

Remarks at a Working Dinner With Leaders of Central Asian Countries and an Exchange With Reporters

November 6, 2025

President Trump. Well, thank you very much, everybody. And I'm delighted to be hosting this group of very, very distinguished—really distinguished people and leaders. Few leaders can even compete with the people around this table.

They're from Central Asia, and it's a magnificent part of the world. It's also a strong part. It's a tough part. And there's nobody tougher or smarter than the people we have gathered tonight.

I'd like to thank Vice President J.D. Vance and Secretary Rubio, Secretary Bessent, Special Envoy Steve Witkoff, Ambassador Sergio Gor—going to India very shortly; congratulations, Sergio—and Ric Grenell, who's always done a fantastic job. Thank you, Ric very much. And Senators Jim Risch and Steve Daines for being here. We have some other people coming in in a little while, very distinguished people.

I've just completed a series of outstanding bilateral meetings with these leaders in the Oval Office to discuss our ties with this very important part of the universe. We're strengthening our economic partnerships, improving our security cooperation, and expanding our overall bonds.

Tremendous amounts of trade was done just in the last little while. Lots of great products, military products and otherwise, are being bought from the United States. We make the best military equipment by far in the world, and they understood, and they really have understood it for a while, ever since I've been in office, where we rebuilt completely our military.

I want to thank all of the leaders for being here and for their dedication to a strong relationship with the U.S.A. The nations of Central Asia, known as the C-5, sit at the historical and geographic crossroads of the world. These nations were once home to the ancient Silk Road, connecting east and west. Great history. Tremendous, beautiful history.

Today, their location in the heart of Eurasia gives them incredible importance and unbelievable potential. Sadly, previous American Presidents neglected this region completely. It's an unbelievable region—and by the way, it happens to be an extremely wealthy region too. But we are fixing that mistake and I'm committed to making America's partnership with each of these countries stronger than ever before.

And I've had a relationship long before this. We've had a great relationship with some of the leaders sitting at the table, and I understand the importance of this region. One of the most important regions. People just—a lot of people don't know that or didn't know that.

One of the key items on our agenda is critical minerals. In recent weeks, my administration has strengthened American economic security by forging agreements with allies and friends across the world to broaden our critical mineral supply chains.

We had a great relationship and a great meeting with President Xi of China. And we went—also, as you know, our new and fantastic Prime Minister of Japan—take a look. What we—what we've done is pretty amazing. We were with the President of South Korea. We went to Malaysia and lots of other places and had a lot of meetings while in South Korea. And I think it was a tremendous period of time.

We took in at least \$2 trillion pouring into our country. There's never been anything like it. We have almost \$18 trillion of investment, and by the time we finish out our first year, we probably will have about \$20- or \$21 trillion—with a t—trillion dollars of investment.

And there's never been anything like that in the history of the world, not just the United States of—this is really the world we're talking about, nor has anything been close.

It's a great honor. I've had a very talented team next to me, but it's a great honor to have that kind of economic power. This was helped greatly by tariffs. It was helped greatly by November 5, which was the election—Presidential election.

But our countries and the countries that we're dealing with, they're promoting security, stability, and everything else that you can imagine for the entire world.

Three months ago, my administration also brokered a historic peace agreement between nearby Armenia and Azerbaijan, one of the eight wars that we ended in 8 months. At that time, eight months.

We're looking to end one more, if that's possible: Russia and Ukraine. We haven't gotten there yet, but I think we've made a lot of progress.

As I said at the time, that historic accord includes the construction of the new Trump Route. It's such an—such a beautiful thing. They named it after me. *[Laughter]* I really appreciate it. It's actually a big deal. But it's the new Trump Route for International Peace. This is a road that's being carved and goes through some of the most important places anywhere in the world—some of the most important places economically, also, anywhere in the world—which will boost commercial activity on the other side of the Caspian Sea, helping nations throughout Central Asia.

I'm optimistic that each of the countries here today will reap the benefits of peace if they embrace the opportunity that we've unleashed with the agreement. Some of the countries we're talking about and some of the countries represented here are going to be joining the Abraham Accords—the Abraham Accord, and that—those announcements will be made over the next little while.

The Abraham Accords are very sought after right now. We're going to be announcing some very important countries that are joining. And for Jared and for Steve Witkoff, we appreciate the great job you've done.

This evening I'm also delighted to report that Kazakhstan has officially agreed. And that's official now, as of about 15 minutes ago. A tremendous country with a tremendous leader—has officially joined the Abraham Accords. And I just want to thank you, Mr. President. It's a great honor. It's a tremendous honor to have you. Really great.

Once again, I am grateful that each of these respected leaders has made the trip to Washington, and I'm delighted to continue our conversation over dinner. We're going to have a little working dinner—a short one. And they've been flying a long way. It's a long flight. But we're going to have a quick but very fruitful dinner.

I want to thank the media. You've covered it very fairly, and it's really a great honor to be with these incredible leaders. These are highly respected people, and there's no games. They don't play games. *[Laughter]* I want to tell you that.

So maybe I'd like to ask you, Mr. President, to say a few words, if you'd like. And we can go through the list of the five. And then we'll have a little dinner. Please.

President Kasym-Zhomart Tokayev of Kazakhstan. Mr. President, first of all, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to you for convening this truly historic meeting at the White House.

And under your steadfast leadership, this summit marks the beginning of a new era of interaction between the United States and Central Asia.

Precisely 1 year ago, you achieved a landslide victory in historic election, which was absolutely clean and fair. And, once again, my congratulations.

President Trump. Thank you.

President Tokayev. And my strong belief that, Mr. President, you are the great leader, statesman, sent by Heaven to bring common sense and traditions that we all share and value back into the United States policy, either domestic or foreign. Therefore, millions of people in so many countries are so grateful to you, and I'm convinced that your wise and bold policy needs to be strongly supported worldwide.

President Trump. Thank you.

President Tokayev. Under your Presidency, America is ushering in a new golden age. I commend your farsighted vision of making America great again. This inspires me to pursue target-oriented strategy towards building just and strong Kazakhstan on the basis of my concept: law and order.

As President of peace, you, Mr. Trump, brought to an end eight wars just within 8 months. Thus, you have evidently reinforced America, its role as a pillar of international stability.

Mr. President, I highly appreciate your unwavering support to advancing Kazakh-American multifaceted cooperation. As early—as in your first term in the White House, our relations have been legally fixed as enhanced strategic partnership. United States is the largest investor, with over \$100 billion in our economy as its perpetuum mobile.

Our trade turnover has doubled in recent years and is approaching \$5 billion. We cover almost 25 percent of America's domestic uranium demand. Kazakhstan has become a home country for 600 American companies. So I think that it's a very good figure. And during my visit alone, our businesses—our concluding deals was over \$17 billion, paving the way for even greater B2B partnership.

So my political will to seize all those unique opportunities, and this will is firm, is irreversible, and I will keep all important issues under my personal attention. I have no doubts that we have very bright future as it comes to our bilateral cooperation.

Thank you, Mr. President.

President Trump. Thank you, Mr. President. Great job too. Thank you very much.

Please.

President Shavkat Mirziyoyev of Uzbekistan. Esteemed Mr. Trump, we highly value your personal contribution to reboot process of C-5-plus-1. Before that, none of the Presidents of United States of America never treated Central Asia as you do. Me, personally, and all my colleagues are grateful to you. We felt your close attention, your attitude, and it means a lot for us. Thank you very much for that.

In reality, indeed, I'd like to repeat myself. I've told you that already, in Uzbekistan, we call you the President of the world. You've done a lot. You were able to stop eight wars, and I'm sure that—I'm convinced that the war between Russia and Ukraine can be only stopped by you, and we are very much hopeful for that.

Today's summit shows that the United States of America foresees Central Asia as key partner. Together we develop future which is based on trust and pursuance to creation.

I have number of proposals. We would like to establish a permanent secretariat and place it, based on rotations, in different countries of Central Asia. Number two, to establish a coordination council on investments and trade and to provide for the systemic dialogue between public authorities and companies.

We think that the idea to establish a Central Asian investment partnership would be good idea. So we were able to agree on that in 2020. We are ready to continuously work with the U.S. on establishing communicational and energy projects, transportation, to link Central Asia and Europe, applying and using Trump Route.

Three-year plan has been established, as I told you already, to implement our investment program for 34 billion U.S. dollars. Those are large projects, and we've discussed it with you already. Both in New York and today, I've mentioned it to you. So we have strong prospective.

Once again, I would like to express my deepest gratitude for all that has been already done. And we will take back a lot of results from this summit. It is a landmarking summit, and your attitude towards all of us means your great support to us to strengthen Central Asia and to strengthen the partnership between Central Asia and the U.S. C-5-plus-1 have to become efficient mechanism of our practical partnership.

And I propose to host our next summit in 2026 in Samarkand to establish this further. I'm pretty sure that I'm convinced, Mr. Trump, that, under your leadership, it will be a strong partnership.

Thank you very much for your attention, and we will be well prepared for the summit in Samarkand.

President Trump. Thank you very much. Great job. Thank you, Mr. President.

Please.

President Emomali Rahmon of Tajikistan. President Donald Trump, I thank you very much for invitation to participate in today's very important, high-level commemorative meeting in the format of C-5-plus-1—the Central Asian and the United States. You play a remarkable and highly commendable role in ensuring peace and stability in conflict regions around the world, and your peaceful efforts are worthy of praise. And I extend my heartfelt congratulations to you, Mr. President.

And today our collaboration of the wide-ranging bilateral cooperation covers different areas: trade, economy, security. As it comes to our security cooperation, we particularly have an excellent cooperation on counterterrorism, fighting extremism, and the drug trafficking.

Mr. President, over 70 companies with American investment are operating in Tajikistan today. And 93 percent of my country is mountainous, and we have an abundance of natural resources, particularly water, hydropower, critical minerals, and rare earth materials. Tajikistan is a home for 13,000 glaciers, and approximately 60 percent of Central Asian water resources originate in Tajikistan. And our country is rich in strategically important minerals, including rare earth minerals and critical materials.

Tajikistan is a member of both the European Union's Critical Raw Materials Club and the United States Mineral Security Partnership instrument.

According to the United States Geological Survey, our country ranks the second interval in terms of antimony production and is currently the largest producer of metallic antimony, which has the United States so deeply interested in. And we have a brilliant cooperation on this. And last year, antimony accounted for 97 percent of Tajikistan total exports to the United States. In

2024, Tajikistan produced and exported 17,000 tons of metallic antimony, primarily to the United States.

And the activities of Anzob joint venture and Anzob Metallurgical Company in Tajikistan, with American investment by Comsup, American company, exemplify our strong and long-enduring collaboration.

However, there are still many opportunities in terms of trade and investment, and we are interested in expanding economic and trade cooperation between our countries. So there is a good opportunity to cooperate in creating new generation of sustainable artificial intelligence data centers.

And since—we have a brilliant cooperation between our air companies. And since 2008, Tajikistan's Somon Air company had purchased eight mid-size Boeing aircraft with a total volume of 440 million U.S. dollars. And this company is expected to receive two more modern Boeing 737 MAX 8 aircraft next year. And the total commercial package of Boeing with the Somon Air exceeds 3 billion U.S. dollars.

And American companies—we have excellent cooperation of—with American companies over the last 20 years. And the American companies, they're particularly interested in antimony and many rare earth minerals, where Tajikistan—which Tajikistan has very abundant resources. And Tajikistan, among the Central Asian countries, has a very rich, boundless potential and resources in critical minerals.

And we are very keen to continue closely have a cooperation on security items, which we are so concerned for so far. And I wish you every bit of luck and to your endeavors as a peaceful—as a president of peace.

President Trump. Thank you very much. Great job.

Please.

President Sadyr Nurgojo uulu Japarov of Kyrgyzstan. Dear mass media representatives, for me, it's a great pleasure for me to hold a bilateral meeting with President, His Excellency, Donald Trump and to participate in the C–5-plus-1.

First and foremost, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to President Donald Trump for his kind invitation and warm hospitality and this opportunity to speak about important topics.

Kyrgyzstan values the United States of America as one of the important partners in foreign policy. During our bilateral meeting, we discussed some actual topics of the Kyrgyz-U.S. relations, as well as the strengthening cooperation between the Central Asian countries.

With regard to Kyrgyz-American relations, I would like to emphasize four main areas: economy and investment, including tourism; hydropower development; digital economy, artificial intelligence, and information technology; ensuring peace and security and stability. In this context, I wish to highlight the significant contribution made by President Donald Trump to strengthening global stability, to ending conflicts in different parts of the world.

When I started my office of the President, I identified the main priority as resolve border issues with our neighboring states in the spirit of good neighborhoodliness. Today, after five years, I am pleased to note that, together with my counterparts, we have successfully achieved this goal, most importantly, through peaceful means.

As a result, the role of Central Asia in global politics has grown substantially, and major powers have shown increasing interest in cooperation with the region. The C–5-plus-1 format has become an important platform for advancing political dialogue, and I'm very glad about that.

I would like to express my special appreciation to Your Excellency, President Donald Trump for initiating and hosting today's summit, and we really feel warm hospitality. We highly value this step and regard it as a demonstration of the United States good will and commitment towards Central Asia and friendship. I am confident that our joint efforts will lead to concrete, mutually beneficial outcomes for both nations and people.

Thank you very much for your attention.

President Trump. Well, thank you very much. Thank you very much.

Please.

President Serdar Gurbangulyýewiç Berdimuhamedow of Turkmenistan. I thank you, Mr. President. First of all, I would like to express my deep gratitude, Mr. President, for the invitation to attend this C-5 Central Asia plus U.S. summit.

We recognize the good results that made since the development of this format, and, of course, we expand the cooperation in such strategically important areas as security, economy, energy, and environment.

We believe that the results of this summit will lead us to further expansion of multifaceted cooperation between Central Asia and the United States of America.

I do appreciate, Mr. President, for your warm hospitality. I do appreciate.

President Trump. Thank you very much, and thanks, everybody. We'll have a little more to discuss, but a lot of progress has been made today. And it's a great honor to have you with us in the United States of America. Thank you.

And to the media, maybe a couple of questions, ideally on this topic, please.

Please.

Kazakhstan-U.S. Relations

Q. Thank you so much. Kazakhstan and the U.S. have signed over 17 billion U.S. dollars in new deals in aviation, minerals, and digital technology. In your view, which area of this partnership matters most?

And second question: President Trump, when can we report that you will be the first U.S. President that—to visit Kazakhstan?

President Trump. Wow.

Q. When will you be our guest?

President Trump. I think it's very possible that we'll do that. And I think all of those are very important items, when you think of it, right? It's—you never know from year to year. One becomes more important than the other, but they're all important. And your country has great natural resources and a great President. Very great President.

President Tokayev. Thank you.

President Trump. Okay. Thank you very much.

Yes, please.

Q. When is the repeal on the Jackson-Vanik amendment we are just expecting?

President Trump. What? Say it again.

Q. Jackson-Vanik amendment.

Senator James E. Risch. Jackson-Vanik.

U.S. Ambassador to India Sergio Gor. Jackson-Vanik amendment. Senator Risch wants to—
[inaudible].

President Trump. Oh, go ahead. Yes, go ahead.

Sen. Risch. Well, thank—thank you, Mr. President. Look, Jackson-Vanik is overdue to be repealed. With the help of the President, with working with the President, we are going to get that repealed in the very near future.

Thank you, Mr. President.

President Trump. Okay. Thank you very much.

Yes, please.

Lapse in Federal Government Appropriations

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. On this topic, Kazakhstan already has diplomatic relations with Israel. Can you talk about the significance of this agreement in terms of what it would signal to the region as Gaza moves toward rebuilding?

And on the shutdown, there's been discussion about potentially a deal, but it would involve rehiring the Federal workers who are laid off. What's your opinion of that?

President Trump. Well, we're going to see about the shutdown. Look, the shutdown is caused by the Democrats, and we're not going to spend a trillion dollars or 1½ trillion dollars on health care for people that came into our country illegally, many of them from prisons and many of them drug dealers and murderers—11,888 murderers. We're not doing that.

So we'll see about that. We shouldn't—they should have—as they've done always in the past, it should have just been extended. It could have been extended very easily, and it should have been.

Yes, please.

Middle East Peace Efforts/Iran

Q. On the Abraham Accords—can you answer on the Abraham Accords—its significance, sir, given that they already have diplomatic relations with Israel, what this agreement is supposed to signal?

President Trump. You want to answer that, please?

Vice President James D. "J.D." Vance. Yes. So I think the diplomatic significance is that it gives great momentum to the Abraham Accords. And to recap, for those of—of those—those who are listening who don't want to appreciate, the Abraham Accords, of course, is the historic agreement struck by the president in the first term to rebuild the alliance structure and the relationships between Israel and a number of the majority-Muslim countries in that region of the world.

What the President has done is actually signaled that the momentum of the Abraham Accords is alive and well in the second administration. I think it's not just going to be Kazakhstan, but also a number of other countries that join in the months to come. So it's a great signal, a great act of friendship, and a great sign that the Abraham Accords is alive and well.

President Trump. Marco.

Secretary of State Marco A. Rubio. Oh, just I think that's the wrong way to analyze it. There's a lot of countries that have diplomatic relations with one another. The Abraham Accords

is a partnership. It's an enhanced relationship beyond just diplomatic relations and having embassies in each other's capitals. It is—and it's not just with Israel; it's with all the other countries that are part of the Accord. You're now creating a partnership that brings special and unique economic development on all sorts of issues that they can work on together.

So that's really the benefit of it. And the strength of it is to have majority-Muslim countries, the Jewish state able to partner on things to show the world that it is possible.

President Trump. Essentially, we've really expanded the Abraham Accords. And one of the reasons is, we are right now in negotiations or talks with many countries that really wanted to come in, but they couldn't because of the status of Iran.

When Iran had a possibility of nuclear weapons, which they do not have now; when Iran was the bully of the Middle East, let's call it—the bully of the Middle East, which it isn't anymore, they had a hard time going against that. I understand that. Now that Iran has been very much decimated in terms of their nuclear and in terms of their regular, because of the actions we took with those beautiful B-2 bombers and other things, people really want to come in.

And so we are in very active discussions with the more traditional potential members of the Abraham Accords. The four originals are phenomenal, and they're doing really well. They're making a lot of money with trade and other things being in the Abraham Accords.

And we're expanding it a little bit. When a few of these countries come in, that's a great expansion. And these are very substantial countries, so we consider that a great honor. It was brought to our attention that they wanted to do that, and we think that's great. So it's really an expansion of the Abraham Accords. Okay?

Q. Hi, Mr. President.

President Trump. Yes, please. Go ahead.

Russia/Ukraine

Q. Yes. Thank you so much for your time, sir, on these important issues. I wanted to hear if you have an update on the Russian oil sanctions. We're seeing reports that the exports are way down. So how do you think that could affect the war in Ukraine, the United States interests, and your partners here tonight too?

President Trump. Well, I can say that the exports from Russia are way down. We'd just like to see an end to the war. We'd love to see an end to that war. So many people are being killed. A lot of Russian soldiers are being killed. So we think, at some point, they're going to get very smart and they're going to do that.

So yes, Russian exports are substantially down.

China/Russia/Global Disarmament Efforts

Q. Mr. President, what is your Trump doctrine on foreign policies, in particular, relation to South and Central Asia and China?

President Trump. Well, look, we had a tremendous meeting, as you know, with President Xi in China. And my doctrine would be denuclearization, because we have enough nuclear. We're number one, Russia is number two, China is number three—way behind, but they'll be even in 4 or 5 years. They're, you know, working overtime on nuclear weapons. I think that denuclearization would be a great thing. We could blow up the world 150 times, and there's no need for this.

So I really think we're going to have—I've spoken to President Putin about it. I've spoken to President Xi about it. And everybody would like to spend all of that money on other things. People that, really, you know—things that can benefit people now. So I think something like that could happen, the denuclearization. It's really—I want peace. I want peace through strength, but we want peace all over the world, and we're very close to getting it.

We had a lot of wars raging that people didn't know about. Now they're not raging anymore. We have one left, and we're going to, hopefully, get that taken care of.

Yes, sir. Go ahead.

Gaza, Palestinian Territories

Q. Mr. President, do you have an update on how soon that international stability force may be on the ground in Gaza?

President Trump. Very soon. It's going to be very soon. And Gaza is working out very well. And you haven't been hearing too much about problems.

And I'll tell you, we had—we've had countries that have volunteered, if there's a problem with Hamas, as an example, or a problem with anything—but they volunteered to, on a single basis, go in and take care of it. We have very powerful countries in this coalition.

And it's not, you know—this is a—because I've heard some of the press say, "Well, it's a very tentative or it's very"—it's not tentative. This is a very strong peace. This is peace in the Middle East. Hamas is a very small part of it. Very, very small part. And if they don't do as they said, if they don't behave, then they've got themselves a big problem, a really big problem like they've never had. But so far, it seems to be working out very well.

But that's a very small part of what we're talking about that's a part of Gaza. You're going to have a very—I think we can say, Marco, we have a very strong peace. This is a strong peace. We have many countries involved in the Middle East.

Essentially, these countries are all involved. They want to see peace in the Middle East.

And, Marco, what would you say about that?

Secretary Rubio. No, I think that's right, Mr. President, and you deserve tremendous amount of credit for making that possible. And now I think the only reason why it's going to continue to happen is because of the President's role in this.

So there's work being done at the United Nations now to come up with a resolution that creates the framework internationally so that these countries—who are all volunteering, as you know, Mr. President, to be a part of this stabilization force—can come aboard. But they need this U.N. mandate in order to be able to do it. And we've made a lot of progress over the last few days. And you know, Jared Kushner and Steve Witkoff have been working very hard on that, and we—today was a good day on that front.

President Trump. Okay.

Q. Mr. President. Mr. President.

President Trump. Yes, go ahead, please. Fox.

President Ahmad Husayn al-Shara' of Syria

Q. Thank you very much. Will you discuss the Abraham Accords when you meet with the President of Syria?

President Trump. Well, we're going to meet, and I think he's doing a very good job. It's a tough neighborhood, and he's a tough guy, but I got along with him very well. And a lot of progress has been made with Syria. That's a tough one, but a lot of progress has been made.

You know, we took the sanctions off at the request of Turkey; at the request of, actually, Israel; at the request of a few different countries. And we took the sanctions off to give them a chance.

And frankly, Iran has been asking if the sanctions could be lifted. Iran has got very heavy U.S. sanctions, and it makes it really hard for them to do what they'd like to be able to do. And I'm open to hearing that, and we'll see what happens, but I would be open to it.

But we did take the sanctions off Syria in order to give them a fighting shot. And I think, so far, they're—I think he's doing a very good job so far.

Fox.

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Benefits/Consumer Prices

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. A Federal judge said tonight that the administration has to fully fund SNAP. It's the latest in the back-and-forth, and the Justice Department said they're going to appeal it. What's your message to folks as they work this out in the courts and in Congress as we're heading into Thanksgiving?

President Trump. You want to go with that?

Vice President Vance. Yes. Look, Jacqui [Jacqui Heinrich, Fox News], it's an absurd ruling because you have a Federal judge effectively telling us what we have to do in the midst of a Democrat Government shutdown, which—what we'd like to do is for the Democrats to open up the Government, and of course, then we can fund SNAP, and we can also do a lot of other good things for the American people.

But in the midst of a shutdown, we can't have a Federal court telling the President how he has to triage the situation. We're trying to keep as much turned on, we're trying to keep as much going as possible. The President and the entire administration are working on that, but we're not going to do it under the orders of a Federal judge. We're going to do it according to what we think we have to do to comply with the law, of course, but also to actually make the Government work for people in the midst of the Democratic government shutdown.

If they would like to end this, we would be welcome—we would welcome working with them to end this Government shutdown, and then we wouldn't have to triage what we're going to fund and what we're not going to fund.

And the last thing that I'll say is, the American people are, unfortunately, about to start suffering some very real consequences because of the shutdown. In the past, when you had a Government shutdown, you would have—you know, under the Obama administration, they would lean into all of the problems it was going to cause for the American people. At the beginning of the shutdown, the President has told us to keep as much going as humanly possible.

But after 30 days of this thing, 40 days of this thing, you're going to start seeing very real travel delays. That's because of the Democratic Government shutdown. You're going to start seeing SNAP benefits run out. That's because the Democrat Government shutdown. They should stop the charade and open up the Government. That's what we want them to do. We've been asking them to do it for 40 days. It's time.

President Trump. And you know, one other thing. Our country has to remain very liquid because problems, catastrophes, wars.

Vice President Vance. Yes, sir.

President Trump. Could be anything. We have to remain liquid. We can't give everything away based on a number—here's an example. When I was President, the number that you're talking about was a tiny fraction of what it is now. Biden went totally crazy, gave it to anybody that would ask; gave it to people that were able-bodied, had no problem. Anybody that would ask would get the number, and it's many times the number of people are on—this wasn't meant for that. It was meant for people that had real problems—in many cases, people that were down and out, people that could be saved. It wasn't meant for people that could do whatever they want, the people that say, "Well, I don't think I'll work. I'll just, you know, collect this money."

Take a look at the number, what it was during my administration, and what it was during the Biden administration. It went up many, many times my first term.

One other thing. A number came out today that was amazing. Walmart—I trust Walmart. Arkansas, great place, Arkansas. Great company, Walmart. They announced today with—after many years—they do this every year, for many years—that Thanksgiving for the United States of America under Donald Trump as president is 25-percent less for Thanksgiving meal with all the trimmings than it was under Sleepy Joe Biden's administration.

So we talk about affordability. I think that's the best chart. That's better than a poll. That's better than anything I can think of. So Walmart—which everybody trusts, and I trust, and everybody trusts Walmart, they're not looking to do anything except give the numbers, and they have for many years. They talk about the cost of Thanksgiving and the cost of living through Thanksgiving and enjoying Thanksgiving. For Joe Biden, it was 25-percent more than it is for me at a later time.

Our energy costs are way down. Our groceries are way down. Everything is way down, and the press doesn't report it. The press reports whatever the con people say. You know, I call the Democrats con men and women. They make up numbers.

But when you look at a 25-percent reduction in cost for Thanksgiving between Biden and me—meaning this administration—that's a tremendous number. That's a tremendous—it's the biggest reduction in cost in the history of that chart, or whatever it is they do. That—they do a synopsis of everything. They cover every element of Thanksgiving meals. Twenty-five percent down.

So I don't want to hear about the affordability because, right now, we're much less. If you look at energy, we're getting close to \$2-a-gallon gasoline. With Biden it was \$4.50, \$5.

Another thing: inflation. We had the worst inflation in the history of our country. Now we have virtually no inflation at all. It's down at a very low number and a very normal number.

So the affordability is much better with the Republicans. The only problem is, the Republicans don't talk about it, and Republicans should start talking about it and use their heads, because we have great numbers. We have greatest—and they're going to only get better when all these jobs open up, all these factories open up that are being built all over our country.

By—I mean, we are building auto plants. We're building AI plants. We're leading in AI over China and everybody else. When all of these plants start opening, we're going to have a revolution—a positive revolution, economic revolution like never before.

Thank you very much, everybody. Thank you.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:04 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to U.S. Special Envoy to the Middle East Steven C. Witkoff; U.S. Ambassador to India and Special Envoy for South and Central Asia Sergio Gor; U.S. Special Presidential Envoy for Special Missions Richard A. Grenell; Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi of Japan; and President Lee Jae-myung of South Korea. He also referred to his son-in-law Jared Kushner. Vice President Vance referred to John J. McConnell, Jr., chief judge, U.S. District Court for the District of Rhode Island. The transcript was released by the Office of Communications on November 18. President Shavkat Mirziyoyev spoke in Russian, President Rahmon spoke in Tajik, President Japarov spoke in Kyrgyz, and President Berdimuhamedov spoke in Turkmen, and their remarks were translated by interpreters.

Categories: Interviews With the News Media : Exchanges with reporters, White House; Meetings With Foreign Leaders and International Officials : Central Asian leaders.

Locations: Washington, DC.

Names: Berdimuhamedow, Serdar Gurbangulyýewiç; Bessent, Scott K.H.; Biden, Joseph R., Jr.; Daines, Steven D.; Gor, Sergio; Grenell, Richard A.; Japarov, Sadyr Nurgojo uulu; Kushner, Jared C.; Lee Jae-myung; Mirziyoyev, Shavkat; Putin, Vladimir Vladimirovich; Rahmon, Emomali; Risch, James E.; Rubio, Marco A.; Shara', Ahmad Husayn al-; Takaichi, Sanae; Tokayev, Kasym-Zhomart; Vance, James D. "J.D."; Witkoff, Steven C.; Xi Jinping.

Subjects: 2024 Presidential election; Armenia, relations with Azerbaijan; Artificial intelligence and other emerging technologies; Azerbaijan, relations with Armenia; Central Asia, relations with U.S.; China, President; Critical minerals, supply chain improvements; Federal Government appropriations, lapse; Gaza, conflict with Israel; Hamas political-paramilitary organization; Health insurance exchanges; India, U.S. Ambassador; Inflation; Iran, nuclear weapons development; Israel, military operations in Gaza; Israel, relations with Kazakhstan; Japan, Prime Minister; Kazakhstan, President; Kazakhstan, relations with Israel; Kazakhstan, relations with U.S.; Kyrgyzstan, President; Manufacturing industry, domestic investment; Middle East, regional integration and security; Nuclear disarmament, international efforts; Nutrition assistance programs; Russia, conflict in Ukraine; Russia, oil supply and refining; Russia, President; Secretary of State; Secretary of the Treasury; South Korea, President; Syria, President; Syria, removal of U.S. sanctions; Tajikistan, President; Turkmenistan, President; U.S. Special Envoy to the Middle East; U.S. Special Presidential Envoy for Special Missions; Ukraine, Russian invasion and airstrikes; U.S. Special Envoy for South and Central Asia; Uzbekistan, President; Vice President.

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