
European Council: Michel (President), “ready to defend ourselves, EU’s economy on a war footing”

“Into the third year of Russia’s war of aggression against Ukraine, we face a pivotal moment. Urgency, intensity and unwavering determination are imperative”. This has been written by Charles Michel, President of the European Council, in the usual invitation letter to the 27 Heads of State and Government of the EU countries that will be meeting in Brussels on 21st and 22nd March. “Our foremost task is the swift provision of military aid to Ukraine and, building on recent initiatives like that of Czechia, the fast-track procurement and delivery of ammunition to Ukraine. This European Council will be an opportunity to strengthen and accelerate those efforts”. Additionally, “we must focus on effectively implementing and enforcing our sanctions, as well as advancing our efforts on the use of windfall profits from immobilised assets”. Michel writes on: “This is also a time for a real paradigm shift in relation to our security and defence. For decades, Europe has not invested enough in its security and defence. Now that we are facing the biggest security threat since the Second World War, it is high time we take radical and concrete steps to be defence-ready and put the EU’s economy on a ‘war footing’”. This means, Michel points out, if it’s not clear enough, “spending more” in weapons “and buying more jointly, thus more efficiently. We must also help the defence industry access private and public funds, and reduce regulatory burdens and barriers. Building this strategic security mindset require strong leadership and an acute understanding of the urgency of the threats we face. I expect our European Council to live up to this”.

Valentina Bombelli