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## **EU AGREES TO UKRAINE LOAN - BUT VDL AND MERZ SUFFER DEFEAT AS ASSETS PLAN FAILS**

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Gregorio Sorigi, Victor Jack and Bjarke Smith-Meyer

European governments failed to reach a deal on sending Russian frozen state assets to Ukraine after a 16-hour summit in Brussels, in a major setback for German Chancellor Friedrich Merz and European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen.

Countries were forced instead to agree on an emergency backup plan based on EU joint debt that was pushed for weeks by Belgian Prime Minister Bart De Wever and was deemed a long shot until hours before the deal was done. In a further blow to EU unity, three countries — Hungary, Slovakia and the Czech Republic — won't take part.

The bottom line, after today, is that our support for Ukraine is guaranteed, Danish Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen said as the summit wrapped up at 3 a.m.

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