

Administration of Donald J. Trump, 2026

**Remarks and an Exchange With Reporters Prior to Departure for Fort Bragg,
North Carolina**

February 13, 2026

The President. So we just had very good financial numbers, very low inflation. We brought costs way down. And the numbers were surprising. Except to me, they weren't surprising. So the inflation numbers just announced, as you know, are way down, and we have it back on track.

We had the worst inflation in the history of our country, and now we have very modest inflation, which is what you want to have.

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

Q. Mr. President, are you——

Apparent Kidnapping of Nancy Guthrie in Catalina Foothills, Arizona

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. Why hasn't the FBI taken over the Nancy Guthrie case as the lead investigator? Do you have any updates on how that's going?

The President. Well, they took it over originally. You know, it was a local case originally, and they didn't want to let go of it, which is fine. It's up to them. It's really up to the community. But ultimately, when the FBI got involved, I think, you know, progress has been made. Complicated case.

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

Partial Government Shutdown/Department of Homeland Security

Q. Mr. President, are you anticipating cutting a deal with Democrats to end the potential shutdown for DHS?

The President. We'll see what happens. We have—we always have to protect our law enforcement. Very important. They've done a great job.

Remember, they've taken out hundreds of thousands of criminals out of our country, and we have the best crime numbers we've ever had—and everywhere. Murder numbers, crime numbers of any kind, we have the best numbers. We've taken out hundreds of thousands of criminals out of our country. We have to protect our law enforcement.

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

Q. Are you talking to the Democrats though?

The President's Foreign Policy

Q. Mr. President, are you planning land strikes on Mexico, Colombia, and Venezuela?

The President. What about it?

Q. Land strikes. Are you—are you planning——

The President. Don't worry about it.

Go ahead.

Iraq

Q. Mr. President, do you still have—do you still have a veto on Nouri al-Maliki to become the Iraqi Prime Minister?

The President. We're looking at a Prime Minister. We're going to see what's going to happen. We've got some ideas on it, but in the end, everybody needs the U.S. Everybody needs us.

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

Iran/Potential U.S. Military Involvement

Q. The second aircraft carrier that you decided to send——

The President. Yes.

Q. Talk about why you made that choice.

The President. Well, in case we don't make a deal, we'll need it.

If we don't have a deal, we'll need it. If we have a deal, we could cut it short. It will be leaving—it will be leaving very soon. We have one out there that just arrived. If we need it, we will—we have it ready, a big—a very big force.

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

President Volodymyr Zelenskyy of Ukraine/Russian Conflict

Q. Have there been any progress in Ukraine negotiations? Do you still demand Zelenskyy has to hold elections before summer?

The President. Well, Zelenskyy is going to have to get moving. Russia wants to make a deal, and Zelenskyy is going to have to get moving. Otherwise, he's going to miss a great opportunity. He has to move.

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

Border Security/Department of Homeland Security/Crime Rates

Q. Mr. President, are you personally involved in these negotiations over DHS funding? And where do you see room for compromise?

The President. Well, I will, but you have to remember—if you look at Homeland Security, if you look at what they've done, if you look at what ICE has done and Border Patrol, we have the safest border in the history of our country. Nobody comes in other than if they come in legally.

If you remember, just a little while ago, year and a half ago, for a 4-year period, they allowed 25 million people in our country. Many of these people were murderers and drug dealers. A horrible thing. We've gotten a lot of them out. We now have the best records in the history of our country on crime. It was just announced——

Q. How long will you——

The President. It was just announced, our crime numbers are the best in 125 years.

So I am here to protect law enforcement and law—our great police and ICE and Border Patrol and everybody. I'm here to protect them, because they're protecting us, and the job they've done is incredible.

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu of Israel

Q. Mr. President, do you believe—do you believe Prime Minister Netanyahu will receive a pardon?

The President. I do think so, yes.

Secretary of Homeland Security Kristi L. Noem

Q. Do you still have confidence—do you still have confidence in Kristi Noem, Mr. President—

The President. Yes, I do.

Q. —despite the reports of chaos?

The President. I do. We have safe borders. We have low crime numbers. The answer is yes.

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

Q. Mr. President, do you think anyone should be held accountable?

Closure of U.S. Airspace Over El Paso, Texas

Q. Are you pleased with Sean Duffy's handling of the airspace closure over El Paso?

The President. You mean the way it happened?

Q. Yes.

The President. People learn. You know, people learn.

Greenland

Q. Mr. President, on Greenland, on European leaders' hypocrisy, Greenland doesn't want Europe controlling them anymore. What's your message to them, to those European leaders' hypocrisy?

The President. Well, I think Greenland is going to want us, but we get along very well with Europe. We'll see how it all works out. We're negotiating right now for Greenland.

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

Apparent Kidnapping of Nancy Guthrie in Catalina Foothills, Arizona

Q. Mr. President, do you think the cartels are at all involved in Nancy Guthrie's case, or another nation-state, potentially?

The President. We can't say that yet. It's a little bit early, but it's—somebody either knew what they were doing very well, or they were rank amateurs. Either way, it's not a good situation.

Q. Mr. President, do you think Sean Duffy should be held accountable?

Europe/North Atlantic Treaty Organization

Q. What is your message to European leaders in Munich Security Conference?

The President. Well, I have a great relationship with them. If it wasn't for me, they'd be paying 2 percent and not paying. Instead, they're paying 5 percent, and they're paying. We have a very good relationship with NATO.

Iran

Q. Mr. President, how confident are you that our negotiations with Iran will be successful?

The President. I think they'll be successful. And if they're not, it's going to be a bad day for Iran. Very bad.

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

Department of Homeland Security/Democratic Party

Q. Mr. President, are you actively—are you actively talking with Democrats right now about a DHS shutdown? How painful——

The President. We're talking, but——

Q. ——do you expect that to be?

The President. ——you know, we have to protect law enforcement. ICE has done a phenomenal job. Border Patrol. We have a shut—we have a closed border for the first time in history. We have to protect law enforcement—our police, our Border Patrol, ICE, and others in law enforcement.

We—and I'm very much—look, I know what they want. I know what they can live with. The Democrats have gone crazy. They're radical-left lunatics. That's why their cities are so unsafe. The blue cities are the cities that are unsafe. So we have to protect our law enforcement.

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

Acting President Delcy Rodriguez Gomez of Venezuela

Q. You just lifted Venezuela—sanctions on Venezuelan oil. What are the next steps? And when are you going to host Delcy Rodríguez?

The President. Well, we have a very good relationship with the President of Venezuela. As you know, we're working together very closely. We have our big oil companies going in. They're going to be taking out the oil and selling the oil for a lot of money, and Venezuela is going to get a big part of that money.

And the relationship we have right now with Venezuela is, I would say, a 10.

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

And the biggest beneficiary will be the people of Venezuela.

Acting President Delcy Rodriguez Gomez of Venezuela

Q. On Venezuela. Will you be recognizing Delcy Rodríguez's Government as the official Government of Venezuela?

The President. Well, right now, we have done that. We're dealing with them, and really——

Q. Mr. President——

The President. ——and really, right now, they've done a great job. She's done—Delcy has done a very, very good job, and the relationship is strong. The oil is coming out, and a lot of money is being paid for oil by other nations, and we're taking care of it. We're refining it, and we're the only one that has the capability to refine it.

Right now the relationship with Venezuela is as good as it could possibly get.

Venezuela

Q. Mr. President, when are you planning to visit Venezuela? When are you—when are you planning to visit Venezuela, sir?

The President. I'm going to make a visit to Venezuela. We'll—we have not——

Q. When? When?

The President. We haven't decided. But we—are you from Venezuela?

President Gustavo Petro Urrego of Colombia

Q. From Colombia, sir. We share a border with Venezuela.

The President. We just had a good meeting with your President.

Q. With the President of Colombia. Yes.

North Atlantic Treaty Organization

Q. Mr. President, on the Munich Security Conference, what is your message to Europe and to the leaders?

The President. I think only—the only message is, we have a great relationship with NATO. We're a very powerful part of NATO. The people that are the heads of the countries, the various countries that we're talking about, they're all friends of mine.

Q. Mr. President, since you mentioned the meeting with the President of Colombia, Mr. President——

Q. Do you want Congress back in town?

Q. Do you have plans to meet with the North Korean Kim Jong Un this year?

Iran

Q. Do you have a deadline for Iran, Mr. President? Do you have a deadline for Iran? Do you have any deadline for Iran?

The President. In my mind, I do. Yes.

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

Q. Mr. President—[inaudible]—have the FBI lead the Nancy Guthrie investigation?

Rwanda/Democratic Republic of the Congo

Q. Thank you. Mr. President, Rwanda just violated the peace agreement. What are you going to do about it? You told me last time that there will be consequences. They continue to kill a lot of Congolese people in D.R.C.

The President. We'll take a look at it. We're going to look at it.

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

President Ahmad Husayn al-Shara' of Syria

Q. Are you happy with the situation in Syria after the deal that you brokered?

The President. The President of Syria is doing a very good job. He's unifying the country. We're very happy with the job he's doing. He's doing a great job for the people of Syria. He's unifying the country.

Thank you.

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

Q. Mr. President, I want to show you the evidence.

Come on, Brian [Brian Glenn, Real America's Voice]. Let's go.

Q. Look what they're doing. Step back.

First of all, pretty strong economic numbers going into '26.

The President. [Inaudible]

Stock Market

Q. Stock market: 50,000. You said it could go to 100,000. Plus——

The President. And great numbers today on inflation.

Q. Yes. Inflation. I was going to say: What's the outlook for the remainder of '26? Do you think——

The President. I think we're going to have 100,000 by the time I leave office in—at the end of my term. I think we're going to be at 100,000—the Dow. And if you remember, when I was first elected, everybody said if I got it to 50,000, the Dow, or 7,000 with the S&P—if I got it to 50,000 with the Dow, that would be an amazing—that would be in 4 years from then, from the election. I got it at 50,000 the last day of my first year. So I'm about—I'm pretty early.

I think we have a great chance of doing very substantially higher numbers. The country is doing well. We have the hottest country anywhere in the world by far. And the inflation numbers that just came out moments ago were actually incredible. Prices are way down. Inflation is way down, far lower than anyone thought could have happened in a period of 1 year.

Department of Homeland Security/Crime Rates

Q. [Inaudible]—on the shutdown. Are there any concessions you're willing to make with ICE—about ICE or about immigration enforcement?

The President. I'm always in favor of our law enforcement. ICE has done an amazing job. We've taken out hundreds of thousands of horrible criminals, including murderers. We had 11,888 murderers. A lot of them have been found and removed from our country. We have the lowest crime numbers—we have the best crime numbers we've had—you won't believe this one—125 years, from the year 1900. We have the best crime numbers that we've had in 125 years.

I have a great loyalty to ICE, to Border Patrol, to our police, to, frankly, our firemen, et cetera.

Thank you.

National Economy

Q. Mr. President, one on the economy. One on the economy, sir. Has the economy turned a corner?

The President. Well, I think so. We're at 50,000, we're at 7,000 with S&P. And if you remember—and they can say it any way they want—they said, "If Trump by the end of his term, four years, would get the number of Dow—Dow number to 50,000, it would be a miracle. It would be a"—I got it in 1 year to 50,000. Think of it. In 1 year. And I got S&P, which is actually harder, to 7,000, which they said would be impossible to do even within 4 years. And I got it in 1 year.

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

The economy is doing unbelievable. We right now have the hottest country anywhere in the world.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:50 a.m. on the South Lawn at the White House prior to boarding Marine One. A reporter referred to State Affairs Commission President Kim Jong Un of North Korea.

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

Locations: Washington, DC.

Names: Duffy, Sean P.; Netanyahu, Benjamin; Noem, Kristi L.; Petro Urrego, Gustavo; Rodriguez Gomez, Delcy; Shara', Ahmad Husayn al-; Zelenskyy, Volodymyr.

Subjects: Arizona, apparent kidnapping of Nancy Guthrie in Catalina Foothills; Border security; Colombia, President; Congo, Democratic Republic of the, relations with Rwanda; Crime rates; Economic improvement; Europe, relations with U.S.; Federal Bureau of Investigation; Federal Government, appropriations legislation; Greenland, ownership and administration; Illegal immigration; Inflation; Iran, diplomatic engagement with U.S.; Iraq, relations with U.S.; Israel, Prime Minister; Law enforcement officers, service and dedication; News media, Presidential interviews; North Atlantic Treaty Organization; Russia, conflict in Ukraine; Rwanda, relations with Democratic Republic of the Congo; Secretary of Homeland Security; Secretary of Transportation; Stock market; Syria, President; Texas, temporary closure of airspace over El Paso; U.S. Border Patrol; U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement; Ukraine, President; Ukraine, Russian invasion and airstrikes; Undocumented immigrants, deportation of criminals; Venezuela, Acting President; Venezuela, oil supply and refining; Venezuela, relations with U.S.

DCPD Number: DCPD202600101.