

# Macron commits France to joining neocolonial US war on Iran

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6 March 2026

On Tuesday night, President Emmanuel Macron gave a brief televised address to the French people announcing that France would assist the US-Israeli war against Iran. Trampling upon widespread hostility in France both to a US-led war with Iran and to the US president, Macron has plunged France into an escalating regional and global war.

While Macron acknowledged that the conflict is a “war which is spreading and whose ending no one today can predict,” he thereupon predicted that France’s role within it would be “strictly defensive, aiming to protect and to restore peace as soon as possible.”

In reality, Macron is aligning France with a neocolonial war of aggression by Washington against Iran, continuing his support for the Israeli regime throughout its US-backed genocide in Gaza. After polls found only 8 percent support for a US war with Iran, Macron acted with open contempt for public opinion, above all in the working class. He did not even bother to go through the motions of parliamentary debate and approval of his war policy. Instead, he unilaterally committed France to a war that threatens the world with an economic and military catastrophe.

To promote the barefaced lie that his policy is somehow “defensive and peaceful,” Macron stood reality on its head, blaming Iran for the war launched against it.

He said, “The Islamic Republic of Iran bears the main responsibility for this situation. Iran has developed a dangerous nuclear program and unprecedented ballistic capabilities and financed terrorist groups in neighboring countries: Hezbollah in Lebanon, the Houthis in Yemen, Shia militias in Iraq and supported Hamas and always stated its objective to destroy the state of Israel. The Republic of Iran has, again last January, given the order to fire on its own people. Given all this and negotiations that had stalled, the USA and Israel decided to launch military operations.”

But it is US imperialism and its NATO imperialist

allies, not Iran, who are responsible for the war. Iran did not attack the United States, Israel or France or indeed any other European country. Rather, it was attacked by a coalition of more powerful and better-armed states. The war began by a series of unprovoked strikes by US and Israeli forces, ignoring the Iranian government’s warnings that it would in fact respond to an attack and would strike US military bases in the Middle East.

While Macron has long advocated an European imperialist foreign policy independent from the United States, the French government is nonetheless deeply complicit in the war. Paris is clearly calculating that France and its European allies have not yet sufficiently built up their armies to openly challenge Washington militarily, and that they must, for now at least, seek to assert their imperialist interests in collaboration with US imperialism.

It has been widely reported that the Trump administration had decided for war on Iran last year, and that it negotiated with Iranian officials this year in bad faith, having already decided to bomb them. Yet earlier this year, Macron declared in a text message to Trump that he was “totally aligned” with Trump’s policy in Syria and that together they could “accomplish great things in Iran.”

In a nod to mass opposition to imperialist war and the Gaza genocide, Macron briefly acknowledged the illegal character of the US-Israeli war but then dismissed it as irrelevant, citing the Iranian regime’s repression of protests late last year. US-Israeli strikes on Iran, he admitted, “have been conducted outside of international law, which we cannot approve of. But in any case history never mourns the executioners of their own people.”

This argument is, from the outset, utterly hypocritical. Trump in the United States and Macron in France, no less than the Iranian regime, rest upon the use of deadly force to crush social protests. Trump dispatches militarized ICE

anti-immigration police to occupy US cities and gun down US citizens after mass protests mobilized millions against his policies; Macron in 2019 briefly authorized the French army to fire on mass Yellow Vest protests against social inequality which saw draconian police repression.

The Trump administration's conduct of the war on Iran makes a mockery of Macron's pose of concern for the well-being of the Iranian people. In less than a week, it has bombed schools, abandoned Iranian sailors whose ships it had sunk to die at sea, and pursued large-scale targeted assassination of Iranian officials. These crimes flow, moreover, from the imperialist character of the war against Iran that Macron is joining, as world capitalism plunges ever deeper into global war.

The war aims to topple the Iranian regime that emerged from the 1979 Iranian Revolution, take back control of its oil and gas, break up the country along ethnic lines, and use it as a base for broader war operations across Eurasia, including against Russia and China.

In line with these aims, Macron announced the deployment to the Eastern Mediterranean of French warships, including the nuclear-armed aircraft carrier Charles de Gaulle, to protect Israel and NATO bases in Cyprus from Iranian strikes and also control critical shipping lanes for oil and gas.

"Today the Strait of Hormuz is effectively closed, and through this strait pass 20 percent of the world's oil and liquefied natural gas. The Suez Canal and the Red Sea are also tense and under threat," Macron said. France's intervention, he added, has to "secure passage through these maritime routes essential to the world economy."

Macron made clear his government intends to intervene militarily also in the Persian Gulf, citing "defense accords tying us to Qatar, Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates. They are particularly targeted and we owe them solidarity."

Since Macron spoke, French officials confirmed that they have authorized US forces to use French military bases in the Persian Gulf, as Iranian missile strikes cause serious damage to US bases. They have also authorized US transport planes carrying missiles and bombs to be dropped on Iran to use Istres air base near Marseille.

Finally, Macron announced that France's entry into the war on Iran would entail a further escalation of military and police operations inside France itself: "We are obviously looking to security on the national soil, as well. At my order, the government has reinforced the Sentinel military protection operation and vigilance around the most vulnerable sites and persons."

The warning must be sounded: In France as internationally, the war on Iran will go hand in hand with an escalating class war against the workers.

French bourgeois democracy is collapsing. The 2023 mass strikes against his overwhelmingly unpopular pension cuts, sold out by the union bureaucracies, and the emergence of a hung parliament in the 2024 elections have discredited the political order. Macron is despised for ruling against the people. For nearly two years, the ruling class has desperately but unsuccessfully sought a way to resolve France's crippling and unsustainable levels of sovereign debt via savage austerity without provoking an uncontrollable social explosion.

Powerful factions of the ruling class calculate that waging a major war, despite the vast dangers that it poses, offers a chance to massively redirect funds from social to military spending and move more directly towards a military-police dictatorship.

This would not be the first time in history that an imperialist regime has sought in foreign wars a remedy for insoluble domestic problems. However, this inevitably ends in catastrophe. Imperialism cannot subjugate Iran or re-impose colonial shackles on the Middle East. The task posed to workers in France is to link their struggles to those of their class brothers and sisters in America, across the rest of Europe and internationally in a movement against imperialist war and capitalism, and for workers' power and socialism.



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