

Administration of Joseph R. Biden, Jr., 2023

**Remarks in an Exchange With Reporters Prior to Departure for Camp David,
Maryland**

December 23, 2023

The President. I hope you all have a good Christmas.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu of Israel

Q. Did you call Netanyahu and tell him about—Netanyahu, sir——

Q. Merry Christmas to you, sir.

Q. How did the conversation go with President Netanyahu today?

Q. Netanyahu, sir—did you tell him not to strike Hamas in a preemptive strike?

The President. I had a long talk with Netanyahu today, and it's a private conversation.

National Economy

Q. About the economy, sir, what's your outlook on the economy next year?

The President. All good. Take a look. Start reporting it the right way.

Presidential Immunity

Q. Mr. President, do you think that the President—any President—is absolutely immune from criminal prosecution, any President at all?

The President. I can't think of one.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu of Israel/Israeli Military Operations in Gaza

Q. Mr. President, did you ask for a cease-fire, sir?

Q. Do you have any message for Africa?

The President. I had a private conversation. I did not ask for a cease-fire.

Africa

Q. Do you have any message for Africa?

The President. For whom?

Q. For Africa.

The President. Yes, it has a great future. We're going to continue to work with Africa to build the infrastructure and to grow that continent. A billion people. A billion people.

Merry Christmas!

Q. Thank you, sir. Merry Christmas!

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:02 p.m. on the South Lawn at the White House prior to boarding Marine One. The transcript was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on December 24.

Categories: Interviews With the News Media : Exchanges with reporters, White House.

Locations: Washington, DC.

Names: Netanyahu, Benjamin.

Subjects: Africa, economic growth and development; Africa, regional infrastructure development; Economic improvement; Gaza, conflict with Israel; Israel, military operations in Gaza; Israel, Prime Minister; News media, Presidential interviews.

DCPD Number: DCPD202301148.