

Remarks at the Inaugural Meeting of the Board of Peace
February 19, 2026

President Trump. Well, thank you very much. This is a big day.

And lots of people watching and especially from other countries—the leaders of, as you know, the other countries, because we have a large group of leaders, and the ones that aren't here are watching on Zoom. I hope they enjoy it. *[Laughter]*

And the press, we appreciate it very much. So respectful. You've been so respectful of what we're doing.

What we're doing is very simple: peace. It's called the Board of Peace, and it's all about an easy word to say, but a hard work to produce: peace. But we're going to produce it, and we've been doing a really good job.

And some of these leaders that are with us have helped me very much during just this first year. We have a first year like probably no other ever in our country, because we settled eight wars and, I think, a ninth to come. That's turned out to be a tougher one. I thought that was going to be the easiest one, but with war you never know what's easy and what's not so easy.

But we've had a great relationship, and I've become friendly with so many of the people, and I appreciate you being here. These are great people. These are great leaders. And the people that are watching by closed circuit and open circuit, in many cases—they're so proud of it; they want it to be open—but they're—they've become incredible friends of mine.

And you know, we rebuilt our country in my first term, and now we're at a point that the United States has never seen before.

We broke 50,000 on the Dow. They said that would take 4 years. We broke 7,000 on the S&P. They said you couldn't do that within 4 years. It would be impossible. And when I came in, they were all saying, "If he could get to anywhere close to 40-, 45,000, it would be amazing achievement over 4 years."

Well, we hit 50,000 in the first year, and we hit 7,000, which was actually tougher to do, according to the Wall Street geniuses. We hit 7,000 in the first year. They said it could take 4 or 5 years. They'd be very happy. It would have been a great job. We did it in 1, but we're doing a great job.

Board of Peace is one of the most important and consequential things, I think, that I'll be involved in. We've been involved in a lot, and, really, I've been involved in a lot with the people up here. We worked together on ending wars with their country. Some of the wars were 32 years long—32, 34, and a 37. That's a long time. And we ended it in about 2 days—each one of those. But we have some other work to do, and we're getting it done.

Gaza is very complex. It's been amazing. I want to thank Steve and Jared for an amazing job. Marco is over there watching. Everybody's fantastic. And, J.D., what a job. They're all doing—it's a team. I think it's the best team ever assembled, and you see that by the results.

So today is a tremendous honor to welcome you all to the United States Institute of Peace for the inaugural meeting of the Board of Peace. Very important. I believe it's the most consequential Board. Certainly, in terms of power and in terms of prestige, there's never been anything close, because these are the greatest world leaders. Almost everybody's accepted, and the ones that haven't will be. Some are playing a little cute. It doesn't work. You can't play cute with me. But

they're playing a little bit, but they're all joining. Everybody would—most of them very immediately, a few that we really don't want because they're trouble. We take care of them.

But this is the most prestigious Board ever put together. You know, I've seen some great corporate boards. I've seen some great boards, period. It's peanuts compared to this Board, because we have—virtually every one is the head of a country, other than Gianni. But he's the head of soccer, so that's not so bad. Right, Gianni? *[Laughter]* I like your job the best, I think.

And by the way, your World Cup has set every single ticket record in the history of soccer—in the history—nobody has ever seen anything like it. The sales are virtually complete. Nobody has ever seen anything—so congratulations. You made a good decision.

Fédération Internationale de Football Association President Giovanni V. Infantino. We did it together.

President Trump. We did it together. Thank you, Gianni. Great guy.

So I want to thank the many leaders and dignitaries who are—traveled great distances and lengths for the important gathering that we're at right now.

The—this building was built for peace, and nobody knew what to name it, and then Marco named it after me. I had nothing to do with it. I swear I didn't. *[Laughter]* I swear. I had no idea. They said, "There's a surprise coming." I didn't know they had a surprise. I thought they were going to give me a lot of money or something. Maybe cash. Can always use some extra cash.

But I came, and they stopped the beautiful Beast. I got out—very safely, I'm sure—and looked up, and there it said "Donald J. Trump" on the building. And when I say that that was—had nothing to do—nobody believes it, and that's okay. But I appreciated it.

That was Marco and J.D. and a group got together, and they did that, and I just thought it was very nice. And it makes me work harder. We're going to have to work harder.

We're going to have to make this building much more important. They built—it's brandnew. They built it for peace, but nobody occupied it. You know, nobody knew what—the purpose of it. But the architecture is so beautiful, and it's—it was—with the meeting rooms, the reception rooms. It's really amazing. Who would think that it was built without anybody in mind or anything in mind? And then, the State Department took it over. They liked it.

Marco came over one day. He saw this. He said, "This building is great," and he actually claimed it. Right? He claimed it. And that's what he does.

Where is Marco? Is he—Marco, is that true? You claimed this building. You took it away from about five groups that wanted it.

Secretary of State Marco A. Rubio. That's right. Yes.

President Trump. It was—that was done very quickly, very methodically. But it was really—really built so beautifully, and such a beautiful building.

But we worked together to ensure the brighter future for the people of Gaza, the Middle East, and the entire world. I think that the Board of Peace—because it's mostly leaders and unbelievably respected people, but mostly leaders of Middle Eastern countries, countries from all over the world. And they've been very generous with money also.

And the United States, which I'll say in a moment, is also very generous with money, because there's nothing more important than peace, and there's nothing less expensive than peace.

You know, when you go to wars, it costs you a hundred times what it costs to make peace.

And we have a man at the end, right there, that's smiling because you learned that after 30 years of fighting. Right? Thirty years of fighting, and we got it done. I want to thank you very much. That was the great thing you did—you and your new friend.

They came to my office, and they said, "I've been fighting for 22 years." Now you're there for 23 years, right? "But I've been fighting for 22 years. That's all I've done is fight this gentleman."

And his counterpart was there for 7 years. He said: "I've been there for 7 years. All I've done is fight this gentleman."

And we had it worked out in about 24 hours, right? And it's been a good peace. And I think they've become friends. I'm not sure I'm allowed to say that, but I think so. I think they've become friends, right? Right? Great. Stand up. Stand up.

These are two tough cookies too. I want to—*[laughter]*—these are—you think that was easy? It wasn't easy. These are two tough people. Good people, but tough people.

But, you know, we're in the Oval Office, and we were getting near, but the one was at one side of the room—I have two chairs right in front of the desk—the beautiful Resolute Desk. One's over here. One's on the other side of the room. I said, "Fellas, could you get a little closer?" "Well, I don't"—they felt very uncomfortable. You know, they've been killing each other for 32 years. So I say, "Can you get a little closer?" After 1 hour, they were right next to each other. We made a deal. They hugged, they signed, and we had peace with two very important countries. And I'll never forget it.

So they started off a little weak, and they ended up really strong, and you can be very proud of yourselves. It was a beautiful thing to see. Thank you.

President Ilham Aliyev of Azerbaijan. [Inaudible]

[At this point, President Aliyev and Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan of Armenia stood up and shook hands.]

President Trump. Look at that. Do you believe it? Thirty-two years.

President Aliyev. Thank you.

President Trump. Thank you. Thank you very much.

But we're honored to be joined today by Prime Minister Rama of Albania.

President—where is President Milei? You're another one, I'll tell you. Where is President Milei? I had—I endorsed him.

I'm not supposed to be endorsing people, but I endorsed—when I like people—you know, I've had a very good record of endorsing candidates within the United States. But now I endorse foreign leaders, including Viktor Orbán, who's here, and others.

And I endorsed this gentleman: Milei. He was a little behind in the polls. He ended up winning in a landslide.

I just endorsed the Prime Minister of Japan. She was in a tight race but was probably going to win, and she won in the largest number in the history of Japan, so she likes me a lot. But it was an honor. And you're doing good—oh, look, they're sitting right next—Viktor.

I think—but ultimately, I think I'm going to end up endorsing—hey, look, as long as it works, it's okay with me. But the endorsement seems to be working in foreign countries too, so that's good. But nice to have you both. Viktor. Nice to have you both. Very proud of you.

The Prime Minister of another—really, just a great guy—Pashinyan of Armenia.

President Aliyev of Azerbaijan. I love saying that name now. You know, at the beginning, it was giving me a hard time. Now I love saying it. It's a beautiful name. I love it.

His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa of Bahrain. Bahrain, thank you. Thank you. Where are you? Where are you? He's so rich, he can sit there. He can sit wherever the hell he wants. *[Laughter]* You know, he could sit up in the corner. He could sit up top. He might take a piece of this building, Marco. *[Laughter]* He'll take 25 percent of the building for about \$6 billion. *[Laughter]*

Thank you very—and you've been very generous also. We appreciate it.

Prime Minister Hun Manet of Cambodia. Raise your hand wherever you may be, because—yes, hi. How are you? Congratulations. That was another one, right? We did a good job with that one.

Prime Minister Madbouly of Egypt. Thank you very much, and say hello to the—general-slash-President. Okay?

Prime Minister Orbán of Hungary, who has my complete and total endorsement for election. Not everybody in Europe loves that endorsement, but that's okay. He does an unbelievable job. He's done an incredible job on immigration, unlike some countries that have hurt themselves, but they're working on it. But I just want to let you know, you have my total and complete endorsement, and I'm putting it out. I already did, but I'm putting it out again. And you're coming up with an election, and I think you should be good.

I'll tell you, Milei did pretty well. He was a little down, right? And then he was—he ended up winning in a landslide, so that's pretty good.

You're going to do great, Viktor. Thank you very much for being here. Appreciate it. You run a great country.

A man that I really like a lot is—he's definitely tough. I don't want to fight him. President Prabowo of Indonesia. Thank you very much. Please. This is a big guy. I tell you—I said, "How many people in Indonesia?" He said, "Like 240 million." I said: "No, no, say it again. How many?" It's a big country you have, and you do a great job and respected by everybody. And thank you very much for being here. Thank you very much, Mr. President.

President Tokayev of Kazakhstan. Thank you very much. What a country that is. It's a wonderful country and a rich country, in case anybody has any question. We have some very rich people here today. *[Laughter]*

President Osmani of Kosovo. President, thank you very much. Great. Great job you're doing too.

President Vjosa Osmani-Sadriu of Kosovo. Thank you.

President Trump. Thank you very much.

Prime Minister Sharif—I like this man—of Pakistan—because there was some fighting going on when I got to know him and your field marshal, general—a great, great general; a great field marshal; a great guy—and I got to meet the Prime Minister. And he said, in front of our Chief of Staff, Susie Wiles, who's right here.

He said, "You know, nobody knows this, but I believe that President Trump saved 25 million lives when he stopped the war between us and India." Right? He—you made that statement. I said, "Twenty-five million lives?" Could have been much more, actually, but it's—that was really

a beautiful thing. You said that in front of a group of people that was—they walked out. They don't think about it, but you're talking about that kind of lives.

That war was raging. Planes were being shot down, right? And it was Pakistan and India, and I got on the phone with both of them, and I knew them a little bit. I knew Prime Minister Modi very well, actually. I got to know Pakistan through a little trade. They were trying to make too good a deal, and I got a little upset with them. And in the end, they got what they wanted, right? And they made a good deal. And I got to like them: the Prime Minister, the field marshal, who is a tough man—a tough, good fighter, right? Good, serious fighter. I like good fighters, actually.

And when I heard that they were fighting, I pick up a certain newspaper—I won't tell you which one, because it's fake news generally. But I picked up this newspaper, and I saw that Pakistan and India were really going at it.

And then it got worse and worse, and planes were being—and many planes were shot down. It was all-out. And I called them, and I said, "Listen, I'm not doing trade deals with you two guys if you don't settle this up."

They said, "No, no, no, that has"—both of them. They didn't want to do that. I said: "No, it has to—if you don't do it, I'm not doing a trade deal. We're not doing a trade deal." And they do a lot of business with the United States, and they sort of softened up all of a sudden.

Then, all of a sudden, I read where there was a little bit of a pullback by one, then the other. And all of a sudden, we worked out a deal, right?

But I said, "If you fight, I'm going to put 200-percent tariffs on each of your countries, which essentially makes you not allowed—you know, you can't do any business." And one of them—I won't say which one—said: "No. You can't do that."

They both wanted to fight, but when it came to money—not, like, money. When it came to losing a lot of money, they said, "I guess we don't want to fight."

And we solved that deal in 2, 3 days, right? And we did. We saved—these are two very powerful—these are two nuclear nations. And I don't want to say what was going to happen, but, you know, bad things happen.

So, Prime Minister, I want to thank you, because that was a big—that was a very big deal. People have no idea. A lot of them say, "Oh, well, they weren't fighting." They were fighting. Eleven jets were shot down—very expensive jets, and they were all in. Both of them were all in, and now they're not. And I think we'll always be able to settle up with them. I really do. I think you're going to have—you know, that's—it's a lot of progress was made, even in the relationship.

And Prime Minister Modi also—he's a great man. He's a great guy. They're all great, but I was very proud of it.

President Peña of Paraguay is here. President. President, thank you very much. A young, handsome guy. It's always nice to be young and handsome. Doesn't mean we have to like you. *[Laughter]* I don't like young, handsome men.

Women—it's—I like. *[Laughter]* Men, no, I don't have any interest. *[Laughter]*

President Santiago Peña Palacios of Paraguay. [Inaudible]

President Trump. Good. That's right. That's right.

Thank you very much. You're doing a great job, too.

His Excellent—Excellency Prime Minister Al Thani of Qatar. A—just a great man. Please. A great man and highly respected, and he's working with a man who is amazing. I always say he needs a public relations agency, because you do so much good, and they have you down as evil, and you're not evil. You help us so much, and you're such a good ally, and I just want people to know that. And the Amir is incredible—smart—as smart as you can be, a great leader, and he cares so much for the people, and he cares so much for the Middle East.

So I want to thank you very much, and send my regards. Your country has been a great help. You know, surprising to some of the people writing out there, but now they'll start changing their tune, because it's true. I only tell the truth.

Prime Minister Dan [President Dan; White House correction] of Romania. Wonderful people, the Romanian people are fantastic. Fantastic people, like you're fantastic. And a lot of them come and work in this country and help us in this country, as you know, and it's—they—they are just really, really solid people.

President Mirziyoyev of Uzbekistan, who is—where? There he is. And a friend of mine. He's got one of the most difficult names in history, but that's okay. It doesn't matter. Your country is doing great. You're doing great, and just no problems. Every time I see him, "Nope, we're doing good. No problems."

And General Secretary Tô Lâm of Vietnam. Vietnam is incredible as a country and as a force. And it's an honor to have you. A really great honor to have you. A lot of respect for your country.

We'll also want to express my gratitude to Vice President J.D. Vance, who is a fantastic man. He's a fantastic talent. He was a great student. He went to one school. He graduated—you know, most people—if you watched some of the people that were at the event in Munich, they didn't graduate quickly from college. They had everything they could do. There was one young, attractive woman. She was unable to answer questions, and she didn't do so well, like J.D. did, in college.

J.D. graduated in a 4½ year college in 2 years. And then he went to Yale, and he graduated at the top of his class. Went to the military—great. But when he went to Yale, there was one person that was marginally ahead of him, so he married her. Can you believe it? [Laughter] He married the person that was ahead. I don't know.

I always like to say J.D. was first and Usha was second, because I get a little uncomfortable when I say the—[laughter]—but he's been incredible. He's a brilliant guy and a great guy, and he's been my friend.

All of our people—we have a fantastic group of people—our Cabinet members, everybody. Many of them here.

But J.D. has been great. Thank you very much. He gets a little bit tough on occasion. We've got to slow him down just a little bit on occasion. He says his mind.

Now, then we have the opposite extreme. We have your friend sitting in the back. Your good—your best friend sitting in the back is Marco. Marco does it with a velvet glove, but it's a kill. Right? [Laughter] The result is the same. They do it very differently.

And, Marco, you really did yourself proud 2 days ago in Munich. In fact, so proud that I almost terminated his employ—[laughter]—because they were saying, "Why can't Trump do this?" [Laughter] I do, but I say it differently.

But, Marco, don't do any better than you did, please. [Laughter] Because if you do, you're out of here. [Laughter]

But no, he got—it was—I want my guys to do great. And the acclaim he's gotten and the acclaim J.D. gets is great. We have smart people.

And when you see the representatives there, like Gavin Newsom—he didn't know what he was doing. They didn't even know why—he didn't know why he was there, or A.O.C. She was unable to answer a simple question. And she could have said, "Well, I'm studying it, and I'll report back to you next week." You know, you can get away with that. But she just went, "Uh. Uh." It's actually—I think it could be a career-ending answer, because, for 25 years, anybody running against her, I think, Susie, is going to use that—that little piece of—it was not good. It was not good. That was not a natural.

So I want to thank J.D. I want to thank Secretary of State Marco Rubio. They're extraordinary. I want to thank Special Envoy for Peace Steve Witkoff, who has been unbelievable.

You know, I took Steve because I was a developer in New York. Really successful. Actually, much more successful than Steve, but I don't want to say that. I'm not going to say that, Gianni. I'm not. I refuse to say it.

But I saw something in Steve. Steve is a great negotiator. Everybody loved him. All these developers—and they're tough. You know, New York developers tend to be on the tough side. And you know, most of them hate each other, like a lot of the people in this room hate each other. You know, it's sort of natural, I guess. But we're bringing love back into the room, like the old days.

But everybody loved Steve. Every developer. The worst, most evil people. Horrible human beings, actually. And they loved Steve.

So I remember this, and we had some conflicts, to put it mildly, in the world. And I said, "Steve, how would you like to be Henry Kissinger, Jr., that doesn't leak?" I said, "Are you a leaker, Steve?" "No." He didn't even know what the word meant, and it's true. I always say, Henry Kissinger—who was one of the great leakers of all time, by the way. Richard Nixon said to him, "Henry, Henry, who's leaking all this stuff?" "I don't know, Mr. President." It was Henry. *[Laughter]* It was like it was—these are little stories I like telling.

But Steve has been unbelievable. Everybody likes him. Ukraine loves him. Europe loves him. Russia loves him.

I mean, there's nothing wrong with this. He goes to see President Putin. Didn't know Putin. I set him up a meeting to see. I said, "How's Steve doing?" "Sir, he's still inside." "Oh." That was an hour. I call back: "Tell Steve to call me when he's finished. I want to find out what the hell is going on. We want to end that war." "Sir, he's still inside." Three hours. Four hours.

They were together for 4 hours the first meeting. That's talent. And they get along. I mean, people like or don't like Putin or Zelenskyy. They get along.

Same thing with Zelenskyy. I mean, they all love Steve, and Steve's doing a great job.

That's a tough one. That's a much tougher one. I would have thought that some of the ones that we settled that are up here would have been—I thought this would be easy, because I have a very good relationship with President Putin.

I have a very good relationship with President Xi. I'm going to be going to China in April. It's going to be—that's going to be a wild one. I said, "But we have to put on the biggest display you've ever had in the history of China."

You know, last time I went to China, President Xi—he treated me so well. He gave me a display. I never saw so many soldiers all the same height. Exactly the same height, within a

quarter of an inch. You can do that when you have 1.4 billion people. You know? Lots of shoulders. Everybody was within about one-eighth of an inch the same height. I said, "If they put their helmets down, you could have played pool on the top of their heads."

And it was pretty amazing. But I said, "You've got to top it." He said, "I'll top it." We're going to top it. We're going to have a lot of the people—most of the fake news back there is going to be going.

So we have—Steve has done a great job. And then, a little bit later on, we brought Jared in. Jared was responsible for the Abraham Accords, which is incredible. Nobody else could have done that. A very smart guy. And we're making Jared an Envoy also—Envoy of Peace. They're both envoys of peace. And you couldn't get two—I tell you what, I watch these two guys. I say, "At least we're covered from an IQ standpoint." These two guys walk into a room and—but people like them both.

You know, they're good people, and they like them both. And they've had some very good meetings. They've had some very interesting meetings having to do with—as you know, Iran is a hot spot right now, and they're meeting, and they have a good relationship with the representatives, Iran. And you know, good talks are being had.

It's proven to be, over the years, not easy to make a meaningful deal with Iran. We have to make a meaningful deal. Otherwise, bad things happen. But we have to make a meaningful deal.

But they have a great relationship with the representatives of Iran. They have a great relationship with the other one that they're really working on now, because so many of these—I mean, as an example, Kosovo-Serbia. I did that one.

Could you stand up? If any of you guys are—when you're here, just stand up for a second. Kosovo, Serbia, stand up.

What a job. Thank you very much. We appreciate it. So good.

And you're getting along. And when you don't get along, you'll call me, and I'll—we'll get it solved, right? We'll get it solved. Thank you very much. Really good.

And then, again, Pakistan and India, that was a big one. And just—I think you should actually stand. Come, please. Stand just for a second. Pakistan and India, thank you very much.

And Prime—I spoke to Prime Minister Modi. He's excited. He's watching us right now.

Egypt and Ethiopia, we're going to get that. You know, there's a little dam that got built. Little dam. Like, maybe the largest dam in the world. Built and financed, of course, by the United States, brilliantly. And having a little trouble getting water to the Nile. It's not—that's a tough situation, but we're going to get that solved.

Armenia and Azerbaijan, we talked about. And, again, thank you, fellas, very much. Great job. Great job. Thank you.

Cambodia and Thailand. So incredible, what you did—that you—you got together, and it all worked out. They're watching. They're watching right now on closed circuit. Thank you very much. And thank you.

That was a big one: Cambodia and Thailand. These are nasty fighters, I have to tell you. These fighters are nasty.

Now, we talk about—you talk nasty fighter? You're nice guys compared to this. Congo and Rwanda.

That was—and we've got them pretty peaceful. There's little flare-ups every once in a while. I'll get a call once a week: "Sir, there's a flare-up in the Congo again."

We'll get it straightened out. Right, Susie? We get it straightened out.

And Israel, as you know, with—you could say Israel and numerous countries, if you want to really know the truth—but Israel and Iran. And we'll see where that goes.

But when you think of Israel, we have—we've done the biggest thing of all. We have peace in the Middle East right now. That's bigger than—people said it couldn't be done. For 3,000 years, they've been talking about Middle East. They said it couldn't be done. And you look at what's happened on Gaza. And one of the keys to it was when we took those beautiful, magnificent—we just ordered 22 more of them—updated model—the B-2 bombers. They're incredible.

I never understood the B-2 bomber. I'd watch—it's a wing, and I've never quite understood that, Gianni. I'd look at it. I'd say, "It was beautiful, but what does it do?" It carries very big bombs. *[Laughter]* And it went into Iran, and it totally decimated the nuclear—nuclear potential. And when it did, when it decimated that, all of a sudden, we had peace in the Middle East, because nobody—there was a black cloud hanging over the Middle East. And if that wasn't done, that cloud would have been there.

And countries like Saudi Arabia, countries like Qatar, countries that nobody could have signed, you—would have had that threat. Nobody could have had—you couldn't have had peace in the Middle East.

So now we may have to take it a step further, or we may not. Maybe we're going to make a deal. You're going to be finding out over the next, probably, 10 days.

But this meeting today is proof, with determined leadership, nothing is impossible.

When I took office, the war in Gaza was raging with thousands of people being killed and no end in sight. Today, thanks to unrelenting diplomacy and the commitment of many of the great people in this room—

We have 59 countries signed up—on Gaza. Think of that. We have—it's amazing. But all the people, many—really, so many in this room—the war in Gaza is over. It's over.

There are little flames. Little flames. Hamas has been—I think they're going to give up their weapons, which is what they promised. If they don't, it will be—you know, they'll be harshly met. Very harshly met. They don't want that.

You know, all this stuff, like they don't mind dying, they told me that's not true. Everyone said, "Oh, they don't mind dying." No, they don't want to die. They said, "We don't want to die." People don't want to die.

The ceasefire was held, and every last remaining hostage, both living and dead, has been returned back home. Think of that. That was an impossibility. And we did hundreds of hostages, but the last 20—and I always said—to Steve and Jared, I said: "The last 20 are going to be very tough. Very, very tough." And we got them back.

We got the living back, and then we only got about 16 of the dead. And we said: "Well, you got to get them all. You promised them all." And they dug and dug and dug. You can imagine, it's a job that's brutal. And Hamas really did a lot of that work, and you got to give them credit for that. They brought the last one home a week ago, and we got all 28 of them, living and dead.

The amazing thing, because I've never seen anything quite like it, the parents of the dead—they knew their boy was dead. In this case, boys—all boys. Men—but to the parents, boys. They

knew their boy was dead. They wanted that dead body as much as if he were alive. And when they got them back, there was great sadness, but there was great joy too. They wanted it as much as the people that got their sons back alive.

But we got a lot of people before those 20, Steve, what nobody talks about, but, you know, hundreds of people. We did a good job, and you guys did a fantastic job.

I want to thank every nation that helped us achieve this monumental breakthrough, saving countless lives and really bringing peace and bringing the concept of peace, because nobody thought peace in the Middle East—I've always heard peace in the Middle East is impossible, and it's turned out not to be.

And we do have some work to do with Iran. They can't have a nuclear weapon. It's very simple. They can't have—you can't have peace in the Middle East if they have a nuclear weapon, and they can't have a nuclear weapon. And they've been told that very strongly.

Since the hard-won cease-fire of last October, the United States and our partners have facilitated the delivery of vast amounts of humanitarian aid—numbers that nobody has ever seen before.

In November, the United Nations Security Council unanimously approved the Board of Peace. And last month in Davos, we welcomed over two dozen members to this very important new organization, and we are very closely working with the United Nations.

In fact, I'm going to speak to the Secretary-General in a little while, who's a good man, and I've had a good relationship.

Other than in my last speech, they did turn off my teleprompter. I got up there. My teleprompter didn't work. I'm sitting in front of all of you people and more. I had no teleprompter.

I knew I was in trouble, because I'm walking up—you know, the teleprompters are over here. I had the most beautiful speech ready. I was all set to knock them dead.

First, they had an escalator that stopped. You know that. I was going up. Boom. It's lucky my movie star First Lady was in front of me because I put my hand on a certain part of her body [*laughter*], and I was able to stop my fall. Otherwise—because she had no trouble. I said, "Boy, that was a very sharp stop," Gianni.

So I said, "That was strange." That's—I've been on a lot of escalators. That's never happened before. Usually, it stops very slowly. This was just: Boom. But our First Lady was right in the proper location for me. I'm waving to people, and she was holding on a little tighter. She knew what was happening.

She did. She said—she has a very successful movie out right now, like number one. Can you believe this? And she's a big movie—a big movie star.

And I always say—it's trouble, because I always say there's not room in one family for two stars. I told her that, "We can't have two stars in one family." So I don't know what that means, but it's not good.

But it is good because we're proud of her. She did a—people in the United States love the First Lady, and she did the movie, and it's become the biggest selling documentary in 20 years. Can you believe? The theaters are all packed. Women, especially. They go back and they see it two or three times, four times.

But together, we're committed to achieving a Gaza that is properly governed throughout. The whole area is going to be—you know, so many countries that have really nothing to do with the Middle East, but they may be somewhat close by, they're all involved. They want to go in and

fight. They tell me all the time, "We'd like to send soldiers to fight if it's necessary." And I don't think it's going to be necessary.

We have two countries that want to go in and do a number on Hamas. I said, "I really don't think it's—I hope it's not going to be necessary, because they made a promise, and they promised me they'd get rid of their weapons." Looks like they're going to be doing that, but little—we'll have to find out.

But it's no longer a hotbed of radicalism and terror. And to end that, we have today—and I'm pleased to announce that Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan, U.A.E., Morocco, Bahrain, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Uzbekistan, and Kuwait have all come—contributed more than \$7 billion toward the relief package. That's great. Thank you, fellas. Thank you.

And many more are contributing too, so the numbers are—you know, with—you know, this just started. This is our first meeting.

But every dollar spent is an investment in stability and the hope of new and harmonious—it's a region that's so important. It's so vibrant. It's so incredible. The people are so incredible. But we want to have a harmonious Middle East. The Middle East is amazing. So many friends in the Middle East. They're so smart. Sometimes, they're too energetic. That's the problem—you know, a lot of people aren't energetic. Sometimes, they're a little bit too energetic. These are great people.

The world is now waiting on Hamas, and that's taking place, and it's the only thing that's right now standing in the way.

We have Lebanon with certain things that we're working on that are very important. We have to solve the problem of Lebanon, but it's relatively small in terms of what we're—what's been done.

And, again, the key was getting rid of the nuclear potential, because Iran would have had a nuclear weapon—based on everything we found out since—within one month. We can't let that happen.

So many of our friends in Europe are attending today, and we're eager to have them become full members. They all want to become full members, and we've had a great response from Europe.

And Europe is—you know, it's where I come from, where so many people come from that are in the United States. But we have a great relationship with Europe.

We have a great head of NATO. He's a fantastic man, and he's doing a great job—a really great job.

I'm excited to announce that Norway has agreed to host an event bringing together the Board of Peace.

Oh, I thought, when I saw this note—"I'm excited to announce that Norway"—I thought they were going to say that they're giving me the Nobel Prize. *[Laughter]* Oh, this is less exciting. Oh.

It says, "I'm excited to announce that Norway"—and I'm saying, "Oh, great, I'm getting the Nobel Prize." Finally. Finally, they got it right. But I don't care. I don't care about Nobel Prize. I care about saving lives. Just so you understand.

We play, and we all, you know, do what we have to do. I only have one thing: I don't want to see people killed from parts of the world that are very far away from the United States. And if I have an ability to turn off wars, I want to use that ability, because it's people—millions of people.

It's like the Prime Minister said: 25 million people, maybe. And that's a small number compared to what it could have been, if you really think about it. Right?

No, I want to save lives, and I don't care about prizes.

And the U.N. Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance is raising \$2 billion for the support of Gaza.

Additionally, Japan has just committed to host an aid fundraiser, which will be a very big one, very—it's already successful; we know some of the numbers that are being talked about—which will be attended by other nations in the region, including South Korea, the Philippines, Singapore, and others. And I know that China is going to be involved, and I think Russia is going to be involved. I think they will be.

I want to have everybody—have it—get all sides, because it doesn't help when you have all sides with one ideology. You have to have everybody together for this.

I'm also pleased to announce that FIFA will be helping to raise a total of \$75 million for projects in Gaza, and I think they're soccer-related, where you're doing fields, and you're getting the greatest stars in the world to go there—people that are bigger stars than you and I, Gianni. I hate to say it.

You know, I met one of your great stars who came to the White House, as you know. And he's—my son was very excited. He—he's—these are great people. These are great people.

And Gianni is going to bring the stars to the area, and they're really known. People in Gaza know every one of them. Right?

Mr. Infantino. Absolutely. [*Inaudible*]

President Trump. Yes. So it's really something. And we'll soon be detailing the announcement, and if I can do, I'll get over there with you.

I want to thank Gianni and FIFA for all of the wonderful things they did and are doing. They gave me their first peace prize. They gave me a peace prize. I think they saw that I got screwed by Norway, and they said, "Let's give him a peace prize." I mean, very good. Thank you, Gianni. I appreciate it. Gianni is very smart.

Mr. Infantino. [*Inaudible*]

President Trump. He says, "Very, very smart."

The nations represented here today, just in closing, are not just contributing money. Some are also pledging personnel to help preserve the ceasefire and secure a very enduring peace. We have to have enduring peace. Having peace knowing it's going to blow up in 2 weeks doesn't mean anything.

In particular, Indonesia, thank you very much. Indonesia. That's a great country. Thank you very much.

Look at that man. Look how tough he is. You think it's easy dealing with him? Look at that face. You are a tough cookie, and we say it lovingly too. We need strength. You say—see, he doesn't mind. He's tough and he's smart, and smart is more important.

Morocco, thank you very much. Great. What you're doing is great. Albania, Kosovo, Kazakhstan have all committed troops and police to stabilize Gaza.

Egypt and Jordan are likewise providing very, very substantial help—troops, training, and support—for a very trustworthy Palestinian police force. We think we're getting some very good people on that police force.

And you know, it's peace in the Middle East. We have peace in the Middle East. Think of it. For years, you've been hearing about peace in the Middle East, and everybody who's saying it's impossible.

All of these countries are working together around the vision of a Middle East that is free from the curse of extremism and terror. And now is the time.

And by the way, even people with extremism and preaching extremism—they're exhausted. They're tired. This has been going on for too many years. I don't care who you are. They're tired. They want peace.

And now is the time for Iran to join us on a path that will complete what we're doing. And if they join us, that will be great. If they don't join us, that will be great too, but it will be a very different path.

They cannot continue to threaten the stability of the entire region, and they must make a deal, or if that doesn't happen—I maybe can understand. If it doesn't happen, it doesn't happen, but bad things will happen if it doesn't.

With the commitments announced today, the Board of Peace is proving that it does not just convene countries. It devises and implements, and real solutions happen. We've come up with solutions. This is so little talk. This is very little talk, all action. First time.

It was always talk in the Middle East. People would talk about peace in the Middle East, and then they'd go home and they'd never even think about it again. Nothing would happen.

We're providing a model for how responsible sovereign nations can cooperate to take responsibility for confronting problems in their own regions. The Board of Peace is showing how a better future can be built, starting right here in this room.

And I want to let you know that the United States is going to make a contribution of \$10 billion to the Board of Peace. Thank you.

And we've had great support for that number, and that number is a very small number when you look at that compared to the cost of war. That's 2 weeks of fighting. It's a very small number. It sounds like a lot, but it's a very small number. So we're committed to \$10 billion.

Together, we can achieve the dream of bringing lasting harmony to a region tortured by centuries of war, suffering, and carnage. They say, "3,000 years." And hopefully, we can lift up the eyes of the world to envision how other intractable conflicts can be settled.

So many conflicts, they say, are impossible to settle. And we get them settled. We got—of those eight that we settled, most of them were said to be not settleable. And they not only got settled, they got settled within days.

More impossible problems can be solved as we go along this very beautiful path. I think it's a beautiful path. I think it's such an important day.

Even the weather is beautiful. We walk in, it's beautiful. Everything is beautiful.

But the ancient wounds can be healed—and they are indeed ancient; this has been going on for so many centuries—that our entire planet will be a better, safer, more beautiful, and more peaceful place for us all.

We're going to be working with the United Nations very closely. We're going to bring them back. I think the United Nations has great potential—really great potential. It has not lived up to potential.

The eight wars—I never even spoke to them about one of them, and I should be speaking to them about all of them. Someday, I won't be here. The United Nations will be—I think is going to be much stronger. And the Board of Peace is going to almost be looking over the United Nations and making sure it runs properly.

But we're going to strengthen up the United Nations. We're going to make sure its facilities are good. They need help, and they need help moneywise. We're going to help them moneywise. And we're going to make sure the United Nations is viable.

And you have some very good people at the United Nations, can do a good job. But as I said, it's—I've said it for years: United Nations has tremendous potential.

A lot of people didn't like what I said. They said, "Oh, you shouldn't say that, because, you know, we don't care about the United Nations." No, it's really very important, and I think it's going to eventually live up to potential. That will be a big day.

So I want to thank everybody for being here. You're my friends. You're great, great leaders. You're great people.

And I can honestly say, you know, you're strong leaders. You're tough leaders, in many cases. And every single one that I'm looking at that's right here, I've gotten to know and I've gotten to respect. And really, you're friends. You're friends of mine, and if I can help you at all, you let me know.

But this is going to be something. The Board of Peace will be something that the likes of which I don't think anybody's seen before.

And thank you all very much. It's a great honor.

I'm going to ask J.D. Vance to come up and say a few words.

Thank you very much.

[The event continued; no transcript was provided.]

White House Press Secretary Karoline Leavitt. Thank you, Gianni. That's wonderful.

In advance of today's meeting, members of the Board of Peace were asked to vote on a resolution establishing the principles of financial integrity and transparency that will guide the Board's work, and that resolution has passed unanimously.

So, now President Trump, as Chairman of the Board, will sign the resolution in the presence of a quorum of the Board.

[President Trump signed the resolution.]

Press Secretary Leavitt. Now, while this is not a fundraiser, the Board of Peace has already inspired remarkable support from so many on this stage. As President Trump announced earlier, total pledges exceed \$6½ billion in relief and rebuilding in Gaza, and thousands of personnel have been committed to help preserve the ceasefire and secure enduring peace.

I would like to ask the heads of the following delegations to join President Trump on stage as he signs the fundraising pledges: Albania, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Egypt, Indonesia, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kosovo, Kuwait, Morocco, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, the U.A.E., and Uzbekistan.

Please join the President as he signs the fundraising pledges.

[President Trump signed the Board of Peace fundraising pledges.]

Congratulations.

Now, President Trump, if you would like to say a few words to conclude, and then you have the honor of gaveling out the first-ever Board of Peace meeting.

President Trump. Well, thank you very much, Karoline. And I will say that this has been—I think will maybe be one of if not the most important day of our careers, and we've had some pretty good careers up here. But this is something very special.

And we're going to straighten out Gaza. We're going to make Gaza very successful and safe. And we're also going to maybe take it a step further where we see hot spots around the world. We can probably do that very easily.

This is a tremendous group of powerful people and brilliant people, and I think that we can do things that a lot of other people would not be able to even conceive of or think of.

We will help Gaza. We will straighten it out. We'll make it successful. We will make it peaceful. And we will do things like that in other spots.

Spots will come up. Things will happen that nobody is even thinking about now and not even conceivable, but we will take care of a lot of things. And we'll work, again, with the United Nations and bring it back to health.

It needs help. It's got tremendous potential, but it needs a lot of help, and I think we can start with doing that pretty soon. Michael, I think we're going to work on that very strongly. We can fix up even the building physically. I love to see beautiful buildings. I like to see buildings fixed up physically, not look like they are in disrepair. We don't like that.

So we're going to do a job with the United Nations. We're going to have some very good people—and you have some very good people there right now, but we're going to put some extra people in, and we're going to have it help us.

But most importantly, for day—the Board of Peace is going to lead the way in Gaza. We're going to make Gaza a—an example of success and safety and unity. And it's an honor that you're here.

And I want to thank the media for being so respectful. You're really amazing. It's given the Board of Peace the respect it deserves. These are the most powerful people in the world, they're the richest people in the world, through their countries, and they have made a tremendous commitment. And the United States, likewise, has made a tremendous commitment.

Thank you to everybody for your involvement, and we look forward to working with you over the years for many reasons, many very, very good humanitarian reasons.

Thank you all. Thank you very much.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you, everybody.

Ready?

[President Trump gavelled out the Board of Peace meeting.]

Vice President James D. "J.D." Vance. [Inaudible]

President Trump. Thank you.

[President Trump referred to the gavel.]

We'll take it with us.

Thank you, everybody.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:34 a.m. at the U.S. Institute of Peace. In his remarks, he referred to President Javier Milei of Argentina; President Viktor Orbán of Hungary; Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi of Japan; President Abdelfattah Said Elsisí of Egypt; Chief of Defense Forces Syed Asim Munir Ahmed Shah of Pakistan; Amir Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani of Qatar; Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez; Gov. Gavin C. Newsom of California; Usha Chilukuri Vance, wife of Vice President Vance; President Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin of Russia; President Volodymyr Zelenskyy of Ukraine; Secretary-General António Manuel de Oliveira Guterres of the United Nations; Secretary General Mark Rutte of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization; Cristiano Ronaldo, forward for Saudi Pro League club Al-Nass and Portugal's national soccer team; and U.S. Permanent Representative to the United Nations Michael G. Waltz. He also referred to his son-in-law, U.S. Special Envoy for Peace Jared C. Kushner.

Categories: Addresses and Remarks : Board of Peace, inaugural meeting.

Locations: Washington, DC.

Names: Aliyev, Ilham; Dan, Nicusor; Elsisí, Abdelfattah Said; Guterres, António Manuel de Oliveira; Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, King; Hun Manet; Infantino, Giovanni V.; Kushner, Jared C.; Lãm, Tô; Leavitt, Karoline; Madbouly, Mostafa; Milei, Javier Gerardo; Mirziyoyev, Shavkat; Modi, Narendra; Munir Ahmed Shah, Syed Asim; Newsom, Gavin C.; Ocasio-Cortez, Alexandria; Orbán, Viktor; Osmani-Sadriu, Vjosa; Pashinyan, Nikol; Peña Palacios, Santiago; Prabowo Subianto Djojohadikusumo; Putin, Vladimir Vladimirovich; Rama, Edi; Ronaldo, Cristiano; Rubio, Marco A.; Rutte, Mark; Sharif, Shehbaz; Takaichi, Sanae; Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani, Amir; Tokayev, Kasym-Zhomart; Trump, Barron W.; Trump, Melania; Vance, James D. "J.D."; Vance, Usha Chilukuri; Waltz, Michael G.; Wiles, Susan; Witkoff, Steven C.; Xi Jinping; Zelenskyy, Volodymyr.

Subjects: Albania, Prime Minister; Argentina, President; Armenia, Prime Minister; Armenia, relations with Azerbaijan; Azerbaijan, President; Azerbaijan, relations with Armenia; Bahrain, King; Board of Peace; California, Governor; Cambodia, Prime Minister; Cambodia, relations with Thailand; China, President; Congo, Democratic Republic of the, relations with Rwanda; Egypt, President; Egypt, Prime Minister; Federation Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) World Cup; Gaza, conflict with Israel; Gaza, hostages held by Hamas; Gaza, humanitarian situation; Gaza, international assistance; Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam project, regional negotiations; Hamas political-paramilitary organization; Hungary, Prime Minister; India, Prime Minister; India, relations with Pakistan; Indonesia, President; Iran, diplomatic engagement with U.S.; Iran, nuclear weapons development; Iran, U.S. airstrikes on nuclear facilities; Israel-Hamas cease-fire agreement implementation; Japan, Prime Minister; Kazakhstan, President; Kosovo, President; Kosovo, relations with Serbia; Lebanon, Hizballah political-paramilitary organization; Middle East, regional integration and security; Nobel Prize for Peace; North Atlantic Treaty Organization; Pakistan, Chief of Defense Forces; Pakistan, Prime Minister; Pakistan, relations with India; Paraguay, President; Qatar, Amir; Romania, Prime Minister; Russia, President; Rwanda, relations with Democratic Republic of the Congo; Secretary of State; Serbia, relations with Kosovo; Stock market; Tariffs; Thailand, relations with Cambodia; U.S. diplomatic efforts, expansion; U.S. Institute of Peace; U.S. Special Envoy for Peace; U.S. Special Envoy for Peace Missions; Ukraine, President; United Nations Security Council; United Nations, Secretary-General; United Nations, U.S. Permanent Representative; Uzbekistan, President; Vice President; Vietnam, General Secretary; White House Chief of Staff; White House Press Secretary.

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