

Munich Security Conference overshadowed by Transatlantic conflict

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This Friday, more than 60 heads of state and government, around 100 foreign and defence ministers, and numerous high-ranking military officials, politicians and foreign policy experts will gather for the 62nd Munich Security Conference (MSC). From the US alone, around 50 members of Congress, Secretary of State Marco Rubio and Democratic governors Gavin Newsom (California) and Gretchen Whitmer (Michigan) will be attending. The pseudo-left congresswoman Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, a member of the Democratic Socialists of America, is also part of the US delegation.

The conference will focus on the conflict between the US and Europe. The *Munich Security Report*, which is traditionally published a few days before the conference, accused the Trump administration of destroying the international order. Under the title “Under Destruction,” it states:

The world has entered a period of wrecking-ball politics. Sweeping destruction – rather than careful reforms and policy corrections – is the order of the day. The most prominent of those who promise to free their country from the constraints of the existing order and rebuild a stronger, more prosperous nation is the current US administration. As a result, more than 80 years after construction began, the US-led post-1945 international order is now under destruction.

A year ago, US Vice President J.D. Vance launched a tirade on European governments in Munich and openly expressed solidarity with far-right parties, including the Alternative for Germany. Trump’s punitive tariffs on European imports, his attacks on the European Union and, above all, his threats to annex Greenland by force have

since convinced Europe’s leaders that transatlantic relations are irretrievably broken. Countless political speeches, strategy papers and editorials have explored this theme.

The *Munich Security Report* accused Trump of being “the most powerful of those who take the axe to existing rules and institutions,” pursuing a “bulldozer policy” of destruction and rejecting “core elements of the existing international order.” Washington has “openly dispensed with the rules of global trade it once helped create.” This has had “dramatic consequences for various regions of the world,” especially Europe and the Indo-Pacific.

Although the *Report* couches its criticism in the language of defending existing values, rules and institutions, the European powers are moving in the same direction as Trump. As German Chancellor Friedrich Merz recently put it, they want to “learn to speak the language of power politics themselves” and are massively rearming. Germany, which has more than tripled its military spending this decade, is leading the way.

But rearmament takes time. That is why the European powers are trying to delay a complete break with the US for as long as possible. As the *Munich Security Report* states, they are pursuing a “twin-track strategy”: they “are striving to keep the US engaged while preparing for greater autonomy.”

While there are conflicts over the war in Ukraine, Greenland and trade policy, Berlin, Paris and London are backing Washington’s efforts to subjugate the Middle East and oust China and Russia from the resource-rich and strategically important region. They support not only Israel’s genocide of the Palestinians, but also the advanced US preparations for war against Iran to force regime change.

The organisers of the security conference have invited Reza Pahlavi, the son of the last Shah, whose bloody rule was overthrown by the Iranian Revolution in 1979, to

participate. Pahlavi, who lives in exile in the United States, wants to take power in Tehran under the protection of the US military and establish an imperialist puppet regime. On Saturday, he will speak at a large rally of Iranian regime opponents in exile on the sidelines of the conference at Munich's Theresienwiese, where up to 100,000 participants are expected.

As far as China is concerned, the *Munich Security Report* attacks the Trump administration from the right. It accused an "ever more powerful China" of "making a forceful bid for regional dominance, with provocations and coercion that threaten regional stability." Although Trump and his entourage are systematically preparing for war against the rising Chinese economic power, the *Report* accused them of a lack of determination:

Meanwhile, doubts have grown about US security guarantees and strategic interest in the region. While the US claims to be countering Chinese dominance, regional players view its recent actions as contradictory to that goal. Some of them even worry that dealmaking with Beijing is now more important to Washington than backing its partners.

According to conference chair Wolfgang Ischinger, three other topics will be the focus of the conference in addition to the strained transatlantic relations: the war in Ukraine, Germany's role in Europe and the world, and Europe's ability to "assert itself more strongly in the future with its own forces, represent its own interests and speak with one voice." German Chancellor Friedrich Merz will deliver the opening speech on Friday.

Conflicts with the US are particularly acute on the Ukraine issue. Since Trump met with Putin in Alaska and the US began negotiating with Russia to settle the war, European powers have feared an agreement at their expense and have been pushing for the war against Russia to continue.

Although the US has not yet made a decision, it has largely stopped financing the war, the main burden of which it bore in the first years of the conflict. A recent analysis by the Kiel Institute for the World Economy concludes that US military, humanitarian and financial allocations fell by 99 percent last year.

The European powers are responding by stepping up their own war efforts. In a detailed interview with several

European daily newspapers on Tuesday, French President Emmanuel Macron already called for a more aggressive stance against both China and the US.

Macron warned against trusting agreements with the US on tariffs and Greenland: "Don't believe it for a second, it's not over yet. Every day, every week, there will be new threats." Europe is facing "a double crisis. On the commercial level, there is the Chinese tsunami, and at the same time we have microsecond instability on the American side."

"We have to ask ourselves: Do we want to be spectators – or actors?" Macron concluded. Being a spectator means submission: "We don't bother anyone, we try to be nice to the Americans, and we continue as before with the Chinese. I tell you: if we do nothing, Europe will be swept away in five years." The French president insisted on a more sovereign, independent and militarily stronger Europe. It is "time to emerge from a state of immaturity, from a state of geopolitical minority."

This is no different from Trump. European governments are not opposing the fascist in the White House, but are copying his policies. In order to finance rearmament and the profits of the rich, the ruling classes on both sides of the Atlantic are taking increasingly brutal measures against the working population, cutting wages, destroying jobs, slashing social benefits and smashing democratic rights.

In doing so, they are also intensifying the class struggle and creating the objective conditions for resistance to war, social spending cuts and dictatorship. These can only be stopped by an independent movement of the international working class, which opposes capitalism and fights for the establishment of a socialist society.



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