

Statement by M. Emmanuel Macron, President of the Republic, ahead of the working lunch with Mr Mark Carney, Prime Minister of Canada.

Prime Minister, thank you for being in Paris today; I'd like to welcome you and say how pleased we are to have you here. Firstly, because it's your first visit and you chose France for this first visit abroad. It's a huge honour and it also shows the importance of all the challenges we share. On a more personal note, allow me to wish you a very happy birthday, albeit a day late.

As you powerfully said on Friday when you took office, France – through its culture, way of life and language – is an irreducible part of Canada's identity, just like the First Peoples and the British legacy. And we're proud of this. We're proud of this shared history, we're proud of having with us an ally in every battle, a nation determined to champion a fairer world, and a people driven by a humanist ideal. During the 80th anniversary of the Normandy Landings, we paid tribute to the courage and exceptional self-sacrifice of a generation of Canadians who came to fight right here in France, like their ancestors at the Battle of Vimy Ridge, for a certain idea of freedom. That generation continues to inspire us, and Canada is a unique friend to us.

This has been the case since the war of aggression waged by Russia against Ukraine; your country has unfailingly stood by Europe and France and the Ukrainian people. And on Saturday morning we were together at a video conference with our friend the British Prime Minister and all the other allies and partners, to talk about this. The aim of this shared commitment to standing with the Ukrainians has always been to bring about solid, lasting peace, i.e. peace with robust guarantees that will protect Ukraine against any further Russian aggression and ensure the security of the whole of Europe.

Canada and France are peaceful powers and reliable allies who will take part in this effort together. It is in this spirit that we'll carry on our support for Ukraine and continue to demand clear commitments from Russia, and take all necessary initiatives to make progress together with our American, European and [other] international partners. And it's obviously one of the issues the Prime Minister and I will discuss in a moment.

In the current international context, we also want to be able to develop our most strategic projects with our closest, most loyal partners, because we're convinced – I believe this goes for both of us – that we are stronger together, better able to ensure that our interests are respected and to exercise our sovereignty to the full. We must be ambitious in the defence and security sectors, but also beyond, in organizing the ecological transition, developing new technology and tightening our links as much as is needed.

We've already had initial successes, as proven by the recent announcement that a consortium including French businesses had been chosen for the first stage of the planned high-speed train between Quebec and Toronto, which is symbolic in every sense. Further proof is the very strong turnout by your investors and businesses at the artificial intelligence summit, which shows Canada's strong presence and the partnership we have together in this area. Our businesses are also talking about mutual investments in the critical-metals sector – essential building-blocks for any energy transition.

I know how much you're also promoting fresh ambition on nuclear energy, which is the focus of long-standing cooperation between our two countries, and on quantum, where our research centres and businesses have knowledge unique in the world, which is going to be developed as part of a bilateral agreement. And after the recent artificial intelligence summit I mentioned, we're going to continue making active efforts together, because we're holding successive G7 presidencies, with challenges which await you in a few weeks' time and which we'll continue addressing, as we did from Charlevoix to Biarritz a few years ago.

We'll also make sure that our friendship is useful in promoting our values and our shared commitments to defending democracies, international solidarity, development, fair trade and protecting the planet. Indeed, I think we both believe that fair trade which respects international rules is a good thing for everyone's prosperity, and it's certainly more effective than tariffs, which create inflation and damage production chains and the integration of our economies. We too believe that the freedom of expression so dear/precious to our countries is not the same as an outpouring of hatred, violence, online harassment and opaque algorithms. That's why your G7 presidency in 2025 should be an opportunity for us to make progress on each of these points and basically uphold together a fair international order, in other words something that is neither the law of the strongest nor isolationism, and that's why we're fighting.

The most important part of all this is still our people-to-people ties, which are both close and warm. Prime Minister, French people love Canada. The French language unites us. (...)

In any case, Prime Minister, cher Mark, as you've understood, we're welcoming a friend here, we're welcoming him very joyfully, creating a lot of ambitions and plans together. And having known you for many years, I also know we're welcoming here a man who loves his country, is committed to serving its interests, and thinks you can serve your country's interests by being a good comrade on the international stage and forging effective, respectful partnerships.

That's the spirit that drives us too. Welcome!