

Administration of Donald J. Trump, 2025

Remarks in an Exchange With Reporters During a Greeting With Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu of Israel in Palm Beach, Florida
December 29, 2025

President Trump. Does anybody recognize this man? [*Laughter*] Not too many people. They've been very fair, actually, for the last 3 days.

Q. President Trump, are you going to have a green light——

Q. What is your main message, President Trump?

Q. ——for another attack in Iran?

Q. Will you support attack in Iran?

President Trump. Okay.

Q. Mr. President, can you say anything more——

President Trump. Go ahead. Go ahead.

U.S. Cease-Fire Agreement Between Hamas and Israel

Q. Mr. President, how quickly do you hope to move to phase two of the peace plan for Gaza?

President Trump. Very quickly. As quickly as we can.

Q. And are you worried that Israel could be slow-walking?

President Trump. But there has to be a disarmament. You know that. We have to disarm with Hamas. So one of the things we'll talk about, certainly, but there has to be a disarming of Hamas. Otherwise, very quickly.

Yes.

Venezuela/U.S. Drug Interdiction Efforts

Q. Mr. President, can you say anything more about the explosion in Venezuela that you mentioned in a radio interview? Did the military do that? Can you share any more details about that?

President Trump. Well, it doesn't matter, but there was a major explosion in the dock area where they load the boats up with drugs. They load the boats up with drugs. So we hit all the boats, and now we hit the area—it's the implementation area. That's where they implement, and that is no longer around.

Q. Is that the only strike that the U.S. has done inside Venezuela?

President Trump. I don't want to comment on that.

[*At this point, several reporters began asking questions at once.*]

Russia/Ukraine

Q. Mr. President, on the—yesterday, there was an explosion overnight in—and the Russians say that Ukraine tried to hit the residence of President Putin. Do you have any information to corroborate that?

President Trump. No, I don't know about it, actually. And I don't—I just heard about it, actually, but I don't know about it. That——

Q. Did you speak with Mr. Putin——

President Trump. That would be too bad. That would not be good.

President Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin of Russia/Ukraine Conflict

Q. What was the outcome of your telephone call with President Putin this morning?

President Trump. I had a very good talk this morning. I waited until this morning because it was pretty late by the time we finished—like 2:30 in Russia—2:30 in the morning. And we had a very good talk. We spoke at 8 o'clock in the morning, our time, and it was a very productive talk.

I mean, we have a few very thorny issues, as you can imagine. He knows about thorny issues, probably better than anybody in the world. But it's working out. We have a couple of issues that we're going to get resolved, hopefully, and if we get them resolved, you're going to have peace.

You're going to have Ukraine—they're losing 26,000 soldiers a month. Can you believe it? A month. Twenty-six thousand young, beautiful soldiers, and plus some people in Kyiv and—relatively small, but a lot—you know, still people, and it's a lot of people. But 26,000 soldiers were killed last month.

Yes, please.

Turkey/Gaza, Palestinian Territories

Q. President Trump, are you going to allow Turkish forces or—and do you expect Turkish forces to be stationed in Gaza?

President Trump. So I have a great relationship with President Erdoğan, and we'll be talking about it. And if it's good, I think that's good. And a lot will be having to do with Bibi. We're going to be talking about that.

But Turkey has been great, and he's been, you know, excellent, as far as I'm concerned. I don't know about you, but—[*inaudible*].

[*Several reporters spoke at once.*]

To me, he's been—to me, he's been very good.

Q. Can we get another question from the Israeli press?

President Trump. Sure. Please.

[*Several reporters spoke at once.*]

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu of Israel/Iran

Q. Mr. President, can you tell me a little bit about your relationship with Prime Minister Netanyahu and how important it is for you to see him be pardoned by the Israeli President?

President Trump. Look, he's a wartime Prime Minister. He's done a phenomenal job. He's taken Israel through a very dangerous period of trauma. Israel, with other people, might not exist right now, if you want to know the truth. That's a pretty big statement, but it's true. I feel that.

You had the wrong Prime Minister, Israel right now would not exist, because they were——

Q. Mr. Trump——

President Trump. —they were met with a force the likes of which very few countries could have handled. And we worked together, and we were extremely victorious, to put it mildly.

Now I hear that Iran is trying to build up again, and if they are, we're going to have to knock them down. We'll knock them down. We'll knock the hell out of them. But hopefully, that's not happening.

I heard Iran wants to make a deal. If they want to make a deal, that's much smarter.

You know, they could have made a deal the last time before we went through, you know, a big attack on them. And they decided not to make a deal. They wish they made that deal.

So I think, again, they should make a deal. They want to make a deal, but sometimes that doesn't happen.

Yes, please.

Iran

Q. Mr. Trump, hi. Nadav Elimelech, i24NEWS Israel. Would you support the overthrow of the Iranian regime?

President Trump. Of who?

Q. Iranian regime.

President Trump. I'm not going to talk about overthrow of a regime. It's—they've got a lot of problems in Iran. They have tremendous inflation. Their economy is bust. Their economy is no good.

And I know their people aren't so happy. But don't forget, every time they have a riot or somebody forms a group, little or big, they start shooting people. You know, they kill people, and the people tend to—I've watched this for years. There's tremendous discontent. They form 100,000, 200,000 people. All of a sudden, people start getting shot, and that group disbanded pretty quickly. So I watched it for years. They're vicious, vicious people.

Yes.

Iran/Ballistic Missile Program

Q. Mr. President—[inaudible]. Would you support an attack—Israeli attack on Iran if Iran will not have a deal, if Iran will continue with their ballistic missiles and also nuclear weapons?

President Trump. If they will continue with——

Q. Yes. Yes.

President Trump. —the missiles, yes; the nuclear, fast. Okay? One will be, yes, absolutely. The other was, we'll do it immediately.

Gaza, Palestinian Territories

Q. Mr. President—[inaudible]—from Channel 12 News. What are your plans regarding Gaza for the next few weeks?

President Trump. Well, we're going to be dealing on Gaza. That's why this very great Prime Minister is here right now. We're talking about Gaza. We're talking about a lot of things. We have about five major subjects that we're discussing, and Gaza will be one of those subjects.

Hostages Held in Gaza, Palestinian Territories

Q. Mr. President, can you guarantee that the last hostages, Ran Gvili, will be released before we continue to the second phase of the Gaza plan?

President Trump. Well, let's put it this way: Every hostage, just about, that's been released was released because of me, Steve Witkoff, Jared Kushner, my whole team—Marco Rubio, Pete Hegseth. They were all released because of us. None were released in the Biden administration. None. They were all released because of us.

Then we had a lack of releases with respect to the dead. And all of a sudden, they started coming back, because I said, "Nope, you said you were going to"—we have one wonderful young man, whose parents are right now inside, and he's—what beautiful parents, a beautiful brother, sister, and—like, a beautiful family. And they're waiting for their son. He's the only one left, and we're doing everything we can to get his body back. And the parents just said, "Hopefully, he's alive." And I said, "I'd love you to think that way." Okay?

Q. President Trump—

President Trump. So we're doing everything we can.

Q. Do you have evidence that he's not—

President Trump. But think of it. Out of all of these people—and I'm not just talking about the final 20.

Q. Right.

President Trump. Look at all of the people. What do you think the total number is?

Prime Minister Netanyahu. Two fifty-five.

President Trump. Two hundred and fifty-five.

Prime Minister Netanyahu. Two fifty-four came out. One more.

President Trump. Think of that, and we got them all.

[*Several reporters spoke at once.*]

Nobody else got them.

Q. President Trump, does the reconstruction of Gaza—

[*Several reporters spoke at once.*]

President Trump, does the reconstruction of Gaza—

President Trump. Hold on one second. Yes, I'll do you. Just let her go.

Go ahead, please.

Gaza Reconstruction

Q. Does the reconstruction of Gaza will begin even before Hamas is disarmed?

President Trump. I think it's going to begin pretty soon, yes.

Q. Before Hamas is disarmed?

President Trump. He's looking forward to it. So am I. Look, what a mess. What a mess it is. And it's been a mess for centuries, really. [*Laughter*] It's been a mess for a long time. It's—seems to be born for that, but we're going to—we're going to straighten it out.

No, we're already starting certain things. We're doing things for sanitary conditions and others. But Gaza is a tough place. You know the expression: "It's a tough neighborhood." It's truly a tough—it's truly a tough neighborhood.

Yes, you had a question. In the back. Go ahead.

Q. I'll ask about——

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu of Israel/U.S. Airstrikes on Iranian Nuclear Facilities/U.S. Cease-Fire Agreement Between Hamas and Israel

President Trump. Yes. Please, go ahead.

Q. I'll ask about the relationship between you and the Prime Minister.

President Trump. What about it? [*Laughter*]

Q. They said that there is no relationship, good relationship, between you.

President Trump. It's—I don't think it can be better. We just won a big war together.

You know, if we didn't beat Iran, you wouldn't have had peace in the Middle East, because nobody would have been able. The Arab countries, who have been fantastic, would not have been able to make a deal. If we didn't wipe out their nuclear—we wiped it out. If we didn't wipe out, with our beautiful B-2 bombers—if we didn't—and we sent a lot of Tomahawks in there also, by the way, from a submarine.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu of Israel

Q. What about the pardon that the President in Israel needs to give the Prime Minister?

President Trump. A pardon?

Q. The pardon.

President Trump. Oh, I think he will. How do you not? He's a wartime Prime Minister who's a hero. How do you not give a pardon? You know, I think it's a very hard thing not to do it. I spoke to the President, and I—it's on—I mean, he tells me it's on its way.

Q. Mr. President——

President Trump. You can't do better than that, right?

Please.

Venezuela/U.S. Airstrike on Suspected Drug-Trafficking Facility

Q. Mr. President, could I follow up on Venezuela? Was the facility taken out by the U.S. military? Or was it another entity, like the CIA?

President Trump. It was along—well, I don't want to say that. I know exactly who it was, but I don't want to say who it was.

Q. We don't know.

President Trump. But you know, it was along the shore.

President Nicolas Maduro Moros of Venezuela/Drug Trafficking/Illegal Immigration/Tren de Aragua Criminal Organization/U.S. Airstrikes on Suspected Drug-Trafficking Vessels in the Caribbean Sea and Eastern Pacific

Q. Mr. President, have you or anyone in your administration talked to Maduro in recent days?

President Trump. Well, I spoke to him.

Q. Recently?

President Trump. Pretty recently. Reasonably recent, but nothing much comes of it.

Yes.

Q. Mr. President, can you explain the importance of——

President Trump. You have to understand what he's done. They've sent billions of dollars of drugs in. But maybe just as bad, they've sent hundreds of thousands of people in from jails, from prisons, from mental institutions and insane asylums. The drug lords, the drug dealers were all sent into our country.

But think of it, what he's done. Tren de Aragua—probably the worst gang. They cut off people's fingers. One man made a phone call to complain about them. He cut off their hand. They cut off his hand. "Don't ever make a phone call again. We'll cut off your other hand. After that, we'll kill you," they said. That was in Colorado.

No, they sent in all of the bad ones. They sent in some bad people. And that, to me, was just terrible. And they sent in drugs.

Now, I will say this: 97 percent of the drugs coming in by sea stopped. We're trying to figure out who the other 3 percent are. I—they have a hard time getting people to pilot those boats. But 97 percent of the drugs coming in by the ocean, by the sea, by water are gone. Every boat that we take out, we save 25,000 lives of Americans.

Thank you very much, everybody.

[*Several reporters spoke at once.*]

We'll see you—we're going to have a big meeting, and we'll see you in a couple of hours, if you'd like. And if you'd like, you can come up and have lunch like you did yesterday.

Would you like that or not?

Q. Yes.

President Trump. You want that?

Q. Oh, yes.

President Trump. Because some of them think it's terrible, it's a bribe. But—you know, a bribe for \$25, I don't know.

Q. Well, the White House press corps pays for it, but——

President Trump. If you'd like, you can go. And if you don't, you can stand in the driveway and melt. [*Laughter*] All right?

But if you want—will you work on that, Margo?

White House Communications Adviser Margo Martin. Yes, sir.

President Trump. Is Margo doing a good job?

Q. Margo is the best.

[*Several reporters spoke at once.*]

President Trump. She's a star.

Q. Yes, sir.

Q. She's great.

Q. She's the best.

President Trump. She's too nice. Her only problem: She's too nice to you, and you're not nice to us. But that's okay.

Margo, take them up and have a beautiful lunch.

Communications Adviser Martin. Yes, sir.

President Trump. And we'll see you later.

President Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin of Russia

Q. Mr. President, are you worried that the strike—the alleged strike on Putin's residence could scuttle the peace discussions?

President Trump. Yes, I don't—I don't like it. It's not good. I'm—I heard about it this morning.

Q. Did Putin tell you about it?

President Trump. You know who told me about it? President Putin told me about it. Early in the morning he said he was attacked.

That's no good. It's no good.

Q. But do you have—do you——

Q. And Russian officials said that you——

President Trump. Don't forget: You know, the Tomahawks—I stopped the Tomahawks. I didn't want that, because we're talking about—you know, it's a delicate period of time. This is not the right time. It's one thing to be offensive because they're offensive. It's another thing to attack his house.

It's not the right time to do any of that and can't do it. And I learned about it from President Putin today. I was very angry about it.

Q. Do you not have U.S.——

Q. Mr. President——

Q. But don't you have U.S.——

Q. One question.

President Trump. Please.

Q. ——intelligence services that——

President Trump. What?

Q. Don't you have U.S. intelligence services that monitor that region very closely? Is there any evidence that the U.S. has——

President Trump. Well, it came out—it came out—well, we'll find out. I mean, you're saying maybe the attack didn't take place. It's possible too, I guess. But President Putin told me this morning it did.

Israel-U.S. Relations

Q. One question, Mr. President. Can you expound on the important of a strong relationship with the State of Israel?

And, Mr. Prime Minister, you've met—you've called President Trump the strongest friend for the State of Israel. You've worked with numerous administration, numerous Presidents. Can you expound on that and what makes President Trump such a strong friend for the State of Israel?

President Trump. Why don't you go first?

Prime Minister Netanyahu. I'll say it again and again and again: We've never had a friend like President Trump in the White House. It's not even close. And I think you can judge that by the—not merely by the frequency of our meetings but by the content and the intensity.

I think Israel is very blessed to have President Trump leading the United States and, I'll say, leading the free world at this time. I think it's not merely Israel's great fortune. I think it's the world's great fortune.

President Trump. Well, I just want to say that it's very important who the Prime Minister and President of Israel is. We have a great relationship.

It was an honor to speak before your leaders. That was a great honor for me. I think it has not happened before or something, they told me.

But the relationship has been extraordinary, and Bibi is a strong man. He can be very difficult on occasion, but you need a strong man. If you had a weak man, you wouldn't have Israel right now.

Israel would have been—you know, Israel, with most other leaders, would not exist today. They would not exist. And now they're stronger than ever.

Yes, please.

Syria

Q. Are you going to ask Netanyahu to sign an agreement with Syria?

President Trump. Well, I hope he's going to get along with Syria because the new President of Syria is working very hard to do a good job. He really is. I know he's a tough cookie, and he's—you know, you're not going to get a choir boy to lead Syria. That's the one thing I will say. *[Laughter]*

So I hope they're going to get along, because, you know, I took—I dropped the sanctions on Syria because, otherwise, they wouldn't have had a chance. We want to see Syria survive. So we're going to be talking about Syria too. Okay?

Thank you very much, everybody. Have a good time.

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

Go have a good lunch.

Q. Thank you, Mr. President.

Q. Prime Minister Netanyahu——

President Trump. Thank you. Thank you.

Q. ——there is a lot of——

Prime Minister Netanyahu. You know, after you hear these things, I think, "Better to quit now." *[Laughter]*

Thank you.

President Trump. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:26 p.m. at the Mar-a-Lago Club. In his remarks, he referred to President Isaac Herzog of Israel; Itzik and Talik Gvili, parents, Omri Gvili, brother, and Shira Gvili, sister, of Ran Gvili, whose remains were the last of the hostages held in Gaza, Palestinian Territories, to be recovered and returned to Israel following the Hamas attacks of October 7, 2023; U.S. Special Envoy for Peace Missions Steven C. Witkoff; President Yitzhak Herzog of Israel; and President Ahmad Husayn al-Shara' of Syria. He also referred to his son-in-law Jared C. Kushner. The transcript was released by the Office of Communications on January 2, 2026.

Categories: Interviews With the News Media : Exchanges with reporters, Palm Beach, FL; Meetings With Foreign Leaders and International Officials : Israel, Prime Minister Netanyahu.

Locations: Palm Beach, FL.

Names: Biden, Joseph R., Jr.; Erdogan, Recep Tayyip; Gvili, Itzik; Gvili, Omri; Gvili, Shira; Gvili, Talik; Herzog, Isaac; Kushner, Jared C.; Maduro Moros, Nicolas; Martin, Margo; Netanyahu, Benjamin; Putin, Vladimir Vladimirovich; Rubio, Marco A.; Shara', Ahmad Husayn al-; Witkoff, Steven C.

Subjects: Florida, President's visit; Gaza reconstruction; Gaza, hostages held by Hamas; Hamas political-paramilitary organization; Illegal immigration; Iran, nuclear weapons development; Iran, political unrest and violence; Iran, U.S. airstrikes on nuclear facilities; Israel, President; Israel, Prime Minister; Israel, relations with U.S.; Israel-Hamas cease-fire agreement implementation; Russia, conflict in Ukraine; Russia, President; Secretary of State; Suspected drug-trafficking vessels, U.S. airstrikes in Caribbean Sea and Eastern Pacific; Syria, President; Turkey, President; U.S. Special Envoy for Peace Missions; Ukraine, Russian invasion and airstrikes; Venezuela, President; Venezuela, Tren de Aragua criminal organization; Venezuela, U.S. drug interdiction efforts; Venezuela, U.S. interdiction efforts; White House Communications Adviser.

DCPD Number: DCPD202501225.