

## Merz Says NATO Summit to Address Middle East Developments



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BERLIN: German Chancellor Friedrich Merz said Wednesday that next week's NATO summit in Ankara will discuss the evolving situation in the Middle East alongside the alliance's long-term priorities, including transatlantic cooperation and continued support for Ukraine.

Speaking at a joint press conference with NATO Secretary General Mark Rutte in Berlin, Merz said allied leaders will also review diplomatic efforts aimed at securing a lasting agreement between

the United States and Iran.

He reiterated that the international community's objective remains preventing Iran from developing nuclear weapons while ensuring the security of the Strait of Hormuz, a key global energy route.

Responding to questions about Germany's possible financial contribution to implementing a US-Iran peace agreement framework, including post-conflict reconstruction, Merz said Berlin is prepared to consider supporting rebuilding efforts once a durable ceasefire is achieved.

He stressed that ending the fighting remains the immediate priority, adding that broader reconstruction discussions can only follow a lasting peace agreement.

Merz also said Germany would be willing to help restore critical infrastructure, particularly in the energy sector, noting that regional stability and secure energy supplies are important for both Europe and Germany. He added that all future assistance would depend on sustained peace and successful diplomatic progress.