

Bilateral meeting with Donald Trump on the sidelines of the UNGA

Donald TRUMP

Thank you very much, everybody. It's a great honor to be with a friend of mine, Emmanuel MACRON, President of France. He's done a really good job, he's fighting hard. He's fighting on a lot of fronts. He's helping with regards to the Russia-Ukraine catastrophe. His words of wisdom mean a lot and we've been friends for a long time now, from the first time on. And I appreciate you being there. It's very nice. Thank you.

Emmanuel MACRON

Thank you, Mister President. I'm very happy to have the opportunity to exchange with President Trump and our teams. And indeed, we have a lot of things to do together, and especially fixing these crazy wars that we have. And I just saw the message you issued after your meeting with President Zelensky and I think it's a very right one. I mean, if we back completely Ukraine in this situation, given the Russian economy's suffering, I mean, there is the opportunity of a good future.

Donald TRUMP

It is. I think so, I think so. They're very enthusiastic in a lot of ways. It's been a terrible war. It should have ended and Russia should have stopped it, but they've been three and a half years and they've gotten not so far. So we'll see what happens. But the other side can fight too, and they've proven that. Maybe it's a... It could be that Russia is a paper tiger. I don't know what they are, but three and a half years of fighting and killing everybody, of killing 7,000 people a week for nothing, so it's a very sad situation. But most of you have seen the recent statement I put out a little while ago, and I'm glad you got it. I feel that way. I really do feel that way. Let them get their land back. So we'll see how it all works out. And in the meantime, I hear France is doing well, and you're doing well, and he's been my friend and we've gotten along on just about every subject there is to get along with, other than, on occasion, wine. I say, wouldn't you like to pay a couple of dollars to put the wine into America ? But we've never... We've always treated you good, right ?

Emmanuel MACRON

We will try to fix all these issues, but we have very good discussions. And I think peace as an objective everywhere, in Ukraine as in Middle east, is a common objective we have, so we will work hard on that.

Donald TRUMP

Emmanuel has actually helped me with a couple of the wars. We settled seven wars. The biggest disappointment, but I think that will happen eventually, is the Ukraine and Russia situation. But we've settled... I thought that was going to be the easiest one because of my relationship with Putin, but unfortunately, that relationship didn't mean anything, unfortunately. But when I needed some advice and when I needed some help in terms of a country in that part of the world, you were always there and you helped me settle some of these seven wars. I'm very proud of the seven wars, but you helped me settle them and I appreciate that. Thank you very much. Any questions ?

Journaliste

President Trump, President Macron just said that if you want the Nobel Prize, you should put an end to the war in Gaza. What's your response to that ?

Donald TRUMP

Well, they say that altogether. I mean, it's Gaza, it's Russia, it's everything. I think Gaza is going to come along. We're going to have a very important meeting, and my next meeting actually is going to be very important with leaders in the region, and we're going to talk about Gaza. We're going to see if we can do something about it. We want to stop that. We want to get our hostages back or their hostages back. We've gotten all of the American hostages, as you know, and Alexander, all of them have been back. Steve Witkoff has done a great job and Marco Rubio, always, and everybody. I mean, we have... Scott got involved, strongly involved. From a financial standpoint, we're doing some things that are pretty good. We put Iran out of commission, very important. That was called the bully of the Middle east and they're out of commission now. We're going to have a meeting today. I think it's going to be a successful meeting with all of the leaders of many of the biggest, I would say, the most important countries having to do with Gaza indirectly and directly. And that's going to take place just in a little while. So I'm sure you'll be there and we could have an outcome very quickly.

Journaliste

Is recognition of Palestine a gift to Hamas ?

Donald TRUMP

Well, I think it honors Hamas and you can't do that because of October 7th. You just can't do that. But we want our hostages back and we don't want them back in, you know, take the next two years to do it. We were the ones that got the hostages back. And I always said, I told Steve, I told Marco, I was always saying : "The last hostages are going to be the toughest ones". But you can't honor them by doing anything like you suggest. All you can do is say, we want our hostages back. And we want the war to end. We're going to want it to end, but you always have to remember. People forget October 7th was one of the most savage days in the history of the world. There's never been anything like that. We're talking about babies being sliced in half, you're talking about young children having their heads chopped off. You can't forget that.

Emmanuel MACRON

And just perhaps to make it clear on that, I think it's why, yesterday, 11 countries did recognize Palestine, not as... I mean, it was not a decision taken like that, neither by UK nor by Canada, nor by France. It's just a big change. Nobody... President Trump is totally right. Nobody forgets the 7th of October. I went there a few days after, taking families in my hands, and we experienced all together these horrific attacks. And by the way, we lost a lot of French people in this terrorist attack. But after almost two years of war, what is the result ? Once again, they killed the top leaders of Hamas. It works. This is a great achievement. But at the same time, you have as many Hamas fighters as you had the first day. So it doesn't work to dismantle the Hamas. This is not the right way to proceed. So we need a full-fledged process. And we worked very hard on the day after, and I totally share the sequencing, the release of all stages, the ceasefire, resume of humanitarian aid, the day after in Gaza to stabilize the land, and we need a political perspective. And this is why we took this decision on recognition.

Journaliste

Is France rewarding terrorism ?

Donald TRUMP

Well, I have to say that I'm on the side of Israel. I've been on the side of Israel really my whole life. And we are going to get a solution, and it's going to be a solution, hopefully, that's good for everybody. But it's time to stop, we're going to have that very important meeting. I think the meeting we have coming up in the next hour is going to be one of the most important meetings that we'll have here. We've had some important meetings, we've had some great meetings and I understand where you are and where other people are too, and we just have to get this solved. We have to get the hostages back. We want to get the war over. That's very important. We're going to end the war, get the hostages back and we want them all back. We don't want to have one and then they'll give another two in about three months from now. We've been doing that for a long time. And in all fairness, we've gotten a lot of hostages back, but you have 20 hostages and you have probably 38 bodies, dead bodies. And the people that I see, and I speak to Israeli families... I was speaking to American families before, but we got them back. But I speak to Israeli families, and they want their son who died. They want their dead son back as much as though he were alive. And it's an amazing thing to see, and it's a horrible thing actually to witness, but I've seen it a lot. So they have 20 hostages, they have 38 dead bodies, and we have to have them back. And we have to have them back immediately. Thank you very much, everybody.