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Merz pledges Major defence, Infrastructure spending to Bolster Security



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Germany's likely next chancellor, Friedrich Merz, has unveiled a sweeping plan to boost defence and infrastructure spending, vowing to do "whatever it takes" to safeguard freedom and stability in Europe.

Merz, whose conservative bloc won last month's election, announced a political agreement with centre-left allies to secure hundreds of billions of euros in additional funding. The proposals will be presented to parliament next week.

"In light of the threats facing our continent, we must take decisive action," Merz said. His comments referenced recent U.S. policy shifts under President Donald Trump, which he has criticized, particularly regarding Ukraine.

At a joint press conference with Social Democrat and Bavarian conservative leaders, Merz stressed the importance of strengthening Germany's military capabilities. "We rely on our alliances, but we must also expand our own defence resources significantly," he stated.

A central element of the proposal is a €500 billion fund to modernize Germany's ageing infrastructure while adjusting strict fiscal policies to accommodate increased defence spending.

The plan includes exempting necessary military expenditures above 1% of GDP from the country's

constitutionally mandated debt restrictions.

Germany has been a key supporter of Ukraine, but its military remains underfunded. The outgoing government, led by Olaf Scholz, introduced a €100 billion defence package after Russia's 2022 invasion, yet much of that has already been allocated. Germany needs an additional €30 billion annually to meet NATO's 2% GDP target, with security analysts urging an increase closer to 3%.

Merz's proposal will initially be reviewed by the outgoing parliament before the new legislative body convenes in late March. Any changes to Germany's "debt brake" would require a two-thirds parliamentary majority, facing potential opposition from far-right and left-wing factions.

Outgoing Defence Minister Boris Pistorius welcomed the initiative, calling it a "significant step" towards securing Germany's future. Talks between political leaders will continue as the country navigates economic constraints and evolving security challenges.