

BBC NEWS

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BBC News with Chris Barrow.

European leaders have mounted a robust defense of their continent at the Munich Security Conference. Hours after the German chancellor had warned of the end of the rules-based global order, the French President Emmanuel Macron told his audience to reject the image of an ageing continent where freedom of speech was in retreat. Our security correspondent Frank Gardner has more on the mood in Munich.

I think the transatlantic alliance is very bruised. The Trump administration, the Trump White House is clearly not on exactly the same page as Europe. But the transatlantic alliance is not broken. It's damaged, it's bruised, but they are looking for ways to try and keep it on track.

Americans are pleased that Europe is finally understanding that it needs to pay for its own way in defense. I think the flip side of that, though, is that European governments have yet to have this conversation with their own populations because the money isn't there.

The Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney and opposition leaders have laid flowers at a temporary memorial to the eight victims of a teenage killer in northern British Columbia. They'll later attend a vigil outside the town hall in Tumbler Ridge.

The estranged father of the shooter, Jesse Van Rootselaar, has offered his condolences for what he called a "senseless and unforgivable act of violence."

President Trump has confirmed that he's ordered a second aircraft carrier strike group to the Middle East to join the U.S. military buildup against Iran. He said the USS Gerald R. Ford would be leaving very soon and would be needed if the Iranians didn't make a deal on their nuclear program.

Speaking at a military base in North Carolina, he reminded soldiers there of the attack the U.S. carried out on nuclear facilities in Iran. "We have a situation right now where we sent a very big carrier group to Iran. I'd love to see if we could make a deal. They've been difficult to make a deal. I thought we would have had a deal last time. They wish they did. And that's where we did Midnight Hammer."

There's been a fire at an oil refinery in the Cuban capital, Havana. A massive column of smoke could be seen rising from the Nico Lopez refinery in Havana Bay. The fire has reportedly subsided. The incident comes as Cubans face their worst fuel shortage in recent years. Ian McWilliam reports.

Cuba has depended on Venezuela for its crude oil, but has received no shipments since U.S. special forces captured the Venezuelan president, Nicolás Maduro, last month. Washington has subsequently threatened to impose tariffs on countries supplying Havana with the oil it needs to generate electricity.

To conserve remaining fuel stocks, the government has reduced the workweek, school hours and public transport. Many countries now advise against travel to Cuba, bringing the valuable tourism industry close to collapse.

The Cuban president, Miguel Díaz-Canel, has said his country is willing to talk to Washington, but not under pressure.

World news from the BBC.

President Trump says he'll bypass Congress and force stringent new voter ID laws ahead of November midterm elections. A bill requiring would-be voters to present proof of citizenship has been approved by the House but is unlikely to pass the Senate.

Mr. Trump did not explain how he would go about imposing such rules, which critics say would serve to prevent millions of legitimate voters from taking part in the election.

An Indian man allegedly recruited by his country's intelligence service has pleaded guilty in New York to plotting to hire a hitman to kill a Sikh separatist. Nikhil Gupta had been negotiating the killing but the man he was in contact with was working for U.S. law enforcement. Gupta faces up to 40 years in prison and will be sentenced in May. India has denied involvement in any plot.

French police have shot and killed a man who tried to attack an officer near the Arc de Triomphe. The attack took place near the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, where police officers were rekindling the eternal flame.

There's been a shock winner of one of the blue-ribbon events at the Winter Olympics, the men's figure skating. The hot favorite Ilia Malinin of the United States fell numerous times during his routine, leaving the door open for the unheralded Kazakh skater Mikhail Shaidorov. And in the men's skeleton, Britain's Matt Weston set four consecutive track records on his way to a gold medal. Jo Currie reports from Livigno.

It was the moment Matt Weston's Olympic dream came true. "He's seconds away from a gold medal for Great Britain and he has done it with a flourish."

Weston cemented his status as the best skeleton racer in the world as he made history by winning gold in emphatic fashion in Cortina. After a run of fourth place finishes, near misses and disappointments, it's Team GB's first medal of the games.

And that's the latest BBC News.