

Administration of Donald J. Trump, 2026

Remarks on United States Military Operations in Iran and an Exchange With Reporters Aboard Air Force One En Route to Joint Base Andrews, Maryland
March 29, 2026

The President. Hello, everybody.

Q. Hello, Mr. President.

The President. So we've had very good negotiations today with Iran, getting a lot of the things that we—they should have given us a long time ago. We'll see how it works out. But they're very good. Moving along very nicely.

And they've destroyed a lot of additional targets today. The navy's gone. The air force is gone. We know that. But we destroyed many, many targets today. It was a big day. And we are negotiating with them directly and indirectly. We have emissaries, but we also are dealing directly.

And as you know, they've agreed to send 8 boats 2 days ago, and then they added another 2, so it was 10 boats. And now, today, they gave us, as a tribute—I don't know—I can't define it exactly, but they gave us, I think, out of a sign of respect, 20 boats of oil—big, big boats of oil going through the Hormuz Strait. And that's taking place starting tomorrow morning over the next couple of days. A lot of boats.

And I would only say that we are doing extremely well in that negotiation, but you never know with Iran, because we negotiate with them, and then we always have to blow them up, whether it's the B-2 bombers or just terminating, as an example, the Iran nuclear deal done by Barack Hussein Obama, probably the worst deal we've ever done as a country; one of the dumbest deals we've ever done. But I terminated it, fortunately, otherwise right now they'd have a nuclear weapon.

And we did the attack with the B-2 bombers, and we stopped them from having nuclear. And now we had to blow them up again. And we will probably—I think we'll make a deal with them, pretty sure. But it's possible we won't.

But we've had regime change, if you look, already, because the one regime was decimated, destroyed. They're all dead. The next regime is mostly dead. And the third regime, we're dealing with different people than anybody's dealt with before. It's a whole different group of people. So I would consider that regime change. And frankly, they've been very reasonable.

So I think we've had regime change. I mean, we can't do much better than that. The regime that was really bad, really evil was the first one. That was done. The second was appointed, and they're gone. They're all dead, other than one who may have a little life in him. And then, they really are the third group, and the third group of people that seem to be much more reasonable. It truly is regime change. And regime change isn't imperative, but I think we have it automatically.

I did something today. I—we just got these in from the architects. A lot of people are talking about how beautiful the ballroom——

[At this point, the President held up a rendering of the planned White House Ballroom.]

For 150 years, they've wanted to build a ballroom at the White House. And other Presidents have wanted it. When we have dignitaries coming, like President Xi of China or anybody else, we have very small rooms. They're not big enough to handle the kind of capacity that you need.

And this is the same height as the White House. It's an incredible fitting. You see what that is, right? It's nice. I'll show you.

[The President held up another rendering of the ballroom.]

Here's another view. This is coming from right opposite the Treasury Building. Beautiful capital. Beautiful building.

And one of the—I think it will be the finest ballroom of its kind anywhere in the world. A lot of people are giving it really good reviews. Some are giving it reviews without even seeing the building, because this just came out today. These pictures were just made today.

We got rid of, a long—quite a while ago, the stairs on the south side, and it's become really beautiful.

But it matches and fits the White House. It's also capable of handling the Inauguration. We have all bulletproof glass. We have drone-proof roofs, ceilings. Everything's drone proof and bulletproof. And unfortunately, we're living in an age where that's a good thing. And this is the view from the Treasury—opposite the Treasury. Let me see another one of them.

[The President held up another rendering of the ballroom.]

Here's a view from—on the south with the porch, which is a porch, and it's also a fire stair basically leading down to the grounds. And that porch will be magnificent looking in between the columns. And they no longer—we took the stairs out that were in the south side and really replaced them with these stairs. So you have an open porch and you have the closed porch under the columns overlooking the Washington Monument, the Jefferson Memorial, and the Lincoln Memorial-slash-Monument. So that's great.

[The President held up another rendering of the ballroom.]

This is a view of the columns as they are going to be made. They're going to be hand carved, and they're beautiful, top-of-the-line. They'll be Corinthian, which is considered the best—most beautiful by far.

Okay?

White House Ballroom Construction Project

Q. What's your timeline on this thing?

The President. Timeline. Well—so we're ahead of schedule and under budget. And all of this money—all of the money paid is from—paid by myself and donors. And it's all donors. There's not one dime of Government money going into the ballroom.

[The President held up another rendering of the ballroom.]

Now, the military is building a big complex under the ballroom, which has come out recently because of a stupid lawsuit that was filed. But the military is building a massive complex under the ballroom, and that's under construction. And we're doing very well.

So we're ahead of schedule. That's part of it. And the ballroom essentially becomes a shed for what's being built under the military, including from drones and including from any other thing. The glass on the windows—you see the big windows? The glass is extremely thick. It's high-grade, bulletproof glass. So all of the windows are bulletproof.

I think the Times wrote, "Gee, some of the windows are fake." We have no fake windows. They said—they talked about a stairway on the south. We don't have a stairway on the south. And that was replaced a long time ago.

But this is a view of it from the north. And that's—if you see it, it fits in with the White House. It's almost a twin to the White House. It's something—we just wanted to pay tribute to the White House. And so, that fits in beautifully.

Let me just see another one that——

Timeline for White House Ballroom Construction

Q. When will the above-ground construction begin?

[*The President held up another rendering of the ballroom.*]

The President. Here's another one. Very—excuse me. Wait. I thought I'd do this now because it's easier. I'm so busy that I don't have time to do this, but—I'm fighting wars and other things—but this is very important because this is going to be with us for a long time. And it's going to be—I think it will be the greatest ballroom anywhere in the world. It's the highest level.

Same height—exact height of—not higher—same height as the White House. Exactly the same height. And if you look, you have the White House over here. You have this, and that's a duplicate of the wall. So it pays total homage to the White House, which is, I think, very important too.

[*Several reporters began asking questions at once.*]

Say it.

Iran/U.S. Diplomatic Engagement

Q. Sir, could you foresee a deal in Iran this upcoming week?

The President. I do see a deal in Iran, yes.

Q. Mr. President——

The President. Could be soon.

U.S. Military Operations in Iran

Q. Are you considering still putting boots on the ground? And would you do that without going to Congress?

The President. I just have lots of alternatives. We have tremendous numbers of ships over there. We don't need them all because of, you know, the power.

Look, the—I would say we're—just like we're ahead of schedule on the ballroom, in a much bigger way, we're ahead of schedule with Iran. We're weeks ahead of schedule.

If you would have said that in 3 days we were going to knock out 158 ships, their entire navy—which we did. We knocked out their entire air force. We knocked out most of their missiles. That's why you see missile attacks. But they're down to—they're sputtering.

And we have a group. It's really a new regime. It's a new group of people. People that we've never dealt with before, that are acting very reasonable. It is truly regime change.

Iran/Political Leadership

Q. Is Khamenei's son still alive, sir? Is he a part of these conversations?

The President. We think he may be. We—nobody's heard about him. I mean, he's—he may be alive, but he's obviously very seriously in trouble. He's seriously wounded.

Iran/U.S. Diplomatic Engagement

Q. You had offered that 15-point plan to Iran. Did they ever come back with a response?

The President. Yes, they came back on the 15-point plan.

Q. What did they say?

The President. They gave us most of the points. Why wouldn't they?

Q. And you make it sound like they've made some concessions. Can you identify those?

The President. Well, they're agreeing with us on the plan. I mean, we asked for 15 things, and, for the most part—we're going to be asking for a couple of other things.

And just to prove that they're serious, they gave us all these boats. When I talked about, 4 days ago, a present—I said they gave me a present, but I didn't think I was at liberty to say what it was. What it was, was eight plus two. It's 10 massive boatloads of oil. And today they gave us another present. They gave us 20 boatloads of oil. That starts being shipped tomorrow.

We're having very good meetings, both directly and indirectly. And I think we're getting a lot of very important points.

Department of Homeland Security Appropriations/Border Security/Immigration Enforcement Actions

Q. Sir, were you caught off guard when the Senate passed the DHS funding bill?

The President. It's a shame. They should really just go to a filibuster. They should terminate the filibuster——

Q. And will you—[inaudible]——

The President. ——and they should vote. That's what I think.

Look, I think the Senate is playing—they're playing it too soft. The Republicans are wonderful people, but we're dealing with very sick individuals. The Democrats are sick. There's something wrong. They're like terrorists.

And we have to protect our country. We have to protect our border. We have to protect our wall. If it was up to them, they'd open up the wall. They'd let millions of people pour into our country again. And we've all been through that.

And I don't care if you're liberal or you're conservative, what we have now is, we have a beautiful closed border. We're getting murderers out of our country that Biden let in—the administration, the Democrats. We're getting the drug lords out of our country. We're bringing them back to other countries where they came from, from all over the world. We have great crime numbers, despite the fact that they let in 25 million people.

And we're focused on the bad ones. I mean the ones that came in that's—we'll work on something. But we have to get the killers out. We have to get the drug dealers out. We have to get the criminally insane. We have people that are criminally insane. They are unbelievably violent people that come out of insane asylums.

The Democrats want them protected. I want them out. They have to be out.

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement

Q. Will you sign a DHS deal without ICE——

The President. You can't have a country if they're here.

Q. Would you sign a DHS deal without ICE funding in it?

The President. No. ICE is vital to the well-being of our country.

ICE is—first of all, they're great patriots, but they are physically and mentally very strong people. And they are able to protect us from the animals that have been sent in—allowed to be sent in by the Biden administration, where you have people—jails—jails or prisons from Venezuela, from the Congo, from all over the world. Every—from every continent. They were allowed to come into our country totally unchecked, totally unvetted. You can't have a soft, weak, sad person deal with these. You need strong people.

Now, they love our country. They're very brave. They're very strong, like some of these guys. But you have to have these people removed or you don't have a country.

So we had the best crime numbers that we've had. Murder numbers—the best in 125 years. Think of it. Since the year 1900—before my father was born, by a lot—we have the best crime numbers, and we're going to keep it that way. And that's despite the fact that so many criminals were allowed into our country.

So we need ICE. We need Border Patrol. The last thing you people want to see is our country overrun again by criminals. And that's not going to happen. We're not going to let that happen.

[*Several reporters spoke at once.*]

And by the way, our country doesn't want that.

Election Reform/Democratic Party

Q. Mr. President, some Republicans, including Senator Mike Lee, say reconciliation won't work to pass the SAVE America Act because it's not budget related. What's your response to that?

The President. Well, they say—and they'll have to—the Parliamentarian's going to have to make a decision on that. But I—again, I say end the filibuster. Terminate the filibuster. Just vote and you'll get everything you want. You get all five things.

We have voter ID. We have proof of citizenship—it's so important. Mail-in ballots have to be stopped with exceptions for the military; for sick people—people that are sick; people disabled; for people that are traveling. If you're traveling, you can vote. But other than that, mail-in ballots are inherently dishonest.

Jimmy Carter, in his Carter Commission, said you can't have mail-in ballots. We are the only country in the world that has mail-in ballots. We're the only country in the world that has—

You know, we have a big case coming in the Supreme Court that had to do with the babies of slaves after the Civil War. And instead of that, it's being used as a way for rich countries and thousands and thousands of people from China coming in and getting citizenship for people within their family. This is not what they meant when they did that. So that's a big decision coming up.

But if you look at it, and you look at what we've done here, we have five points. We don't want men playing in women's sports. The Democrats do. We don't want transgender mutilation of our children. The Democrats are just fine with it. They could get—you could do every child in America. They'd be very happy. We don't want the mutilation of our children. It's transgender, and we're not going to have it.

So we want to go into those things—and five points. And with the filibuster termination, you could vote them all in. The Republicans would have the vote.

Senate Filibuster/Senate Majority Leader John R. Thune/Election Reform

Q. Mr. President, Leader Thune told me that they do not have the votes to terminate the filibuster.

The President. I know, but——

Q. How will you get around that?

The President. But that's part of being a leader. You have to get the votes.

Q. Do you have confidence in Leader Thune?

The President. I mean, I like him so much. He's a high-quality person. And he told me the same thing, "We don't have the votes." Well, he's only a couple of votes short. But that's what being a leader is. You have to get the votes. You have to get the votes. And those people will not be able to withstand the onslaught, because Republicans and the country wants it.

You know, it's polling at 87 percent—voter ID. Think of it. We're talking about SAVE America. And it's not SAVE Act. It's SAVE America Act because it's saving America. SAVE Act—nobody knows what it's saving. It's the SAVE America Act, and you have to have it. You have to have it.

The SAVE America Act—voter ID, all of these things, proof of citizenship. It's an 87-percent issue with all voters, including Democrats. The only ones that don't want it are Schumer and these corrupt Democrat leaders, because it will not give them the ability to cheat in an election.

Look, why wouldn't you want voter ID? There's not a reason in the world you wouldn't want it, except to cheat. And if they don't cheat, their policy is so bad they'll never win another election.

Cuba

Q. Mr. President, on Friday, you mentioned that Cuba will be next. What did you mean by that exactly?

The President. That who will be next?

Q. Cuba.

The President. Yes, Cuba's going to be next. Cuba's going to be——

Q. In what way?

The President. Cuba's a mess. It's a failing country, and they're going to be next. Within a short period of time, it's going to fail, and we will be there to help it out. We'll be there to help our great Cuban Americans out, who were thrown out of Cuba. In many cases, their family members were mutilated and killed by Castro. Cuba's going to be next. Yes.

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

Q. Are you considering——

The President. Say it.

U.S. Surgeon General–Designate Casey Means

Q. Are you considering withdrawing Casey Means for Surgeon General and nominating someone else?

The President. Well, we're looking at a lot of different things. And I don't know how she's doing in the nomination process—I'm more focused on Iran—but you know, something like that would be possible.

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

We certainly have a lot of—we have a lot of great candidates for that job.

Director of National Intelligence Tulsi Gabbard

Q. Do still have confidence in Tulsi Gabbard, sir?

The President. Yes, sure, I do. Sure. I mean, she's a little bit different in her thought process than me, but that doesn't make somebody not available to serve.

Q. Is she on the same page as you?

The President. I would say that I'm very strong on the fact that I don't want Iran to have a nuclear weapon. Because if they had a nuclear weapon, they'd use it immediately. I think she's probably a little bit softer on that issue, but that's okay. Some people are. Most people aren't. Most people are saying, "Thank you very much for doing what you did."

They are decimated right now. They're going to give up nuclear weapons. They're going give us the nuclear dust. They're going to do everything that we want to do. And you know what? They're going to go on and maybe have a great country again. But if they don't do that, they're not going to have a country. They're not even going to have a country.

So she's softer on that issue, but I have other people. Not too many. That's an issue that we've had great support. You saw the CNN poll with Trump, with MAGA—and I think MAGA is most of the Republican Party—is 100-percent approval.

In fact, the young gentleman that does the poll—who's very good, actually, because he's honest—he said, "I've never seen a hundred percent before." I'm a hundred percent in the CNN poll, which just came out.

Thank you very much, everybody.

Cuba

Q. Hey, no—one more thing on Cuba. There's a report that the U.S. is going to let a Russian oil tanker go to Cuba. Is that true?

The President. Well, we have a tanker out there. We don't mind having somebody get a boatload, because they need—

Q. [Inaudible]

The President. They have to survive.

Q. So that report is true, as far as you know?

The President. Well, I would say—I told them if a country wants to send some oil into Cuba right now, I have no problem with that.

President Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin of Russia/Cuba

Q. Do you worry that that helps Vladimir Putin?

The President. Whether it's—whether it's Russia or no.
What?

Q. Do you worry that that helps Vladimir Putin, though?

The President. Doesn't help him. Like—he loses one boatload of oil. That's all it is. It's fine.

Q. President—President——

The President. If he wants to do that and if other countries want to do it, it doesn't bother me much. It's not going to have an impact. Cuba's finished. They have a bad regime. You know, they have very bad and corrupt leadership. And whether or not they get a boat of oil, it's not going to matter. I'd prefer letting it in, whether it's Russia or anybody else, because the people need heat and cooling and all of the other things that you need.

Go ahead.

Commercial Transit Through the Strait of Hormuz

Q. Now, the issue of the Strait of Hormuz and Iran control of it and charging tolls. What do you think about that? Or what——

The President. Well, I'd have to find out if it's true. I mean, you know, they're going to do whatever they have to do. We could close that up in 2 minutes. We could close that up so fast your head would spin.

Iran/Gulf States

Q. Do you want to see Gulf countries that are being attacked by Iran to start to fight back?

The President. They are fighting back. Saudi Arabia's fighting back hard. Qatar is fighting back. U.A.E. is fighting back. Kuwait's fighting back. Bahrain's fighting back. They're all fighting back.

Actually, they were surprised to be hit. I was very surprised they got hit. And once they got hit, they started fighting very well. We're—very strong communications with all of those countries, and they've all been fighting. They're a hundred percent on our side.

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement

Q. How long can you pay TSA workers for? How long can you pay TSA workers for from the "One Big Beautiful Bill?"

The President. Well, we're going to pay them for as long as we have to. And I will tell you, the ICE workers have been amazing. And that's—helping people with their bags.

It's very interesting. We put ICE there, and ICE got a very unfair press. They're doing an amazing job getting hardened criminals, murderers. Eleven thousand eight hundred eighty-eight murderers were allowed to come into our country through Biden. And ICE has been amazing.

Now, we said give us a little hand during this period of time, because this is caused by Democrat terrorists. These people are sick. They don't care about our country. They don't care about people. But what it's all about, really, is they want to have open borders, and they want to have criminals come into our country so they can get more votes, because they're losing votes fast.

Look at how I did with the Hispanic population, and now I'm doing even better with the Hispanic population. And that's bad for them. They always had it. Now they don't have it anymore. These are people that want our country to fail, and the voters see that.

Thank you very much, everybody.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:17 p.m. in the press cabin. In his remarks, he referred to Supreme Leader Mojtaba Khamenei of Iran, son of former Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Hoseini-Khamenei of Iran, who was killed in an Israeli airstrike in Tehran, Iran, on February 28; Senate Parliamentarian Elizabeth MacDonough; Senate Minority Leader Charles E. Schumer; and Harry Enten, chief data analyst, CNN. He also referred to S. 1383. A reporter referred to H.R. 7147. The transcript was released by the Office of Communications on March 30.

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