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## **EU BACKS FRANCE IN SUBMARINE DISPUTE, ASKING: IS AMERICA BACK?**

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European Union foreign ministers expressed support and solidarity with France on Monday (20 September) during a meeting in New York to discuss Australia's scrapping of a \$40 billion submarine order with Paris in favor of a US and British deal.

Speaking after the closed-door meeting on the sidelines annual UN gathering of world leaders, EU foreign policy chief Josep Borrell said more cooperation, more coordination, less fragmentation was needed to achieve a stable and peaceful Indo-Pacific region where China is the major rising power.

Australia said last week it would cancel an order for conventional submarines from France and instead build at least eight nuclear-powered submarines with US and British technology after striking a security partnership with those countries under the name AUKUS.

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