

Administration of Donald J. Trump, 2025

Remarks in an Exchange With Reporters Prior to Departure for Baltimore, Maryland

December 13, 2025

Death of Three U.S. Servicemembers in Palmyra, Syria

Q. Mr. President, do you have a response to the attack in Syria?

The President. So we mourn the loss of three great patriots in Syria. You know how it happened. It was an ambush. Terrible. We also have three wounded that seem to be doing pretty well. But we mourn the loss. These are great—three great people. And it's just a terrible thing.

Syria, by the way, was fighting along with us. The President—the new President of Syria is, as they told me, and I'm not surprised, he's devastated by what happened. This was an ISIS attack on us and Syria.

And, again, we mourn the loss, and we pray for them and their parents and their loved ones. Very, very sad.

Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) Terrorist Organization

Q. Mr. President, will the U.S. retaliate against ISIS?

The President. Yes. We will.

U.S. Counterterrorism Operations

Q. And will—and if U.S. forces are attacked again?

The President. You're going to be seeing. You'll be seeing. We will retaliate.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:42 p.m. on the South Lawn at the White House prior to boarding Marine One. In his remarks, he referred to Iowa National Guard members Sgt. W. Nathaniel Howard, USA, Sgt. Edgar Torres-Tovar, USA, and civilian interpreter Ayad Mansoor Sakat, who were killed when their convoy of joint U.S. and Syrian forces was attacked in Palmyra, Syria, on December 13; and President Ahmad Husayn al-Shara' of Syria. He also referred to the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) terrorist organization. The transcript was released by the Office of Communications on December 14.

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

Locations: Washington, DC.

Names: Howard, W. Nathaniel; Sakat, Ayad Mansoor; Shara', Ahmad Husayn al-; Torres-Tovar, Edgar.

Subjects: Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) terrorist organization; News media, Presidential interviews; Syria, death of U.S. servicemembers in Palmyra; Syria, President.

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