

Next European Council to discuss European defence and support to Ukraine

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The next European Council will take place on 3 February at the Château de Limont, close to Brussels, and will be dedicated to the topic of European defence, including support to Ukraine.

The European Council will discuss the development of EU defence capabilities and budget increases, and strengthening cooperation, including with non-EU partners.

“I believe we share a similar assessment of the threats Europe is facing. Russia’s aggression against Ukraine has brought high-intensity war back to our continent – violating the core principles of international law and threatening European security – coupled with growing hybrid and cyber attacks on Member States and their economies and societies,” European Council President António Costa said in his invitation letter to the members of

the Council. *“Peace in Europe depends on Ukraine winning a comprehensive, just and lasting peace.”*

He also said that he had invited the NATO Secretary General to join the Council for lunch to discuss the *“most pressing defence-related issues”*, in particular EU support for Ukraine and EU-NATO cooperation.

Addressing the European Parliament on 13 January, NATO Secretary General Mark Rutte said the future of Europe hinged on the outcome of the war. *“We want lasting peace there. If Putin gets it his way, peace will not last,”* he said, adding that EU support to Ukraine was crucial: *“We are safe now, we might not be safe in five years.”*