger. Many people are committed to that 2 percent. And ultimately, I think the 2 percent will be raised.

And the President and I, I think, feel that we need more flexibility — and I think we both agree on that — so that we can use it for other things, not just looking at one specific country. You know, a lot of people say it was meant to look at, originally, the Soviet Union — now Russia. But we also have other things to look at, whether it's radical Islamic terrorism, whether it's the tremendous growth of China. There are a lot of other things.

So NATO is becoming different than it was, much bigger than it was, and much stronger than it was because people are now fulfilling their commitments. There are some countries that aren't fulfilling their commitment, and those countries are going to be dealt with. Maybe I'll deal with them from a trade standpoint. Maybe I'll deal with them in a different way. I'll work something out where they have to pay.

But, you know, we don't want to have people delinquent. We don't have — I don't think it's fair for us to be involved — including France, by the way — to be involved, and you have countries that aren't paying their way. They — you know, they're less than 1 percent. You have a couple that are less than 1 percent. Not fair.

So NATO has made a lot of progress over the last three years, and the word “flexibility” is very important. They're not just looking at one area now; they're looking at the world. And that's very important. To me, it's very important.

Please.

**PRESIDENT MACRON:** I know that my statements created some reactions and shake a little bit a lot of people. I do stand by it. And I have to say, when you look at what NATO is and should be: First of all, this is a burden share. And President Trump just reminded you of some figures and the fact that this is perfectly true that the U.S. overinvested, decade after decade, and it is number one, by far.

And I do share this statement. That's why I'm a strong supporter of a stronger European component in NATO, which is exactly what we have done. So, in terms of cost sharing, we are investing 1.9 percent of our GDP. We are increasing our GDP. We will be at (inaudible).

But when we speak about NATO, it's not just about money. We have to be respectful these are our soldiers. The first burden we share, the first cost we pay, is our soldiers' lives. And I do believe that, in such circumstances, we do pay what we have to pay for collective security.

When I look at the situation in Syria, in Iraq, but as well as Sahel, France is definitely present. It's my first point, is that we have, today, strategy clarifications to be done. It's impossible just to say, "We have to put money, we have to put soldiers." We have to be clear on the fundamentals of what NATO should be. And this is not the case today. What about peace in Europe? I want clarification about that.

After the decision of the end of the INF Treaty, we have to build something new. Because now this is a risk for Germany, France, and a lot of European countries to have new missiles coming from Russia, exposing us. We need such a clarification. And I want the European component to be part of the future negotiations of such a new INF Treaty.

When we speak about the enemy, I would say, of the Alliance, what is the objective? To protect our partners against external threats. And France will do it, and we will have full solidarity vis-à-vis eastern and northern states in Europe. But the common enemy today are the terrorist groups, as we mentioned. And I'm sorry to say that we don't have the same definition of terrorism around the table.

When I look at Turkey, they now are fighting against those who fight with us, who fought with us, shoulder to shoulder, against ISIS. And sometimes they work with ISIS forces. This is an issue, and this is a strategic issue. If we just have discussion about what we pay, and we don't have clear discussions about the situation, we are not serious; we are not serious for our soldiers, we are not serious for our people. This is the very reason of my statements.

I do believe we need strategic clarifications: How to build long-term peace in Europe. Who is the enemy today? And let's be clear and work all together on that.

I know that we do share exactly the same view. Having less (inaudible) exposure of the U.S. means more European investment and more (inaudible) on the European side. I do agree. Being strict and very efficient against terrorist groups means having clear, clear definition of these groups and no ambiguity. I think we do that.

**PRESIDENT TRUMP:** Well, one thing I will also — I'd like to say that you've been really doing a great job in Africa, and you've been very much involved there, more than most. And that's been fantastic. I appreciate you saying the United States, for decades, have been paying, really, way, way disproportionately too much for NATO. And you'd have other countries paying far too little that are very directly benefitted by it and by the United States involvement.

And we're changing that around somewhat, and it's very important. But we're a very important player. I think, without us, NATO certainly is not the same thing, as we've discussed and discussed it at length. This morning, we discussed it with Secretary General Stoltenberg. But we're behind you 100 percent. And all of the money that's been raised and all of these countries that are all of the sudden putting up money, it's a great thing to see.

But we do have a great — we really have a different objective, I think, right now. We're looking at a much bigger picture. And that includes — well, it includes — you mentioned Iraq, but it really includes Iran, too. I think that if you look at what's going on in Iran, they have massive riots. They're having protests all over the country. And they're killing a lot of people. Everybody knows that. That's why they turned off their Internet systems, so nobody can find out.

But if the media would go there — and it's, I think, very hard for the media to go there, frankly, right now. But they're killing a lot of people.

But NATO has come a long way in three years, and it's something that we're very proud of, because we're with them. NATO serves a fantastic function if everybody is involved. If they're not involved — and I really believe that the President is very much involved and likes the idea of NATO, but he wants it also to be utilized properly. If it's not utilized properly — we all agree, right? That's no good.

So we've had a very good discussion. A lot of people — we're meeting with a lot of countries later, as you know. And they're really stepping up — for the most part, they're all stepping up. We have one or two that aren't, and we'll have to deal with them in a different way.

Maybe we — as I said, we'll deal with them on trade. We have a lot of power with respect to trade. They make a fortune with the United States, and then they don't pay their bills. That's no good. But NATO has come a long way in three years, and it's become very powerful. I think very, very powerful. And it's become, I think, a much fairer statement in terms of the United States, because we're able to go down a little bit. We were paying 4 to 4.3 percent of the largest GDP ever. Nobody has ever had a GDP like we have right now. And nobody has come close. And other people were paying 1 percent; some people were paying less than 1 percent of a very small GDP. It's not fair. And if they get attacked, we protect them. But it's not fair. So a lot of changes have been made.

Phil, go ahead.

Q Yeah. Mr. President, what is your message to President Macron about America's tech companies? And what will your process be in determining what additional products from France you might apply tariffs to?

PRESIDENT TRUMP: Right. Well, we're working on that right now. We have discussed it. I think we'll be able to work something out, I hope. And maybe not. Maybe we'll do it through taxing. You know, we could work it out easily through taxing.

But the techs — you know, they're American companies — the tech companies that you're talking about. They're not my favorite people because they're not exactly for me, but that's okay. I don't care. They're American companies. And we want to tax American companies, Phil. That's important. We want to tax them. That's not for somebody else to tax them.

And, as the President knows, we taxed wine and we have other taxes scheduled. But we'd rather not do that. But that's the way it would work. So it's either going to work out, or we'll work out some mutually beneficial tax. And the tax will be substantial. And I'm not sure it's going to come to that, but it might. It might.

Q Mr. President, has France committed to step up when it comes to taking back foreign fighters in Syria?

PRESIDENT TRUMP: Well, I haven't asked that to the President today. I have over the period of time. We have a tremendous amount of captured fighters — ISIS fighters — over in Syria, and they're all under lock and key. But many are from France, many are from Germany, many are from UK. They're mostly from Europe. And some of the countries are agreeing.

I have not spoken to the President about that. Would you like some nice ISIS fighters? I can give them to you. You can take — you can take everyone you can.

PRESIDENT MACRON: Let's be serious: The very large number of fighters you have on the ground are ISIS fighters coming from Syria, from Iraq, and the

region. It is true that you have foreign fighters coming from Europe, but this is a tiny minority of the overall problem we have in the region.

And I think number-one priority — because it's not yet finished — is to get rid of ISIS and these terrorist groups. This is our number-one priority. And it's not yet done. I'm sorry to say that. Yes, you still have fighters in this region — in Syria, and now in Iraq — and more and more. And the whole destabilization of the region makes the situation more difficult to fix the situation against ISIS.

Second, some of these foreign fighters are being (inaudible) in Iraq because of the deeds, precisely, they act in this very region. And we will have a case-by-case approach. We have a humanitarian approach for children already organized, and we will have a case-by-case approach.

But, for me, the very first objective in the region is to finish war against ISIS. And don't make any mistake: Your number-one problem are not the foreign fighters. This is the ISIS fighters in the region. And you have more and more of these fighters due to the situation today.

PRESIDENT TRUMP: This is why he's a great politician, because that was one of the greatest non-answers I've ever heard — (laughter) — and that's okay.

PRESIDENT MACRON: Because sometimes you can have some temptation from the U.S. side — I don't say about President Trump, but could be the press — to say, "This is European responsibility." I'm sorry to say that.

We have some of our people, but if you don't look at the reality of the situation that is number one — not to be ambiguous with these groups — this is why we started to discuss about our relations with Turkey. But I think any ambiguity with Turkey vis-à-vis these groups is detrimental to everybody for the situation on the ground.

PRESIDENT TRUMP: France has actually taken back some fighters. But we have a lot of fighters. We've captured a lot of people. And we have captured 100 percent of the caliphate, but you know that that means that it's still — they keep going and going.

We sent a small contingent in, and we wiped out another portion of ISIS. We don't want to happen, to me, what happened with President Obama, where it reformed and then it became stronger than it was in the first place. So we don't want that to happen.

And, as I said before: We've taken the oil. We have the oil. So we have total control of the oil so that they're not going to be able to use that.

They use that oil to really — to fuel up their wealth, to fuel up their money. That was their primary source of income. And they get contributions. So we have, now, lists of where these contributions come from, which is very important. You have people contributing, if you can believe it. Some of these people are wealthy people that make contributions. And we have lists of —

Well, we learned a lot. You know, when we got al-Baghdadi, that was a great get. And when we killed him, we have a lot of information that I'm revealing now for the first time, but we also got a lot of good information.

So a lot of things are happening. And France has been very helpful, I have to say that. They've been very, very helpful.

Okay? Go ahead. Any other questions, please?

Q (Speaks French.) (Translation inaudible.)

PRESIDENT MACRON: (Speaks French.) (Translation inaudible.)

PRESIDENT TRUMP: And I largely agree with that answer. I just have to say, though — you know, I came into a position where the European Union was making anywhere from 100 to 150 billion dollars a year in deficits to the United States. They were making it and we were losing it. And so we had to do something that is fair, not severe — I think fair. We're losing tremendous amounts of money.

As you know, the European Union is very strong on barriers. Barriers — meaning, certain of our products can't come in, including agricultural product. It just can't come in. We can't sell it. And yet, the European Union sells openly to the United States, and, generally, untaxed or taxed at a low level.

So these are problems that we're talking about. These are problems that we're working out. And, you know, the digital tax is the least of it. I inherited a situation where the European Union — which was formed, partially, for this reason; I guess, for a lot of reasons it was formed, but partially to make better or take advantage of the United States. And they've done that very brilliantly. And, frankly, it's not right.

So, I've exposed it. A lot of people didn't know it. And we're doing things about it; we have no choice. Because the United States can't continue to lose the kind of money that they've lost over the last — literally, since the formation of the European Union. And I think we'll work something out.

They want to talk, as you know. The new head wants to talk, who is supposed to be a very respected woman, very highly respected. And I look forward to meeting her. They want to meet.

But we have a very unfair trade situation, where the U.S. loses a lot of money for many, many years with the European Union — billions and billions of dollars. I mean, to be specific, over \$150 billion a year. So we don't want to be doing that.

And we — we can make a deal. We could take a harsh approach. We could solve that problem instantaneously if we wanted to. But I don't want to do that. These are friends of ours. These are people that we've had very extraordinary relationships with, and I do, personally. And I'm sure we can work something out.

Q You mentioned earlier the Iran protests. Does the United States support these protestors in Iran?

PRESIDENT TRUMP: I don't want to comment on that. But the answer is "no." But I don't want to comment on that.

Q Mr. President, on Turkey, President Macron just said he wanted the United States to do more in terms of standing up to President Erdoğan and clarifying the terms of that relationship. Are you supportive of those efforts by other NATO Allies, or are you standing in the way of that?

PRESIDENT TRUMP: Well, I can only say we have a very good relationship with Turkey and with President Erdoğan — I do. I can't speak for the President of France. I mean, I — we have a very good relationship.

We pulled our soldiers out and we said, “You can patrol your own border now. I don’t care who you do it with, but we’re not going to have soldiers patrolling the border that’s been fought over for 2,000 years.”

But we took our soldiers out. We put some of those soldiers around the oil, where we’ve captured the oil and taken the oil. And we have the oil. But we’ve — and we’ve brought some home, and we will be bringing some home. And we’ve sent some to other areas. Okay?

Q Sir —

PRESIDENT TRUMP: But we have a very good relationship with Turkey.

Q Mr. President —

PRESIDENT MACRON: And just, on Turkey, to be clear: We have a lot of cooperation with Turkey — on security, on trade, migration. And so there is a full-fledged agenda with the European Union and France.

I do respect all leaders, whatever they can say, even bad things about myself. I do respect, and I never (inaudible) anybody.

But now, it’s a question for this NATO Summit. I think we need clarification from the Turkish side. This is not us to qualify them in what they are doing. But I do believe at least we have two clarifications to be asked: How is it possible to be a member of the Alliance, to work with our office, to buy our materials, to be integrated, and to buy the S-400 from Russians? Technically, it is not possible.

These clarifications to be provided by the Turkish President, as far as he wants to be part.

Secondly, I understand, from Turkey, that they want to block all the declarations of this summit if we do not agree about their definition of terrorist organizations — qualifying YPG and the others as terrorist groups, which is not our definition.

These two points have to be clarified if they want to — to be a serious member of the Alliance. I think so.

PRESIDENT TRUMP: This is why we’re — this is really why we’re having meetings. Those are our points. And we’ll be discussing that with the President today.

Yes.

Q Mr. President, will you issue sanctions on Turkey over their purchase of the S-400 missile system?

PRESIDENT TRUMP: We’re looking at it now and we’re talking about it now. As you know, Turkey wanted to buy our Patriot system, and the Obama administration wouldn’t let them. And they only let them when they were ready to buy another system, which is not the same system.

But Turkey, for a long period of time, wanted very much to buy the Patriot system, which is our system, which is what NATO uses — which is a great system, which is the best system. But they wouldn’t sell it to Turkey.

So, you know, there are two sides to the story. I have to say this. But we will be discussing that with Turkey in a little while. We’ll be meeting with Turkey in a little while, and also tomorrow.

PRESIDENT MACRON: But to be clear about this point and to — for you to have them: The fuller view — they were discussing with the Europeans on SAMP/T, and we accepted to sell the SAMP/T to them. So these decisions is not you. And one of our (inaudible) explained, by the refusal of a few years ago of the Americans not to sell that Patriots. It's their own decision, even having a European option, totally compliant with NATO. So they decided not to be compliant with NATO. (Inaudible.)

Q Sir — Mr. President, Prime Minister Johnson, I believe, is organizing some sort of discussion later today about the Syria conflict. Are you going to take part in that and meet with him? And if not, why?

PRESIDENT TRUMP: Are you talking about Ambassador Johnson?

Q Boris Johnson.

Q Boris Johnson, the Prime Minister.

PRESIDENT TRUMP: Oh, I thought you meant Woody Johnson.

Q No.

PRESIDENT TRUMP: And I said, "Boy, he's really risen rapidly," Woody. Where is Woody? Is he here? This is his house. I can't believe he's not here.

Yes, we'll be meeting with Prime Minister Johnson in a little while. I'll be seeing him later on. We're going over to Number 10, which is a very exciting place to be, as you know. And we'll be discussing a lot of different things.

Yes.

Q And one other related question: The London Bridge attack from a few days ago, do you have any comment here? Your first day in London —

PRESIDENT TRUMP: No, I don't have a comment on the London Bridge attack, other than to say that I was very proud of those people that grabbed him and did such a good job, between the fire extinguishers and whatever else. It was an amazing job they did. And he was very violent; you could see that. I mean, this was captured very much on tape.

I think the — the way the — I think they were British citizens — the way they stepped up was incredible. That was really great.

So, a terrible thing. Terrible attack. A lot of people very badly hurt. I believe three or four killed. Is it four now, today? So, it's terrible. It's a terrible thing. And I know it's an act of terrorism. It's been declared an act of terrorism. Radical Islamic terrorism, by the way. And it's very bad. Very bad.

But I think the way they stepped up, to me, that was something very special. Okay?

Q Mr. Trump, a question on Russia. Mr. Macron says that Russia shouldn't be designated as an adversary of NATO. Do you agree with that? Do you think Russia is the enemy?

And, Mr. Macron, who is the enemy today?

PRESIDENT TRUMP: I don't think he does feel that. I think we get along with Russia. I think we could get along with Russia. I think you feel we can get along

with Russia. We've discussed that before.

But certainly, we have to be prepared. Whether it's Russia or somebody else, we have to be prepared. But he and I have a pretty similar view on that. I think we feel that we can get along with Russia. And I think it's a good thing to get along with Russia. And I campaigned on it. I mean, I'd go into big stadiums; people like it. And I think the Russian people would like to see it too. A lot of — a lot of good can come of it.

But the purpose of NATO is that, but the purpose of NATO can be much more. And that's where we're showing the flexibility over the last period of two years. Okay?

PRESIDENT MACRON: (Speak French.) (Translation is inaudible.)

Q (Speaks French.) (Translation is inaudible.)

PRESIDENT MACRON: (Speaks French.) (Translation is inaudible.)

Q (Speaks French.) (Translation is inaudible.)

PRESIDENT TRUMP: And I think the situation in Ukraine is very important. I think that the meetings coming up with Russia and Ukraine are very important. And there's a possibility that some very big progress can be made. It's very important for Ukraine. I think it's very important from the standpoint of Russia, also, that they work out a treaty, they work out peace, because they've been fighting a long time. Too long. And I think there's a really good chance that that will happen.

Also, with respect to nuclear weapons, I've spoken to President Putin and I've communicated with him. And we are — he very much wants to, and so do we, work out a treaty of some kind on nuclear weapons that will probably then include China at some point, and yourselves, by the way. But it will include China and some other countries.

But we intend to see if we can work something out to stop the proliferation, to stop what's happening, because we are making a lot and we are renovating a lot. And, frankly, the whole situation with nuclear is not a good — it's not a good situation. We ended the treaty because it wasn't being adhered to by the other side. But they want to make a treaty, and so do we, and I think it would be a great thing. I think it's one of the most important things we can do, frankly.

So, we're going to be dealing with Russia on a treaty where we really — and we're focused on nuclear and nuclear weapons — missiles — but nuclear weapons. And we think something can be worked out. We think they want to do it. We know they want to do it. And we want to do it also.

I spoke to China about it. They — during one of our trade negotiations, they were extremely excited about getting involved in that. So, some very good things can happen with respect to that. I think it's very important. The whole nuclear situation — very, very important.

Okay? Thank you all very much. Thank you. Thank you.

END

3:03 P.M. GMT