



# Mette Frederiksens tale ved åbningsceremonien for det danske EU-formandskab

**Taler**

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42. statsminister,  
Socialdemokratiet

**Dato**

3. juli 2025

**Sted**

Aarhus Rådhus

1 Your Majesties,

Your Excellencies,

5 Ladies and gentlemen,

Welcome!

I am honoured to see you all here. In wonderful Aarhus.

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If you look around. You see the work of, as just been said, one of our most famous architects. Arne Jacobsen.

This beautiful city hall was built during the Second World War.

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In the darkest hour of modern European history.

Back then, there was a lack of materials. Iron bands in the right size for the construction of the roof were not available.

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So what did the craftsmen do?

Did they wait for the war to end?

25 No. They collected small pieces of iron from all over Denmark.

And put all these pieces together to form the strong iron bands holding the roof together.

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Even in the most difficult times. We can build something great and beautiful.

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But only if we join forces. And put together all the small pieces.

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Right now, Europe is facing the greatest challenges since the 1940's.

Russia's brutal war against Ukraine.

Democratic elections targeted by foreign powers.

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Pressure on Europe's external borders from migration.

Global economic uncertainty.

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Today, it's clear: Peace and stability on our continent cannot be taken for granted.

The world order that we built together is trembling. And our security and our way of living is under pressure.

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The past six months have shown that Greenland and Denmark can rely on European family and friends when the storm hits us.

The unity of Europe is real. And Europe can be strong when need is.

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\* \* \*

Ladies and gentlemen.

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You represent decision-makers, companies, unions, youth associations and the press.

To address the challenges Europe faces. All at the same time. We need every one

of you. Not only to defend the interests of your stakeholders.

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But to take responsibility. And to join efforts to build a stronger Europe.

\* \* \*

75 Dear Ursula and dear Antonio.

All construction projects need architects with visions.

And we are lucky to have you at the forefront drawing up the way forward.

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And during our Presidency, Denmark is ready to support both of you.

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85 First of all. We need to pave the way for a much stronger European defence.

Russia has converted into a war economy. And I see no signs that Putin's imperial dreams stop with Ukraine.

90 If we as Europeans are not able or willing to defend ourselves. Then what is Europe?

It was a grave mistake to cash in the peace dividend. A big mistake. For too long we spent too little. And we must never repeat that again.

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We need to rearm. Scale up our defence industry. Break down any barrier and obstacle in our way.

And as Presidency, we will push for common ground on how to get there.

100 Europe must be able to defend ourselves – no later than 2030.

And here, we need to look to our Ukrainian friends.

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\* \* \*

110 Dear Volodymyr,

Right now, European security rests far too much on the shoulders of your brave countrymen and women.

115 You're fighting for your own country. And you're fighting for the rest of Europe.

We cannot – and will not – let you down.

120 We must continue our steadfast support for Ukraine. And increase the pressure on Russia with more sanctions.

We need to look at our support to Ukraine in a different way. We have to change our mindset.

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Our donations are not charity.

They are part of our defence of our common continent. Of Europe. Of our life and freedom.

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And we need to learn from Ukraine. Your determination. Your sense of urgency. And your ability to innovate.

In only a couple of years, Ukraine has built an incredible defence industry.

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Now we must show that we can do the same and the rest of Europe. And we don't have a single second to waste.

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Secondly. Building a strong Europe is also about migration.

Right now, cynical smugglers have the power to decide who can enter Europe and who cannot.

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We need of course to be in control of our borders. Who can enter and stay in our countries. That needs to be a democratic decision.

150 Many come here to work and to contribute. But some do not.

And around Europe, we see the consequences. Crime. Radicalization. And terror.

155 We have built some of the best societies ever. But we cannot accept anyone who wants to come here.

Those that commit serious crimes, they should be expelled.

160 We need to address these challenges. We need to address them head on. Take firm action on migration and criminal foreign nationals.

Because this is all about ensuring that our societies and our citizens are safe.

165 \* \* \*

Third, we need to build a stronger Europe economically.

170 European companies should have the best opportunities to succeed in the global market. To create the jobs of the future here in Europe.

We must cut red tape and remove burdens. Reduce our dependencies. Bring Europe forward. In a just way. For all of our citizens.

175 And while others build tariff walls. We should build new partnerships.

Get Mercosur rolling. Finalize an agreement with India.

180 Not just for the sake of trade.

But also for the sake of building strong alliances in a very uncertain world. Without ever compromising what makes Europe special:

Our social model. Our cities where people can live and work. Our green

leadership.

\* \* \*

190 And this is a message to all the commissioners: We need to see the green transition as key to our competitiveness. Our independence. Especially from Russia. Our future. We need to combat climate change and adapt to the dramatic changes that we already see. Floods, storms.

195 But it is not only a matter of fighting climate change. It is not only a matter of creating more and better lives in our cities. Not only a matter of strengthening our society.

It's all at once. And with no time to lose.

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That is why it is key that we need to set a long-term EU climate target for 2040.

It is hard to believe, but Russia remains the second largest exporter of gas to the EU.

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Every cent we send to Russia is a support for Russia's war machine.

We cannot continue paying them killing Europeans.

210 We need to work hard to end all import of Russian gas.

At the same time, we must bring down our energy costs. And roll out clean energy and infrastructure at a level we've never seen before.

215 For ourselves. But also for our children and grandchildren.

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Ladies and gentlemen.

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I have trust in Europe.

A Europe that will no longer seek shelter behind others.

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A Europe that is ready to stand up for ourselves. Defend ourselves.

A Europe standing proud.

230 Let's go to work!

**Kilde**

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**Kildetype**

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