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Prime Minister De Croo to speak at Munich Security Conference on European security on Sunday

Prime Minister Alexander De Croo will participate in the Munich Security Conference, the annual security conference in Munich, from 18 to 20 February. Belgian Foreign Minister Sophie Wilmès will accompany him. In light of the Ukrainian crisis, the Prime Minister will speak on the importance of strengthening Europe's security architecture. The programme also includes a series of bilateral meetings.

Alexander De Croo: *"The situation in Ukraine is a major concern for me. An escalation of violence would be bad for Europe and a disaster for Russia. Our country must step up in these difficult times. We must show ourselves as a loyal NATO ally, but also as experienced experts in the sustainable resolution of conflicts between communities."*

"So, I'm going to Munich with two clear messages. First, that NATO is more united than ever. Our country has developed a solid investment path of 14 billion euros until 2030 for defence, to further strengthen our role within NATO."

"My second message is that we need to move away from a geopolitical system with spheres of influence, as some people advocate. This is not just an unclear concept based on vague historical claims, above all it's a never-ending process that leads to a series of unpredictable actions and reactions. We need a strong security architecture that creates clarity and respects the sovereignty of every country, large or small. It is the only path to lasting stability between Russia on the one hand and the European Union and NATO on the other."

On Saturday 19 February at 3 PM, the Prime Minister will participate in the panel discussion on European Security and Defence Policy in the *Amerika Haus*. The discussion will be followed by a Q&A with about 300 students and young professionals and organized by the Youth Forum of the Foreign Affairs Association with Sigmar Gabriel as its patron.

On Sunday 20 February at 11.30 AM, the Prime Minister and his colleague Kaja Kallas (Estonia) will participate in the panel discussion "Back to Elysium: Fostering European Cohesion", which is part of the main programme in the Conference Hall.

In the margins of the conference, De Croo will also meet with corporate and government leaders, members of the US Congress and leaders of international institutions such as the World Bank and the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE).

Practical information

- Journalists can still get accredited until Wednesday 16 February to gain online access to the Munich Security Conference via the MSC website: <https://securityconference.org/en/press>

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