Leaders of the Coalition of the Willing meet in Paris, agree on troop deployment and security guarantee after ceasefire

The leaders of some of the states in the Coalition of the Willing after their meeting Tuesday in Paris. (From left, Chancellor Merz, President Zelenskyy, President Macron, Prime Minister Starmer, U.S. presidential envoys Witkoff and Kushner.)

On Tuesday, French President Macron hosted a meeting of President Zelenskyy and 25 other heads of state or government that are participating in the Coalition of the Willing, which is focused on ensuring with a multinational force that the territory in Ukraine that is now controlled by Ukrainian forces remains under Ukrainian control if and when there is a ceasefire in the war between Russia and Ukraine. The U. S. is not a member of the Coalition but presidential representatives Steve Witkoff and Jared Kushner participated in the meeting as did the representatives of eight other governments. The purpose of the meeting was to prepare for the deployment of the multinational force once there is a ceasefire.

Following the meeting, France issued, on behalf of the participants, a Declaration entitled “Robust Security Guarantees for a Solid and Lasting Peace in Ukraine.” The Declaration stated, “The members of the Coalition of the Willing, Ukraine, and the U.S. have convened today in Paris. We all stressed our commitment to a just and lasting peace in Ukraine in line with the United Nations Charter principles, and welcomed the progress achieved, including in the discussions between the Americans, the Ukrainians, European and other partners. In particular, the Coalition was clear that Ukraine’s ability to defend itself is critically important for ensuring the future of Ukraine’s and Euro-Atlantic collective security. We confirmed that ensuring the sovereignty and lasting security of Ukraine shall be an integral part of a peace agreement, and that any

settlement will have to be backed up by robust security guarantees for Ukraine. We stand ready to commit to a system of politically and legally binding guarantees that will be activated once a ceasefire enters into force, in addition to bilateral security agreements and in accordance with our respective legal and constitutional arrangements. They will include the following components:

1. **Participation in a proposed US-led ceasefire monitoring and verification mechanism.** There will be a continuous, reliable ceasefire monitoring system, including contributions from members of the Coalition of the Willing. The Coalition of the Willing will also be represented in the Special Commission that will be established to address any breaches, attribute responsibility, and determine remedies.
2. **Support for the Armed Forces of Ukraine**: The Coalition agreed to continue critical long term military assistance and armament to the Armed Forces of Ukraine to ensure their sustained capability, as they will remain the first line of defense and deterrence. This will include but not be limited to: long term defense packages; support for financing the purchase of weapons; continued cooperation with Ukraine on its national budget to finance the armed forces; access to defense depots which can deliver rapid additional support in the case of a future armed attack; provision of practical and technical support to Ukraine in building defensive fortifications.
3. **A Multinational Force for Ukraine** made up from contributions from willing nations within the framework of the Coalition, to support the rebuilding of Ukraine's armed forces and support deterrence. Coordinated military planning has been conducted to prepare for reassurance measures in the air, at sea and on land and for the regeneration of the armed forces of Ukraine. We confirmed that these reassurance measures should be strictly implemented at Ukraine’s request once a credible cessation of hostilities has taken place. These elements will be European-led, with the involvement also of non-European members of the Coalition and the proposed support of the US.
4. **Binding commitments to support Ukraine in the case of a future armed attack by Russia in order to restore peace**. We agreed to finalize binding commitments setting out our approach to support Ukraine and to restore peace and security in the case of a future armed attack by Russia. These commitments may include the use of military capabilities, intelligence and logistical support, diplomatic initiatives, and adoption of additional sanctions.
5. **Commitment to deepen long-term defense cooperation with Ukraine**. We agreed we would continue to develop and deepen mutually beneficial defense cooperation with Ukraine, inter alia: training, defense industrial joint production, including with the use of European relevant instruments, and intelligence cooperation.

In addition, the UK, France, and Ukraine agreed on a “Declaration of intent…relating to the deployment of multinational forces in support of the defense, reconstruction and strategic sustainability of Ukraine.” In it, the leaders, recognizing that the UK and France have taken a leading role in building the coalition of willing nations to establish stable conditions for an enduring peace once there is a ceasefire, agreed to deploy units of their armed forces together with those of other contributing nations to support Ukraine’s ability to deter any further attacks; conduct deterrence operations in the air, on land and at sea; conduct training, planning, and integration of command and control systems; manage and coordinate the joint

operations of the multi-national forces; promote the construction and protection of facilities and structures for military use; create a negotiating group to ensure the development and conclusion, as soon as possible, of an international agreement and other necessary arrangements; promote the participation of other governments in the multinational force in Ukraine; support Ukraine's Euro-Atlantic integration through the development of equipment, doctrine, and standards according to NATO standards; and ensure the exchange of information and control mechanisms among the units participating in the multinational force. The leaders also announced they had further decided to establish a US/Ukraine/Coalition coordination cell at the Coalition Operational Headquarters in Paris.

Ukraine's key European allies on Tuesday signed security guarantees for Ukraine, including the deployment of a multinational military force in the event of a peace deal with Russia. French President Emmanuel Macron said the agreement was a "significant step" that would dissuade further aggressions on Ukraine.

Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelensky, France's President Emmanuel Macron and Britain's Prime Minister Keir Starmer sign the declaration on deploying post-ceasefire force in Ukraine during the Coalition of the Willing summit on security guarantees for Ukraine, at the Elysee Palace in Paris, on January 6, 2026.

Ukraine's Western allies on Tuesday agreed key security guarantees for Kyiv including a US-led monitoring mechanism and a European multinational force that would be deployed after a ceasefire in the war.

Following the largest yet meeting of the so-called Coalition of the Willing in Paris, both European leaders and US envoys hailed progress that hid tensions in recent days over assertive US foreign policy in the Western hemisphere under Trump.

But the security guarantees for Ukraine would only come into force once a ceasefire is agreed to end the almost four-year war sparked by Russia's 2022 full-scale invasion of its neighbor, and Putin's intentions remain unclear.

The "robust" guarantees would see the United States lead a truce monitoring mechanism with European participation, President Macron said after the meeting which gathered representatives of 35 countries, including 27 heads of state or government.

Macron, Starmer, and Zelenskyy signed a declaration of intent that foresees Britain, France and other European allies deploying troops on Ukrainian territory after a ceasefire. The allies also agreed to establish a US-Ukraine-Coalition coordination cell in Paris.

But a promise that Washington would commit to "support" the European-led multinational force "in case of a new attack" by Russia that was present in the draft statement was not in the communique released on Tuesday evening. Macron said that Paris could deploy "several thousand" French troops to Ukraine after the war.

Macron said after the meeting that the moves represented "robust security guarantees for a solid and lasting peace", hailing an "operational convergence" among allies including the United States. The security guarantees are "the key to ensuring that a peace agreement can never mean a Ukrainian surrender and that a peace agreement can never mean a new threat to Ukraine" from Russia, Macron said.

Against the background of tensions between Europe and the US in regard to Venezuela and Greenland, U.S envoy Steve Witkoff said "a lot of progress" had been made. Allies have "largely finished" agreeing security guarantees for Ukraine "so that the people of Ukraine know that when this ends, it ends forever," he said, flanked by President Trump's son-in-law Jared Kushner.

Witkoff said that "land options" will be the most "critical issue" and "hopefully we will be able to come up with certain compromises with regard to that". He said Trump believes "this carnage has to stop." Kushner added: "This does not mean that we will make peace, but peace would not be possible without the progress that was made here today."

Zelensky expressed satisfaction over the outcome. "These are not just words. There is concrete content: a joint declaration by all the coalition countries and a trilateral declaration by France, Britain, and Ukraine," Zelensky said. Echoing Witkoff's comments, he added that the most significant issue still to be resolved is "the territorial question," referring to Russian demands that Kyiv give up the Donbas region of Ukraine. Russia, which occupies around 20 percent of Ukraine, has also repeatedly opposed any NATO boots on the ground in Ukraine to monitor a halt in hostilities.

Starmer said for his part that following a ceasefire the UK and France will establish "military hubs" across Ukraine and "build protected facilities for weapons and military equipment to support Ukraine's defensive needs." But he added, "We can only get to a peace deal if Putin is ready to make compromises. And so we have to be frank, for all Russia's words, Putin is not showing he is ready for peace. Over the last few weeks, we've seen the opposite." But that, he said, "only hardens our resolve.,"

German Chancellor Merz, whose nation has been wary of contributing troops to a multinational force, said German forces could join to monitor a ceasefire, but based in a neighboring country. "We will certainly have to make compromises", he said, adding that "we will not achieve textbook diplomatic solutions".

The capture by US forces of Venezuelan president Maduro, a Putin ally, as well as claims by Trump that the self-governing Danish territory of Greenland should become part of the US had unsettled some European countries ahead of the meeting. Macron told French TV: "I cannot imagine a scenario in which the United States of America would be placed in a position to violate Danish sovereignty."

Prime Minister Starmer added these words as well: “It’s important that we are starting the year like this – European and American allies, side-by-side with President

Zelenskyy. Standing for peace. And we are closer to that goal than ever. But the hardest yards are still ahead. So we're here today to keep driving that effort forward. And we've had a very constructive meeting which has built on the excellent progress made in negotiations over recent days and weeks. The purpose of the Coalition of the Willing Is to help deliver a peace that can last – and to work with the U.S. to guarantee Ukraine's security for the long term. This work is now more advanced than ever. Today's joint declaration set that out in clear terms. On top of that, and alongside President Zelenskyy and President Macron, we went even further today. We signed a Declaration of Intent on the deployment of forces to Ukraine in the event of a peace deal. This is a vital part of our iron-cast commitment to stand with Ukraine for the long term. It paves the way for the legal framework under which British, French and partner forces could operate on Ukrainian soil, securing Ukraine's skies and seas and regenerating Ukraine's armed forces for the future. We discussed these issues in detail today. And so I can say that, following a ceasefire, the UK and France will establish "military hubs" across Ukraine and build protected facilities for weapons and military equipment to support Ukraine's defensive needs. And with our Coalition partners, we also have agreed significant further steps: First, that we will participate in US-led monitoring and verification of any ceasefire. Second, we will support the long-term provision of armaments for Ukraine's defense. And third, we will work towards binding commitments to support Ukraine in the case of a future armed attack by Russia. This is all about building the practical foundations on which peace would rest. But we can only get to a peace deal if Putin is ready to make compromises. And so, we have to be frank: For all Russia's words, Putin is not showing that he is ready for peace. Over the last few weeks, we have seen the opposite: Further horrific strikes on Ukraine killing and wounding civilians and cutting off power from millions of people in the dead of winter. His forces hit a hospital in Kyiv just yesterday. And he has tried to distract from peace efforts with unfounded claims of attacks on his residence. Now this only hardens our resolve. We will continue to step up our support to Ukraine's defence in 2026…To ensure it gets the equipment and backing it needs to continue the fight. And we will keep up the pressure on Russia, including further measures on the oil traders and Shadow Fleet operators funding Putin's war chest. We will continue these efforts until they come to the table in good faith. And until we realize the goal that we all share – of a just and lasting peace."

David R. Cameron
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