
Merz hails new European era for NATO alliance



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German Chancellor Friedrich Merz on Wednesday described the Ankara summit as the beginning of a “new, more European” NATO, with European allies taking greater responsibility for their own defense while maintaining strong transatlantic ties.

Speaking after the two-day summit in Türkiye’s capital, Merz said NATO had taken an important step toward a new phase, becoming more European than ever while remaining firmly anchored in its partnership with the United States.

He said European countries were moving quickly to meet defense spending commitments agreed at the 2025 summit in The Hague, strengthening collective deterrence and creating a fairer burden-sharing arrangement with Washington.

Merz also praised US President Donald Trump's participation in the Ankara discussions, saying Trump listened carefully to concerns raised by leaders, including representatives of smaller NATO member states.

Despite earlier doubts and tensions, the German leader called the summit a success for all allies, expressing confidence that NATO would emerge more united and stronger.

He said the alliance's shared goal remained protecting peace, security, and freedom worldwide through greater cooperation and commitment among members.

Merz added that decisions taken in Ankara reflected renewed determination among allies to adapt to changing global security challenges. He emphasized that stronger European participation would contribute to NATO's long-term stability and effectiveness.