

# European Council: ‘Ukraine’s security is at the core of Europe’s security’

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The European Council, convened on 6 March in Brussels, tasked the Council of the European Union *“to work urgently on further initiatives to address Ukraine’s pressing military and defence needs”*, in particular on the delivery of air defence systems, ammunition and missiles, and the provision of necessary training and equipment for Ukrainian brigades.

The European Council held an exchange of views with Volodymyr Zelenskyy, President of Ukraine, and discussed the latest developments as regards Ukraine. The document on Ukraine (EUCO 10/25) was firmly supported by 26 Heads of State or Government, excluding Hungary. The Council will revert to this issue at its next meeting.

*“We have now committed to increasing our support even more. Immediately,*

*member states can increase their support thanks to the increased fiscal space. Several member states have already announced their pledges up to €15 billion,”* European Council President António Costa told journalists after the meeting. *“At the same time, we are preparing to support Ukraine when it decides to engage in negotiations. To help it reach a positive outcome, that means a just and lasting peace.”*

The European Council also called on the Commission, Slovakia and Ukraine to intensify efforts towards finding *“workable solutions to the gas transit issue, while taking into consideration the concerns raised by Slovakia”*.

Concerning European security, EU leaders decided to invest in priority areas already defined by the European Defence Agency (*“reflecting the lessons learnt from the war in Ukraine, and in full coherence with NATO”*), and to mobilise additional public and private funds for the EU’s defence. The EU will create a new European instrument, worth up to €150 billion, to support member states in boosting the defence capabilities that are urgently needed.

*“We are putting our money where our mouth is,”* said Costa. *“Our efforts to strengthen European defence will also benefit Ukraine. Because Ukraine’s security is at the core of Europe’s security.”*