

Beat: Politics

## **PRES. MACRON ANNOUNCED HE WILL COORDINATE HUMAN CORRIDORS IN MARIUOPOL**

**WITH TURKEY & GREECE**

Paris, Washington DC, Brussels, 26.03.2022, 23:12 Time

**USPA NEWS** - French President Macron held a press conference, following the extraordinary NATO's Summit, and having also attended the G7 meeting, on the row, at NATO's headquarters in Brussels, 24 march afternoon. The French Head of State first congratulated the re-election of President Charles Michel, President of the European Council, unanimously until the end of November 2024, and "the opportunity to welcome President Joe Biden for an exchange ", and the presence by videoconference of President Zelensky. He then announced that he had acted "Three (3) components of the united approach since day one: strong pressure on the Russian regime through unprecedented sanctions; unfailing support for Ukraine at all levels; maintenance of channels of dialogue in order to allow, as soon as possible, a peaceful solution to this conflict".

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President Macron has announced that France will launch a humanitarian operation in Marioupol with Turkey and Greece "We are going, in conjunction with Turkey and Greece, to launch a humanitarian operation to evacuate all those who wish to leave Mariupol", he declared after a European summit in Brussels, specifying having to discuss the subject with the Russian President, Vladimir Putin, "within forty-eight to seventy-two hours" The French President also announced that he had acted "We first put ourselves in a position to have a common storage policy for next winter, by defining the ways and means of reconciling these interests. The Commission was then given a mandate to be able to use several regulatory and market instruments, in particular price cap instruments among several others" He then justified this optimization of group purchasing, "Today, we, the European Union, we buy 75% of the gas that is supplied through the pipelines. If we know how to have a much more grouped approach - it is now very divided - you can clearly see that we have a much greater ability to set the price. It's much less for LNG, we're at just under 20%, but for pipelines, it's massive. Group buying, the ability to define long contracts together, is the best instrument to bring down the price of our gas," he said.

**"INVEST MUCH MORE COLLECTIVELY IN OUR DEFENSE ACCORDING TO THE AGENDA OF VERSAILLES" RECALLED PRES. MACRON**

"With regard to our response to Russian aggression against Ukraine, our exchanges aimed to confirm the 3 prongs of our united approach since day one: strong pressure on the Russian regime through unprecedented sanctions; unfailing support for Ukraine at all levels; maintenance of the channels of dialogue in order to allow, as soon as possible, a peaceful solution to this conflict. In this respect, we have recorded the preparation of additional sanctions. There has been significant coordination work, because all of this is being prepared, if the situation were to continue to deteriorate. We have also re-coordinated the work in terms of welcoming refugees - I can come back to this if you have any questions - given the fact, as I mentioned yesterday, that our Europe has already welcomed more than 3.5 million refugees on its soil, which is already an unprecedented migratory, humanitarian challenge. All of this requires the establishment of solidarity mechanisms between Member States, which we have taken care to do. As for our support for Ukraine, it took the form of military, financial and humanitarian aid. It is also embodied by this welcome that I mentioned, and we have confirmed our coordinated desire to continue without entering into co-belligerence. On the other subjects, it is the balances that were defined at

Versailles that have been reiterated here. explained President Macron, regarding the coordination of the European Council, on the subject of military, financial and humanitarian support for Ukraine.

**"THE EUROPEAN COUNCIL YESTERDAY ENDORSED ITS 1ST WHITE PAPER ON THE STRATEGIC COMPASS BY 2030"**

President Macron reminded, the strategic compass, amid the Collective defense, coordinated by the European Commission, and European Council, unveiled, during the Summit in Versailles (10-11 March 22), « You will remember, following what we had launched at the end of 2019 with regard to NATO, then under the German presidency, we had launched a strategic exercise, called strategic compass, which gave rise to intense work by our Foreign and Defense Ministers, as well as the European External Action Service and the High Representative. The European Council yesterday endorsed its first White Paper in the form of a work plan between now and 2030, what we therefore call this strategic compass. We all share the observation that our immediate environment has become more volatile and dangerous. This compass was prepared largely before the war in Ukraine. This confirms many of our intuitions, but it reinforces - and what has moreover made it possible to reinforce it in recent weeks - the main axes of this strategic compass. First, to intervene together more effectively, more quickly and more coherently in different theatres, sometimes by groups of voluntary Member States, and to deploy and systematize the culture that we have in particular initiated in the Sahel.' President Macron explained.

**"OUR CHALLENGE IS TO DEVELOP A COMMON MILITARY CULTURE" PRESIDENT MACRON STRESSED**

President Macron detailed the common military culture within EU "In short, our challenge is to develop a common, military culture. It is then to invest more in defense in order to be able to do two main things: have more autonomous capabilities and succeed in building the innovations that we need for our armies. This we must do while maintaining the interoperability that is necessary within NATO. We must continue to operate between Europeans and Americans, but we must be less dependent on non-Europeans. This challenge is significant and requires investment, but sometimes the consolidation of the construction of industrial sectors. This is a step forward for European defense which will be completed in a few weeks by the analysis that the Commission will deliver to us on strategic capability needs, in accordance with this Versailles agenda."

**"OUR OBJECTIVE IS A COMPLETE EXIT OF FOSSIL FUELS LINKED TO RUSSIA" RECALLED PRES. MACRON**

« The other subject that we have discussed at length is energy. He was expected, he is known. We have been dealing with the subject of energy for several months through our climate agenda. I had the opportunity to say it. For me, the climate agenda is also a sovereignty agenda. He is hit. It must be accelerated, reconsidered, in the light of the war in Ukraine. Because our collective objective - we also reiterated this at Versailles by giving ourselves the objective of completely phasing out fossils linked to Russia - must be to reduce our dependence on fossil sources. This is the heart of our climate agenda. But in the shorter term, to accelerate the reorientation to depend less on these fossils from Russia. We now have, if I may say so, two agendas that come together, the second being a very short-term agenda, and with a forced march that has been decided on oil and gas. Beyond the objectives of 2030 and 2050, we have this desire, in the very next few years, to be able to get out of our dependence on Russian fossil fuels. In this regard, our focus on energy at this summit was twofold. First, to consolidate this strategy, but which will also be built on the conclusions and proposals of the Commission, and our national strategies that we are in the process of coordinating between now and April-May; but it is above all to control our supply and our prices and there, the very short-term objective is that. Basically, that's why there was a very long debate, and that's why there were, if I may say so, there were initial oppositions that are well known. Because first of all, the energy models of the different states are not the same, so that required coordination; and the priorities that each assigned to our strategy were not the same, and so we sought to reconcile these two objectives. » The French Head of State stated.

**Article online:**

<https://www.uspa24.com/bericht-20308/pres-macron-announced-he-will-coordinate-human-corridors-in-marioupol.html>

**Editorial office and responsibility:**

V.i.S.d.P. & Sect. 6 MDSIV (German Interstate Media Services Agreement): Jedi Foster, Rahma Sophia RACHDI

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