

Bromance cools for once-chummy Trump and anti-nationalism Macron

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French President Emmanuel Macron (right) meets with Iranian President Hassan Rouhani on the sidelines of the U.N. General Assembly at the U.N. headquarters Tuesday in New York. | AFP-JIJI

World / Politics

AP

NEW YORK – Gone is the shoulder squeezing, the affectionate dandruff-brushing – and French President Emmanuel Macron’s hope that he could use his unlikely friendship with Donald Trump to rein in the American president’s more incendiary instincts.

When the two men met Monday in New York, they shook hands lightly and got down to the tasks at hand. They agreed to disagree on the Iranian nuclear accord and Trump’s protectionist policies and one-sided support for Israel, according to two French presidential advisers.

The businesslike mood contrasted with Trump’s fawning over Macron at a state dinner

in April, and Macron's lavish Eiffel Tower welcome for the Trumps last year.

Hours after their meeting, the two men laid out starkly different worldviews in speeches at the U.N. General Assembly.

"Nationalism always leads to defeat," said the progressive, multilateralist Macron.

"We reject the ideology of globalism and we embrace the doctrine of patriotism," said Trump, trumpeting his "America First," zero-sum vision.

Macron later ticked off ways Trump has disappointed him — from his withdrawal from the Paris climate accord and Iranian nuclear deal to unilateral tariffs on steel and aluminum.

Still, Macron said he'll keep working with Trump on a "case by case" basis, and insisted that they're not rivals but pragmatic allies.

At their meeting, "Both leaders reaffirmed their commitment to closely coordinate to address global challenges," the White House said. Macron specified that meant working together on Syria and a new U.S. trade deal with Europe — as long as it doesn't involve such things as American GMO products that make European consumers wary.

Macron appeared to convince Trump to follow through on promises to visit Paris in November to mark 100 years since the armistice ending World War I, and added a possible battlefield tour to Trump's program.

And Trump offered Macron an unexpected compliment, praising him as the new "hardliner" of Europe for his tough stance on Brexit negotiations, according to the French officials. The officials took part in Monday's meeting but were not authorized to be publicly named according to presidential policy.

Given Trump's combative, mercurial presidency, the French aides made a point to stress one positive thing about Trump and Macron's latest sit-down session: no new conflicts emerged.



