

Administration of Donald J. Trump, 2025

Remarks Prior to a Meeting With Secretary General Mark Rutte of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization in the Hague, Netherlands

June 25, 2025

President Trump. Hello, fellas.

Q. How are you, sir?

President Trump. Had a big weekend.

Q. Yes, sir.

President Trump. Great weekend.

See you on the plane.

Secretary General Rutte. They are with you on the plane?

President Trump. They travel with me, yes.

Secretary General Rutte. Most the time? Yes.

President Trump. They have better seats than I do. [*Laughter*]

[*At this point, Secretary General Rutte pointed to a reporter.*]

Secretary General Rutte. You say, "No."

North Atlantic Treaty Organization

Q. Mr. President, what are you telling the Prime Minister about your goals for NATO and article 5 today?

President Trump. We're with them all the way. I mean, if you take a look at the numbers, we're with them. And they have very big things to announce today. I don't know if you've taken the vote or if you're going to take the vote, but I've been asking them to go up to 5 percent for a number of years, and they're going up to 5 percent. And that's a big—from 2 percent, I'd—and a lot of people didn't even pay the 2 percent. So I think that's going to be very big news. NATO is going to become very strong with us, and I appreciate doing it.

Perhaps you want to talk?

Secretary General Rutte. Yes, absolutely.

Let me first—before I go to spending, I just want to recognize your decisive action on Iran.

President Trump. Thank you.

Secretary General Rutte. You are a man of strength, but you are also a man of peace. And the fact that you are now also successful in getting this cease-fire done between Israel and Iran, I really want to commend you for that.

President Trump. Thank you very much.

Secretary General Rutte. And I think this is important for the whole world.

Then on spending, it's absolutely true. I want to state here, without President Trump, this would not have happened in three stages. When you became President in 2016, 2017, you forced

Europeans and Canadians to pay more. At this moment, the result of that phase is \$1 trillion extra aggregate defense spending by the Canadians and the Europeans.

Then came phase two, when you became President in January of last year.

President Trump. That's right.

Secretary General Rutte. Phase two is that all the countries not yet on 2 percent have now committed to the 2 percent. This is the old goal from Wales in 2014. Seven were not on 2 percent. Some were saying somewhere in the 2030s. Now, this year, all of them—including Canada, including Italy, including Belgium—they have all now committed to the 2 percent.

And now comes the big splash. Today we will decide to go to 5 percent. We have to keep ourselves safe from our adversaries, but also because it is fair to equalize with the United States. With this 5 percent, the Europeans and the Canadians will equalize their defense spending with United States.

So this is not about American taxpayers paying more. This is about Europeans, Canadians paying more. And, again, this would not have happened—and I'm really saying this here, and some people might criticize me, but then when I speak with them, they all say, "Yes, you are right." This would not have happened if you would not have been elected in 2016 and reelected last year and back into office in January. So I want to thank you for that.

President Trump. Well, thank you very much. It's a great victory for everybody, I think. And we will be equalized very shortly, and that's the way it has to be. It's going to be a lot of money too, a lot of defense.

Secretary General Rutte. Trillions extra. Trillions.

President Trump. Yes. And we have a great relationship, and we've had a great relationship from the beginning. Highly respected man.

And yes, we appreciate you being here too, everybody. We really do. We have a tremendous group of people on my left and a tremendous group of people on my right. They might be even better than my people. I don't know. *[Laughter]*

Secretary General Rutte. No, no, no.

President Trump. Let's have a fight. Let's figure it out.

Secretary of Defense Peter B. Hegseth. We could take them.

President Trump. Anyway—but we appreciate it. And we've had a tremendous relationship, Mark and I.

Secretary General Rutte. Absolutely. We are friends.

President Trump. And we've really worked on this subject for a long time.

Secretary General Rutte. Yes.

President Trump. When Biden was here, it just died. It just died, like everything else died. And now it's—you're going to take, I guess, a vote today. Right?

Secretary General Rutte. Absolutely. Today we will decide unanimously to do this. That's my absolute conviction on that.

President Trump. So we can't talk about it until the vote is taken, because sometimes, you know, strange things happen to a vote. But I think you're going to get——

Secretary General Rutte. I'm not too worried. I'm not too worried.

President Trump. —I think you're going to do very well. Everyone's very happy about it. Go ahead, yes.

Iran/Israel

Q. Mr. President, how is the Iran-Israel cease-fire going, in your opinion on the matter?

President Trump. I think very good. I think very good.

Israel came back yesterday. I was so proud of them, because they came back. You know, they went out because they felt there was a violation. And technically, they were right, but it just wouldn't have worked out very well. And they brought the planes back. They had gone on to another journey because there was a little bit of a violation. And I said, "You've got to get them back." And they came back, and it was a great thing, and it's going very well.

Q. Are you confident it will hold?

Iran/U.S. Airstrikes on Nuclear Facilities/Israel

Q. Mr. President, what are your—what is your response to the Foreign Minister saying he still wants to enrich nuclear?

President Trump. Hello, Katie [Katie Pavlich, Townhall.com]. She is so great, this one. Any question she asks, I'll answer. Well, maybe I'd better not say that. [*Laughter*]

What was your question?

Q. What is your response to the Iranian Foreign Minister continuing to say Iran will enrich uranium and pursue nuclear weapons?

President Trump. Well, I don't know if they've said that, but I'll tell you, the last thing they want to do is enrich anything right now. They want to recover. And we won't let that happen, number one. Militarily, we won't.

I think we'll end up having somewhat of a relationship with Iran. I see it. Look, I've had a relationship over the last 4 days. They agreed to the cease-fire, and it was a very equal agreement. They both said, "That's enough." They both said it.

But no, they won't do that. The last thing they want to do, Katie, is enrich. They're not looking to—they're not—can you imagine, after all of that, they're going to say—

Secretary General Rutte. Yes.

President Trump. —"Oh, let's go and do a bomb?"

Secretary General Rutte. Crazy.

President Trump. You know, there could be a day in the future—and then somebody else taking our place will be saying, "Don't do it." And maybe they won't do it as well, I don't know. But they're not going to have a bomb, and they're not going to enrich. And we believe all of the stuff is down there. We don't think they have nearly the time—because to get that out is a very difficult thing. It's not like—it's not like moving a package or taking this carpet up and moving it. It's very difficult, very dangerous to do. We believe it's all down there.

We had a tremendous victory, a tremendous hit, and because of that, they—I don't think they would have been down there, because they knew we were coming. When they know we're coming, they're not going to be down in that—you know, 30 stories underground.

So, no, I think it was a—just a tremendous victory for everybody, including Iran. Look, you know, they've got a country, and they've got oil, and they're very smart people, and they can come back.

Israel got hit very hard, especially the last couple of days. Israel was hit really hard. Those ballistic missiles—boy, they took out a lot of buildings.

And they've been great. Bibi Netanyahu should be very proud of himself, and they've really been great.

But they're not going to be building bombs for a long time.

U.S. Airstrikes on Iranian Nuclear Facilities

Q. Mr. President, what's your reaction to the intelligence reports saying that the Iranian nuclear sites were only partially devastated, not entirely eliminated?

President Trump. Yes, well, I—they said it was—actually, the report said it could have been very—they don't know. I mean, they—they did a report. I could have Pete talk to it, because his department did the report. They really don't know. I think Israel is going to be telling us very soon, because Bibi is going to have people involved in that whole situation.

We hear it was obliteration. It was a virtual obliteration. When you take a look at the ground above—don't forget, the flame is all underground—but everything above—if you look at the before and the after picture, everything above is burned black—the trees, everything. There's one building, but that's a building that's sunk substantially into the granite, so that—you know, the fire goes right over it.

It was—I believe it was total obliteration. I believe they didn't have a chance to get anything out, because we acted fast. If it would have taken 2 weeks, maybe. But it's very hard to remove that kind of material—very hard and very dangerous for them to remove it. Plus, they knew we were coming. And if they know we're coming, they're not going to be down there. There aren't too many people that are going to be down there.

Pete, do you have something to say about that?

Secretary Hegseth. Well, Mr. President, when you talk to the people who built the bombs, understand what those bombs can do, and deliver those bombs, they landed precisely where they were supposed to. So it was a flawless mission.

President Trump. Flawless.

Secretary Hegseth. Right down where we knew they needed to enter.

And given the 30,000 pounds of explosives and capability of those munitions, it was devastation underneath Fordow. And the amount of munitions—six per location—any assessment that tells you it was something otherwise is speculating with other motives.

And we know that, because when you actually look at the report—by the way, it was a top-secret report—it was preliminary. It was low confidence. All right? So this isn't—you make assessments based on what you know. They don't—

President Trump. And it said it could be very devastating, very serious in that report.

Secretary Hegseth. Moderate to severe. And we believe, far more likely, severe and obliterated.

Q. Is there a leak investigation?

Secretary Hegseth. So this is a political motive here.

News Media

Q. Is there a leak investigation?

Secretary Hegseth. Of course. We're doing a leak investigation with the FBI right now, because this information is for internal purposes, battle-damage assessments. And CNN and others are trying to spin it to make the President look bad, when this was an overwhelming success.

Q. Mr. President——

President Trump. We had a tremendous success.

And this is the New York Times—I call it "the failing New York Times"; it's going to hell—and CNN, which, as you know, very few people are watching. And you would think they'd do the opposite. You would think they'd want to say, "This was an unbelievable success."

And the thing that hurts me is it's really demeaning to the pilots and the people that put that whole thing together, the generals. That was a perfect operation. And when you look at the holes—and this was done from 52,000 feet. There was no Moon. There was no light. And they—those three holes are right together.

And also—and nobody talks about this—we shot 30 Tomahawks from submarines—in particular, one submarine, but that was 400 miles away. And every one of those Tomahawks hit within a foot of where they were supposed to hit. Took out a lot of buildings that Israel wasn't able to get. We took them out with Tomahawks. We don't even talk about that.

This was a devastating attack, and it knocked them for a loop. And you know, if it didn't, they wouldn't have settled. If they had won, if we didn't take it out, they wouldn't have settled. Somebody mentioned that to me last night. If that thing wasn't devastated, they would have never settled.

Marco, do you have something to say?

Secretary of State Marco A. Rubio. Yes.

No, first of all, on this stuff about the intelligence, this is what a leaker is telling you the intelligence says. That's the game these people play. They read it, and then they go out and characterize it the way they want it characterized. And they're leakers. This is the game they play. So that's number one.

Number two, here's a fact. The conversion facility—which you can't do a nuclear weapon without a conversion facility—you can't—we can't even find where it is, where it used to be on the map. You can't even find where it used to be because the whole thing is just blackened out. It's gone.

President Trump. That's right. It's wiped out.

Secretary Rubio. It's wiped out.

Then we dropped 12 of the strongest bombs on the planet right down the hole in two places. Everything underneath that mountain is in bad shape.

And I refer you to the statement of the IAEA, Mr. Grossi.

Secretary General Rutte. Yes.

Secretary Rubio. You know what he said? He said there was Iran the way it looked the day before the act—attack and what their nuclear program looks like now. Two very different things. They are way behind where they were just 7 days ago.

Now, anything in the world can be rebuilt, but now we know where it is. And if they try to rebuild it, we'll have options there as well.

But all this leaker stuff—these leakers are professional stabbers. That's what they are. They go out and they read this stuff, and then they tell you what it says—against the law—but they characterize it for you in a way that's absolutely false.

There's no way Iran comes to the table if somehow nothing had happened. This was complete and total obliteration. They're in bad shape. They are way behind today compared to where they were just 7 days ago because of what the President did.

Secretary General Rutte. Marco, can I—

U.S. Airstrikes on Iranian Nuclear Facilities

Q. Just to be—just—

Secretary General Rutte. —just alert you to one other aspect?

So the great thing is you took out the nuclear capability of Iran. This was crucial. You did it in a way which is extremely impressive. But the signal sent to the rest of the world, that this president, when it comes to it—yes, he is a man of peace, but, if necessary, he is willing to use strength—the enormous strength of the American military.

So I think that signal to the rest of the world—this is far beyond Iran—is extremely important. So let me also point us to that aspect of what happened.

Q. And just to be clear—

President Trump. They went down—

Q. —are you saying the intelligence is wrong?

President Trump. Iran went down to the site afterwards. They said, "It's so devastated." And they settled when they saw what we did to it. And frankly, if we didn't do that, they would have had a lot of ammunition to keep going. They wouldn't have settled. Somebody brought that up.

And two Iranians went down to see it, and they called back, and they said, "This place is gone." So it's just fake news by CNN, which has got no ratings. It's a failed network. Anybody here from CNN, by the way? Because you're—really disgraceful network. MSNBC I think is actually worse, but they're all pretty bad. But yours is good, Katie, I'll tell you.

[Several reporters began asking questions at once.]

You know what—you know what Marco reminded me? He did such a nice job there. It was—9 years ago, I had to debate this guy. [Laughter] He was not easy. [Inaudible] I think he even got better. But when you were into your little thing, I said, "This is what I had to debate—this guy." [Laughter] You think it's easy debating him? It's not easy.

Q. Mr. President—

U.S. Airstrikes on Iranian Nuclear Facilities

Q. How long do you think that the Iranian nuclear program has been put back by these strikes? Years or—totally obliterate—how—long is—[inaudible]?

President Trump. I think basically decades, because I don't think they'll ever do it again. I just don't think they're going to do it. I think they're going to take their oil, they're going to have some misses—missiles, and they'll have some defense.

I think they've had it. I mean, they just went through hell. I think they've had it. The last thing they want to do is enrich. They've been trying to do it—by the way, it's hard to enrich. And you know, when you look at a site like that, very, very hard to build. Very, very hard. Very expensive. They spent trillions of dollars trying to do this thing, and they didn't come up with it.

And we're actually getting along with them very well right now. But had we not succeeded with that hit—that hit ended the war. That hit ended the war. I don't want to use an example of Hiroshima. I don't want to use an example of Nagasaki. But that was essentially the same thing. That ended that war. This ended that—with the war. If we didn't take that out, they would have been—they'd be fighting right now.

Q. Mr. President——

President Trump. Yes.

Iran/Nuclear Weapons Development/News Media

Q. If the Iranians do rebuild, would the United States——

President Trump. If they rebuild?

Q. ——would the United States strike again?

President Trump. Sure.

Q. And I have also a question about Russia.

President Trump. I'm not going to have to worry about that. It's gone for years. Years. Very tough to rebuild because the whole thing has collapsed.

In other words: Inside, it's all collapsed. Nobody can get in to see it, because it's collapsed. You can't go in to see a room that has, you know, 10 million tons of rock in it. And the tunnels are totally collapsed.

Q. But if they rebuild?

President Trump. Well, they've already looked at the tunnels. The—this was an unbelievable hit by genius pilots and genius people in the military, and they're not being given credit for it, because we have scum that's in this group—and not all of you are, you have some great reporters—but you have scum. CNN is scum. MSDNC is scum. The New York Times is scum. They're bad people. They're sick.

And what they've done is, they're trying to make this unbelievable victory into something less. Now, even they admit that it was hit very hard. Okay? But it wasn't his hard; it was hit brutally. And it knocked it out.

The original word that I use—I guess it got us in trouble, because it's a strong word—it was "obliteration." And you'll see that. And it's going to come out. Israel is doing a report on it now, I understand. And I was told that they said it was total obliteration.

You know, they have guys that go in there after—after the hit, and they say it was total obliteration. And you know, I don't want it for me. I want it for the pilots. I want it for the military. They did such a good job.

If you were in the Situation Room with me, with the generals and all of the people that did such a good job, and then they get demeaned by these idiots at CNN who can't get ratings. The place is dying. Nobody wants to even waste their time going on their shows. So they form with the New York Times, who is dying also. Without Trump, you wouldn't have a New York Times.

President Volodymyr Zelenskyy of Ukraine

Q. And then just changing gears to your meeting with Zelenskyy later today. Can you give us any preview of what the two of you might be discussing——

President Trump. No. Well, we'll——

Q. ——particularly with Russia?

President Trump. ——discuss the obvious. [*Laughter*] We'll discuss his difficulties. He's got a little difficulty, Zelenskyy. He's a nice guy. I mean, I'm going to meet him today. I don't know. I assume we're going to be discussing Ukraine.

Q. Yes.

President Trump. I mean, it seems like the most likely subject. [*Laughter*]

President Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin of Russia/Gaza, Palestinian Territories

Q. Is there any restart of talks there or anything that you might do?

President Trump. Well, we're going to see. I mean, I've spoken to Putin a lot, and he actually was very nice. He volunteered help on—as you know, on Iran. I said, "No, I don't need help on Iran. I need help on Russia." Okay? [*Laughter*]

Secretary General Rutte. Exactly.

President Trump. I said, "Do me a favor: Help us on Russia, not on Iran." But he was very nice.

We're going to talk about that. We're going to talk. I think progress is being made.

I think great progress is being made on Gaza. I think the—because of this attack that we made, I think we're going to have some very good news. I was talking to Steve Witkoff—who, by the way, is terrific—and who knows more about this subject than anybody—the subject of what we were just talking about.

He was on last night with Jesse and with Laura and with Sean and, boy, he has—Susie, he has a great take on it. He just explains it so easily. He's really very knowledgeable. But he did tell me that Gaza is very close.

[*Several reporters spoke at once.*]

Secretary General Rutte. Donald, we have to go to photograph. Yes.

President Trump. Oh, okay.

Secretary General Rutte. Should we go?

U.S. Airstrikes on Iranian Nuclear Facilities

Q. One follow-up on Iran. Both you and Secretary Rubio and Hegseth mentioned the leakers. But can you clarify: Is the intelligence correct, or is the intelligence wrong?

President Trump. Well, the intelligence was—very inconclusive. The intelligence says, "We don't know. It could have been very severe." That's what the intelligence says. So I guess that's correct. But I think we can take the "we don't know"—it was very severe. It was obliteration.

And you think that a media outlet would say, "Isn't that a great thing?" I mean, more importantly, for the pilots, for the military, you take their guts out. You take their absolute guts out. They had a tremendous attack. It was a complete obliteration. The other team—the other—the other group, Iran, said, "Let's stop this." And you know what? Israel said it too. Very smart. They fought like hell. And then they said, "Let's stop." And they're going to build themselves.

And I really see it just sticking. I mean, we may do papers on it, Marco. Maybe we're going to do papers. I don't even know if you need them. They're not going to be fighting each other. They've had it. They've had a big fight, like two kids in a schoolyard. You know, they fight like hell. You can't stop them. Let them fight for about 2, 3 minutes, then it's easy to stop them.

Secretary General Rutte. And then Daddy has to sometimes use strong language to get it stopped. [Laughter]

President Trump. You have to use strong language. Every once in a while, you have to use a certain word to get the point across.

Secretary General Rutte. I think we have to join the others, Donald.

President Trump. Yes, we're going to join some other group.

Secretary General Rutte. Yes.

President Trump. Yes, thank you. Katie, one other.

Q. Just one last question. Do you believe this strike——

President Trump. I only—she's so good. That's the only reason I take.

Secretary General Rutte. I——

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. Do you think——

President Trump. She used to be very difficult, but now she's—[laughter]—go ahead.

Gaza, Palestinian Territories

Q. Do you believe that this strike on the Iranian nuclear program will lead to the release of the hostages in Gaza?

President Trump. I think that it helped a little bit. It showed a lot of power. Yes, I think it helped. But we're going to get—separately, even before this, we were very close to making a deal in Gaza. I think this helped. Yes.

Okay? Thank you, Katie.

Q. Thank you.

President Trump. Thank you, everybody. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:22 a.m. at the World Forum. In his remarks, he referred to former President Joseph R. Biden, Jr.; Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu of Israel; U.S. Special Envoy to the Middle East Steven C. Witkoff; Jesse Watters, cohost, Fox News Channel's "The Five" program; Laura Ingraham, host, Fox News Channel's "Ingraham Angle" program; Sean Hannity, host, Fox News Channel's "Sean Hannity Show"; and White House Chief of Staff Susan Wiles. Secretary Rubio referred to Rafael M. Grossi, Director General, International Atomic Energy Agency. A reporter referred to Minister of Foreign Affairs Abbas Araqchi of Iran.

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Names: Biden, Joseph R., Jr.; Hannity, Sean; Hegseth, Peter B.; Ingraham, Laura; Netanyahu, Benjamin; Putin, Vladimir Vladimirovich; Rubio, Marco A.; Rutte, Mark; Watters, Jesse; Witkoff, Steven C.; Zelenskyy, Volodymyr.

Subjects: Gaza, humanitarian situation; Iran, conflict with Israel; Iran, nuclear weapons development; Iran, U.S. airstrikes on nuclear facilities; Israel, conflict with Iran; Israel, Prime Minister; Netherlands, President Trump's visit; News media, fairness and accuracy; North Atlantic Treaty Organization; Russia, conflict in Ukraine; Russia, President; Secretary of Defense; Secretary of State; U.S. Special Envoy to the Middle East; Ukraine, President; Ukraine, Russian invasion and airstrikes.

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