



Written by [Paul Dragu](#) on July 8, 2026

Trump & NATO Kiss and Make Up as Europeans Pledge to Buy More U.S. Weapons

For nearly the entire duration of his second term, U.S. President Donald Trump has incessantly griped about NATO and its leaders. But he emerged from this week's summit in Ankara, Turkey, with renewed dedication to the entangling alliance. It seems the Europeans may have softened him up by promising to buy more American-made weapons.

Trump arrived in Ankara on Tuesday. He praised the country's autocratic leader, Tayyip Erdoğan, [saying](#), "Frankly, if it [the summit] weren't held in Turkey, where my friend happens to be a very strong leader, a very strong person, it's possible that I wouldn't have attended." And while he repeated a litany of complaints and took jabs at various member states, especially for refusing to help the United States at the height of its war on Iran, the two sides made up by the end of the meeting.



AP Images

During a press conference on Wednesday, Trump called NATO leaders "very smart people" with "a lot of good in their heart." He [suggested](#) that the NATO alliance remains strong as he described a closed-door, warm meeting between alliance leaders in which "there was tremendous love."

Mark Rutte

Trump called NATO head Mark Rutte a great unifier. Rutte, for his part, corroborated Trump's kumbaya version of the meeting, likening the acrimonious cloud that has been hovering over America and NATO to a healthy family that sometimes argues. "I always felt that families where sometimes you have heart-to-hearts and sometimes you fight each other a bit are much stronger" than families who never disagree, Rutte [said](#). It would be "fake" if they never fought, he added. Moreover, when friends fight each other, "it makes you stronger." The bottom line, Rutte concluded, is that Trump "is committed to NATO."

Rutte even defended the president's persevering pressure on NATO members to spend more on their militaries. He repeated the view that it's nonsensical to have so many rich European nations depend on one country, the United States, for protection against threats such as the one supposedly posed by the Russians, and justified Trump's complaints, saying the U.S. president is "committed to NATO, but also expecting us all to do more."

He also said that he pointed out to Trump that Iran has nothing to with NATO, since the alliance is between and for European nations.



Money for U.S. Weapons

During the same press conference, Trump said that NATO member states pledged to increase, or to continue to work toward increasing, their military spending. Last year's promises to boost spending netted an increase of nearly \$150 billion, according to Trump. That increase benefited American weapons makers, he said, and it's a pattern that will continue, because the idea is to make and sell more weapons — many more. "As European nations rebuild their militaries, American equipment will be the largest beneficiary," said Trump.

The president talked at length about his administration's pressure on American weapons makers to build more weapons and munitions and to build them faster. He said he suggested to manufacturers that they build more plants, not just work longer hours in existing plants. And he described various U.S.-made missiles and defense systems as being unsurpassed in quality and destructive capabilities.

European allies and Canada announced tens of billions of dollars in weapons deals and industrial cooperation deals during the summit, many of which involve U.S. weapons and systems, according to reports.

Ukraine & Russia

At the end of the day, there is no chance whatsoever of America leaving NATO. As the legacy media [reported](#), the alliance's members — including the U.S. — "recommitted to its mutual defense agreement, vowed to increase military spending and expand defense production, and increased their support for Ukraine."

Ukraine, as expected, was one of the major issues looming over the summit. For Europe, it is *the* issue. While Ukraine is technically not an alliance member, the Europeans act as if it is. In Ankara, they reiterated their "unwavering support for Ukraine," vowing \$80 billion in military aid this year and next.

Trump met with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky and told him Washington would allow his country to make Patriot air defense systems. Zelensky corroborated the news in a social media post, [saying](#):

I'm grateful for the strong emphasis placed on strengthening Ukraine's air defense to better protect people's lives. President Trump and I spoke about some ideas that could strengthen our positions and bring peace closer.

This comes as Ukraine's war with Russia has greatly intensified within recent weeks, thanks to the former's effective strikes deep in the Motherland. Russian media [acknowledge](#) that "Ukraine has stepped up mid- and long-range strikes on targets deep inside Russia, hitting oil refineries, gas compression stations, civilian infrastructure, and vehicles." The Russians recognize that Ukrainian drone strikes have been effective. Russian head of state Vladimir Putin claimed during a recent meeting with government officials that Ukraine's strikes will not achieve their goal of destabilizing Russian society and its economy, but it's clear that they're disrupting Russian life.

There are signs that the Russians are growing increasingly frustrated. As we mentioned in a previous [report](#), the Kremlin appears to have made a proxy plea to the Trump administration through Russian arms dealer Viktor Bout via Tucker Carlson's podcast for the United States to stop supporting Ukraine. Bout even suggested that NATO members such as Poland, Germany, Romania, and others could become



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legitimate targets for Russian strikes due their involvement. And, as the Russians have done many times before, he floated the prospect of using nuclear weapons in the future. By selling the Europeans more weapons to give Ukraine, Trump is outright going against Russian wishes.

Before the summit ended, [Trump said](#) during a separate conference, with Zelensky seated to his right, that the leaders of both warring nations want to end the fighting, noting of Putin:

We have a lot of pressure on President Putin. You know, I don't think he likes what's going on. I don't think he's thrilled with what's happening. There's a lot of pressure on President Putin to get it done. I think there's pressure on everybody to get that one done.

The world has lost count of how many times it has heard statements suggesting peace is imminent. The two sides have never been able to agree on the big issues, including territorial concessions — or, from Ukraine's perspective, the lack of territorial concessions.

Iran & Italy

Iran also came up quite a bit during the summit. While Ukraine is Europe's most pressing military issue, Iran has become the monkey Trump can't shake off his back. As the U.S. resumed strikes after the Iranians reportedly attacked three commercial ships in the Strait of Hormuz, including Qatari and Saudi tankers, he said the ceasefire deal with Iran was over and said dealing with Tehran was a "waste of time." On Wednesday, he said of Iran's leaders: "They're nuts, okay? They're crazy people." You can read more about the latest in the Iran saga [here](#).

Mixed in the NATO drama was a TNZ-ish feud Trump has been having with Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni, though that appears to have finally dissolved. Last month, Trump told Italian media that Meloni "begged" him to take a picture with her at the G7 summit in France. Meloni said that wasn't true. The squabble peaked this weekend when Trump posted a fake picture of Ms. "Meloni staring at him longingly with the caption, "RESTRAINING ORDER NEEDED," per reports.

The genesis of this bickering is likely rooted in something more serious. It may go back to Italy's denial of "landing rights to U.S. war planes seeking to land at Sigonella base in eastern Sicily after determining their flight plans were linked to the war effort," as reports described it. Italy was one of a number of NATO countries that restricted U.S. warplanes access during the most intense phases of America's attack on Iran. But in the end Trump and Meloni both dismissed the quarrel for the trivial matter that it was.



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