

France, Greece sign defence deal; Athens to buy 3 warships

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France and Greece recently announced a multibillion-euro defense deal, including Athens' decision to buy three French warships as part of a strategy to boost its defense capacities in the Eastern Mediterranean amid recurring tensions with longtime foe Turkey.

President Emmanuel Macron and Greek Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis announced a defense and security strategic partnership in a joint news conference in Paris.

Key Highlights

- This partnership expresses our will to increase and intensify our cooperation in the defense and security sector based on our mutual interests, Macron said.
- It will help protect the sovereignty, independence, and territorial integrity of both states."
- Greece will purchase three French frigates to be built by defense contractor Naval Group in Lorient, in western France. The deal includes an option for the acquisition of a fourth frigate.
- The announcement comes at a key time for France after the loss this month of a USD

66 billion deal to sell diesel-electric submarines to Australia, which instead chose to acquire nuclear-powered submarines provided by the US.

- The three-way strategic defense alliance announced by Australia, the UK and the US came as a shock to French officials.
- Greece has already bought 18 French Rafale fighter jets and plans to purchase another six under a program to modernize its armed forces.

SOURCE: *Business Standard*