Beat: Vips

«UKRAINE'S EU FAST MEMBERSHIP IS REJECTED» PRES. MACRON UNVEILED

AT INFORMAL EU VERSAILLE SUMMIT 3/10-11

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USPA NEWS - On the occasion of the EU, Informal Versailles Summit, held on 10-11 March 22, under the the French presidency and chaired by Charles Michel, President of the European Council, the EU leaders adopted the « Versailles Declaration » that outlines how the EU can live up to its responsibilities and protect EU citizens, values and democracies and the European model. The declaration covers Russia's aggression against Ukraine and outlines how the EU can bolster defence capabilities, reduce energy dependencies and build a more robust economic base. » Source: European Union.
As the war in Ukraine is terribly evolving, since the Russian unprovoked and unjustified military aggression against Ukraine on 24th February, more than 2,5 Milion of civilians have fled Ukraine to the European border countries, and the hot topic to be discussed especially, regarding the European and global security and stability, in terms of defense, energy independence, and sustainable support, of Ukraine, without entering in war with Russia. Ukrainian President Zelensky has more than insistently expressed membership in the EU, signing his membership form, filmed and broadcast on social networks a few days ago.

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As the war in Ukraine is terribly evolving, since the Russian unprovoked and unjustified military aggression against Ukraine on 24th February, more than 2,5 Million of civilians have fled Ukraine to the European border countries, and the hot topic to be discussed especially, regarding the European and global security and stability, in terms of defense, energy independence, and sustainable support, of Ukraine, without entering in war with Russia. Ukrainian President Zelensky has more than insistently expressed membership in the EU, signing his membership form, filmed and broadcast on social networks a few days ago, President Macron announced today at the end of the Informal Summit, in Versailles, that the answer to Ukraine's membership in the EU is NO: "the European Council has expressed a strong and clear message on the European destiny and the European path of Ukraine, without ambiguity. Now, can we have an accelerated entry exceptional procedure with a country at war without looking at any criteria? The answer is no" decided by announcing this refusal to join the EU at this time, thus destroying the hope of Ukrainians to become Europeans. In fact, according to the European Union's statement, « Russia, with its accomplice Belarus, bears full responsibility' and that those responsible would be held accountable, including for indiscriminately targeting civilians. In this respect, they also welcomed the decision of the prosecutor of the International Criminal Court to open an investigation, and called for the safety and security of Ukraine's nuclear facilities to be ensured immediately. »

REMARKS BY PRESIDENT MACRON - PRESS CONFERENCE AT THE VERSAILLES SUMMIT

At the end of this Versailles Summit, Mr. President (Charles Michel), Madam President (Ursula Von Der Lyen have just perfectly reflected the spirit of our debates and conclusions. We find ourselves in this Gallery of Battles, and if some people thought that the war in our countries had been part of history for 15 days, the choice of Russia, of President PUTIN, was to bring back the war in Europe. unprecedented attack deployed by Russia against Ukraine and its people, and a tragic turning point for our history, we are all, I believe, fully aware that it is also a turning point for our societies, our peoples and our European project. we have responded for 15 days, Madam President and Mr. President have just said, with unity, speed and a spirit of responsibility. The choices were made quickly, at 27, with our institutions, and coordinated with all our partners as part of NATO as well as the G7, and with diplomatic work which has made it possible to isolate Russia, in particular at the General Assembly of the United Nations, even recently.

For two weeks, Ukrainians have been fighting courageously to defend their freedom, democracy, their sovereignty and the integrity of their territory. The Europeans have a clear position: unanimous and firm condemnation of Russian aggression, condemnation in all

international forums, and we have drawn all the consequences, with in particular the resolutions passed and the victory in the general assembly.
We have decided on unprecedented support for Ukraine by jointly delivering equipment, humanitarian material, but also weapons. We have proposed today that the European Peace Facility be supplemented with EUR 500 million, which makes it possible to go even further in this perspective, and countries which until now had a tradition of neutrality around the table - I am thinking of Sweden - have decided for the first time in so many decades to take part in this concrete support for Ukraine. Economic support also that we will continue, humanitarian support by welcoming more than 2 million refugees.
Madam President (Von Der Lyen) recalled the importance of this solidarity, and here I want to pay tribute to the Polish, Slovak, Romanian and Hungarian peoples as far as our Union is concerned, but also the Moldavian people for their outpouring of solidarity and 'humanity. I had the opportunity to say it, France will play its part and I hope that we can have the solidarity mechanisms that can be fully activated in this approach. From day one, we have also deployed a massive, unprecedented and rapid system of sanctions. The second, fourth and sixth day of conflict were marked by European decisions on unprecedented sanctions. Speed, massiveness and we are ready to adopt other sanctions. All the options are on the table and the objective of our discussions is also to be able to prepare ourselves for these sanctions if they were such as to be able to stop the aggression and also to prepare us for all the consequences in the weeks and months that are coming.

Our first objective, of course, remains a rapid return to peace, starting with a ceasefire, followed by a rapid withdrawal of Russian troops. This is why we are maintaining the pressure on Russia and why we are also maintaining a demanding dialogue, in particular in connection with the German Chancellor. This support, this solidarity with Ukraine, is also what kept us very busy yesterday. We support Ukraine today and we will support it as long as the war lasts and we will be there to rebuild what Russia's brutal and unjustified aggression has destroyed, and to heal, rebuild and help it recover and over time. The message we have thus sent to the Ukrainians is that the path to our Europe is open to them. Their fight for freedom and democracy for the values ??that bring us together demonstrated that Ukraine does indeed belong to our European family. We also wanted the applications that had been submitted by Moldova and Georgia to be examined, as provided for in the treaties, by the European Commission, so that the acceptability of their application and the potential opening can be made according to our treated.
The Versailles declaration, and the Versailles agenda that we have been discussing today, comes to acknowledge the fact that European sovereignty, if some years ago could see it as a slogan, perhaps for some a fantasy French, everyone understands today that it is an imperative, and that this sovereignty, this strategic autonomy, we have experienced the importance of it since the pandemic, when it came to obtaining certain health equipment, certain materials ; we experienced it when it came to being able to produce and have vaccines for ourselves and the countries we wanted to help; we experienced it at the end of the crisis, at the time of the recovery, when we realized that having semiconductors, when we had delegated production to the other side of the world, was complicated to restart production automobile or others. We see it fully with this crisis where we measure how much our food, our energy, our defense are also subjects of sovereignty where we can cooperate, where we want to be a power open to the world, but where we want to choose our partners and not depend on them. This is sovereignty. It is not protectionism. It's not closing. It is to have the possibility of remaining open without being dependent. So the Versailles agenda has marked the next few months of work to move forward in this direction.

"FRANCE IS ALREADY AT 2% OF GROSS NATIONAL PRODUCT INVESTMENT IN DEFENSE OTHER HAVE TO MAKE EFFORTS PRESIDENT MACRON SAID In terms of defence, we want to be able to define the investments we need. Several of us are already at 2% of our gross national product invested in defense, others have efforts to make. But we want to do it in a coordinated way, identify our needs in terms of the budget, identify the capacities that need to be built, also identify our needs in terms of new conflicts, whether in space, cyber, of the maritime sector and identify what also makes sense to build European industrial sectors. Having a Europe that spends more on defence, if it is to import more equipment made elsewhere, would not make much sense in terms of sovereignty. We must continue to have certain partnerships, but we must also decide to consolidate, build defense industrial sectors with fewer standards, but which correspond to a fully integrated market. To this end, we have already taken several decisions. France, as you know since 2017, has made massive budgetary choices to reach, as of last year, its 2% investment and to relaunch many of its sectors and its capacities. Germany decided a little more than 10 days ago in turn to make historic investments for its country. Denmark has also made a historic choice, that of submitting to its people, in a few months, the possibility of returning to the European security and defense project. As you can see, everywhere on our continent, historic choices are being made which mark a major turning point. We need to organize it at European level to build this common defense capability. This is the purpose of the mandate given to the Commission so that, between now and May, we can, within the framework of what will no doubt be an extraordinary Council, and which will precede the summit of the NATO of the month of June, to build a fully established European strategy in terms of investment, strengthening of our capabilities industries.

EU NEED TO BUILD A PATH SUSTAINABLE INDEPENDENCE OVER RUSSIAN FOSSIL ENERGY Then there is the subject of energy. We have already, through our climate strategy, begun to build a path of independence. Getting out of fossil fuels means becoming independent. However, we knew that on this route, for many of us, the exit from coal in particular was through gas. A gas that we import and still import from Russia. The situation we are experiencing today, the one that we will inevitably experience tomorrow, must lead us to reassess this strategy by being even more ambitious in terms of climate. To this end, we will have a meeting at the end of March where we will look very concretely at how to first support our peoples on the question of prices. This is the mandate that is, here too, entrusted to the Commission, concrete options on prices, concrete options on filling. These are very technical subjects, but what is it really about? To help guarantee mechanisms that avoid being subject to the vagaries of the market, sometimes to market speculation, linked to this context of crisis. Many of us have already made choices to protect our compatriots, our businesses. We must harmonize these choices at European level, and equip ourselves with new instruments within the next 15 days, to better withstand the price shock linked to this geopolitical context. Prices were already rising before the war, and they continue to rise because of it. Then we also have to prepare for possible sanctions that will come, and we have to prepare to desensitize ourselves from this dependence on Russia. This is the purpose of the mandate that has been given to the Commission for the month of May with this plan, the importance of which the President and Madam President recalled: a plan for ending fossil dependence on Russia, that is to say how to get out of our dependence on Russian gas, oil and coal by 2027.

EU SEEKS SOVEREIGNTY OVER FOOD INDUSTRY It's a plan that presupposes new investments, new equipment, a strategy that will reinforce the choices we have made in terms of renewables and nuclear power in particular. You can see it there too, March and May will be structured by a very strong energy agenda. Finally, we have the other subjects on which we must also build our independence and our sovereignty. The food strategy, in a context where, whether it's wheat, corn, cereals more broadly, Ukraine and Russia are two very important markets. Our Europe is already destabilized by the war in this respect. It will be even more so in 12-18 months because of what cannot be planted right now in Ukraine. Europe, but with it Africa, will be very deeply destabilized in terms of food. So here too we need to prepare ourselves, and re-evaluate our production strategies, first of all to defend our food sovereignty and our protein sovereignty in Europe, but also to be able to define and re-evaluate a strategy with regard to Africa, otherwise several countries in Africa will be affected in the period of 12 to 18 months by famines, precisely because of the war. Sovereignty with regard also to other raw materials, with regard to rare materials; sovereignty, obviously, as I mentioned, in terms of semiconductors, health, I do not want to list the whole list here. But we have, through this agenda, punctuated the next few months for very concrete investment decisions that will make it possible to build this more independent and more sovereign Europe. This means that we will have to encourage private investment. This is the whole purpose of taxonomy in energy. This is also the subject of work that we must speed up to complete the union of capital in Europe, and the deepening of the single market in the various sectors. Second point, we need to have an appropriate monetary policy. We are not back to normal times, obviously, and the European Central Bank will have to continue the work following its announcements yesterday. But it is very clear that we are entering an area of ??very high tension, also due to the geopolitical context.----------
Third lever, we will have national strategies of public investment to protect us from the consequences of the war, to finance our solidarity and our resistance to these consequences, but also to finance these strategies of sovereignty. Fourth point: we Europeans will also have to finance, as we were able to do during the pandemic, these major strategies that I have just mentioned, and do so because we are talking about investments for our future, which we we are talking about joint investments, that we have an interest in coordinating these investments, and that we also have an interest in financing this in Europe to avoid any fragmentation of the financial market and of European sovereign debt. This is the strategy that we have started to work on here, and which will occupy us in the coming months. But there too, we will have to show unity, speed and a spirit of responsibility.

ACCORDING TO UNHCR 2.5M CIVILIANS FLED UKRAINE SINCE START OF THE ATTACKS The Ukrainians give us a unique example, that of courage. We Europeans are not making war today against Russia. But we support, as I said, Ukraine, we sanction Russia, but we must also do our part, and have the courage to take historic decisions, to assume the fact that defending democracy and our values ??has a cost, that making these choices of independence has a cost, and supposes sometimes going back to dogmas that we had had for many years, organizations, habits that were ours. I think I can say that the discussions yesterday and today confirmed the awareness and the will of the Europeans here in Versailles to move forward in this direction. I will end with these words, I began our work yesterday by thanking some of my colleagues, and I say this to the President of the Commission, because Versailles, which is a huge place of history that the French men and women love more everything and which is our pride in the rest of the world, has also sometimes been a place that has resonated with diplomatic defeats. It is also the place where we lost the peace at the end of the First World War. After winning the war, we lost the peace because at that time we acted on the will to humiliate and divide Europe. I am very proud that during these two days, despite the difficulties, the gravity, the heaviness, sometimes the extreme emotion that

there was around the table, we all together, unanimously, noted that the only way to preserve peace on our continent was our unity. That was the courage of this unit. This is the most important to me. Thank you. ../ Source: President Macron's speech Versailles, as it was delivered,

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