

# Macron uses presidential address to denounce Brexit “lies and false promises”

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Emmanuel Macron used his New Year’s Eve presidential address to the nation to denounce the “lies and false promises” that led to the UK departing the European Union.

He described Brexit as the “child of a malaise within the EU”, acknowledging that internal difficulties within the union had contributed to the split.

But the way forward for the bloc lay in greater integration, the president said, which had already begun under French guidance.

He promised France a better future during a 15-minute address, before adopting a more sober tone to say: “This evening for the first time, a country — the UK — will leave the EU.”

Criticizing the “lies and false promises” that led to the UK’s departure, he said nevertheless the UK will remain “our neighbour” as well as “our friend and our ally”.

Mr. Macron sought to reassure the French that the economy would not be harmed by Britain’s departure, saying that the trade deal negotiated with London would succeed in “defending our interests, our industrial firms, our fishermen and our European unity”.

The presidential office had issued a statement this week, however, saying that “France will be very vigilant from Day One” in case Britain “disregards its commitments” under the agreement.

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