

*Administration of Donald J. Trump, 2026*

**Remarks Prior to a Meeting With President Ahmad Husayn al-Shara' of Syria and an Exchange With Reporters in Ankara, Turkey**

*July 8, 2026*

*President Trump.* Well, thank you very much.

I'm with the highly respected President of Syria, and we are working together. We were—right from the beginning. We were responsible, along with—actually President Erdoğan also felt very strongly.

And he's done a really fantastic job as President. He's unified the country in a very short period of time. I'd say, like, a year and a half—about a year and a half. And right from the beginning, it was a real mess. It was a very disjointed place, and he's brought it together.

He's a strong person. He's a great leader. He's respected by everybody, including me. And we're proud to have him together, and we're just here to talk a little bit.

We released sanctions from the country, which, really, I think, was a big boost. The sanctions was a very important thing.

And we're proud of the job he's doing. Syria's become a very stable—I mean, it—it's amazing. In a short period of time, it's really been stabilized, and we're proud of that and to be part of the Middle East.

Syria had one of the great cultures—the professors and lawyers and doctors. It had one of the great cultures of any country, not just Middle East, and then it went through this terrible period of time.

But it's a country that a lot of people are very proud of, and they're proud of the job he's done.

Thank you very much, Mr. President.

*President Shara'.* Thank you. Thank you.

*President Trump.* Would you like to say something—[inaudible]——

*President Shara'.* We have made a great achievement in the toppling of the former regime. And as President Trump said, in a year and a half, we made an achievement in bringing the country together, unifying the country, and put it back on track.

Of course, this is due to our strong people—the strong Syrian people that President Trump talked about.

Then, the historic decision that President Trump has taken by lifting the sanctions off Syria as well as the help of friendly countries and the loving countries in the region—Turkey and other countries in our neighborhood.

The entire Syrian people thanks President Trump.

[At this point, President Shara' spoke briefly in English as follows.]

Thank you.

*President Trump.* Thank you very much. I'm proud of you.

You have any questions?

*Syria-U.S. Relations/Lebanon*

*Q.* Mr. President, are you going to remove Syria from the State Sponsor of Terrorism list?

*President Trump.* I think I will, yes. I think I will. Why wouldn't I? He's done a great job.

Maybe he would have brought that up in a little while, but you brought—that's a good question.

Yes.

Any problems with that?

*U.S. Secretary of State Marco A. Rubio.* No.

*President Trump.* I think we should. Yes, I will.

*Q.* Do you still want Syria to help with Hizballah in Lebanon?

*President Trump.* They could help. We'll find out. I think we're making a lot of progress.

*Q.* Mr. President——

*President Trump.* It could help. He would do a very good job.

*Turkey-U.S. Relations/Israel-U.S. Relations/Iran*

*Q.* Prime Minister Netanyahu has been critical of aspects of your relationship in the last couple of days with President Erdoğan of Turkey. He said that Erdoğan has imperial ambitions on neighboring countries, you know, presumably including Syria.

*President Trump.* Well, he hasn't been involved with Syria—you know, if you think, he hasn't been involved with Israel at all, and he's left it alone. I wouldn't say he's a friend, because he's not a friend of—as you know, of Netanyahu, of Bibi. They don't get along, I think.

But you know, I—for me, he's been great. Look, Turkey has been fantastic and a fantastic ally. They're also a NATO country.

And Israel, we've done—no President's done as much for Israel as I have. Nobody even close. If you look at—I mean, just look at all the things with Jerusalem—all the different things that we've done—the Golan Heights. I did things—nobody has ever done anything for Israel like me, and we made tremendous progress, and we're going to—

We've made a lot of progress with Iran too. We've wiped out their military. But they—it should have been done 47 years ago.

*Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu of Israel*

*Q.* And if I could, do you think that—that Prime Minister Netanyahu should be reelected? There's an election coming in Israel. Or would you like to see new blood?

*President Trump.* I can tell you this: He's been a great wartime President. We worked out—Prime Minister. He—so we worked with each other very closely, and we went through a very big thing. We did a big thing together. And, in my opinion, he's been a great wartime Prime Minister.

I don't know anything about his politics. I'm not sure. I would think he should be popular because he did a very good job.

We had a—we had and have a very good relationship, but he was a great wartime Prime Minister.

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

If you had other Prime Ministers, you know what? There wouldn't be an Israel right now. You know that? There wouldn't be—it would have been blown to pieces by Iran. If you had a different—if you had a weak Prime Minister, you wouldn't have—and if you had a different President, I guarantee there wouldn't be an Israel. It wouldn't—Israel wouldn't exist today if you didn't have me as President.

*[Several reporters spoke at once.]*

*Q.* President Trump, sir.

*President Trump.* Daniel [Daniel Baldwin, One America News Network].

### *Iran/Oil Markets and Prices*

*Q.* New data from the Energy Information Administration revealed that U.S. crude oil production set a new record in the month of April under your leadership.

*President Trump.* That's right.

*Q.* Why is it important to keep hitting numbers like this at this moment in time? Why is it important that you were able to get this done and keep it on this trajectory?

*President Trump.* Yes. Well, we—you know, when we decided to do this—it's called the denuclearization of Iran. We have to do it. We have to have—they're not—they're never going to have a nuclear weapon. And they admit they're never going to have it.

But they behave badly—always behave badly. There's something wrong with them.

But when we did this, we thought oil would go much higher, and it didn't go very high, and now it's coming way down. And you're going to see oil drop very low.

Now, maybe we'll do some other things that could lift it a little bit, but I don't think it's going to lift it a lot at all. I think oil is coming down. There's tremendous amounts of oil.

Scott, what would you say about that?

*U.S. Secretary of the Treasury Scott K.H. Bessent.* Yes, so record production under President Trump in his first term. Now, in his second term, the U.S. is an energy superpower. It's why we weathered the conflict better than anyone else.

And there—just this weekend, Bloomberg wrote that there is an oil glut out there, and, you know, we think that safe, secure American oil maybe even should trade at a premium to the rest of the world.

*President Trump.* So we have—if you add it up, you take Saudi Arabia and take Russia—two big oil producers—we do more than twice as much. We do more than—think of it: Saudi Arabia, Russia, put together, we do more oil, and that's not including Venezuela. It's pretty amazing. Right?

And this all happened during my term. We started it the first term. Biden blew it because he had no idea what he was doing. But we are making—we are producing more oil right now than Saudi Arabia and Russia combined by almost double.

Okay. Any other questions?

*Q.* Mr. President—

*President Trump.* Yes. Yes, ma'am.

### *Iran/Disposition of Nuclear Material*

*Q.* You said that dealing with the Iranians is "a waste of time." How do you plan to get the nuclear material and the nuclear assurances that you want?

*President Trump.* Well, we've already got the nuclear material, because it's so far underground, nobody's going to be able to get it except us, because we have the equipment that can get it. But the—I call it the nuclear dust. The nuclear material is so far down underneath a mountain, and now it's—that's been determined—that it would take massive machinery that we have that no other country has. They can't get it.

*Q.* So you have no plans to go in, boots on the ground?

*President Trump.* Why would I go in now? I'd go in when they're completely either eliminated or whatever—or an agreement's made.

*Q.* Mr. President, if you——

*President Trump.* Yes.

### *European Union/U.S. Economy*

*Q.* If you cut off trade with Spain, does that mean that you're going to have to renegotiate a trade agreement with the EU?

*President Trump.* With who?

*Q.* With the EU—with the EU, any past trade agreements you already have with them.

*President Trump.* We're going to see what happens with the EU. You know, they've treated us very badly for years, and they took advantages.

Look, we're very close to those countries—right?—and to everybody in the EU. The problem is, they took advantage of the United States for years.

It's like him. They took advantage of Syria. He's bringing it back.

And I'm bringing the United States back. We have the greatest economy we've ever had. We have the biggest investment: \$19.2 trillion's being invested right now in the United States. It's never—\$3—\$3 trillion was the number, the record.

Under Biden and under the past administration, they had less than a trillion for 4 years. We have \$19.2 trillion in 12 months. Think of that. We have the largest amount of money being invested in a country in history. Pretty amazing—\$19.2 trillion, with a "t."

So—and they're building factories all over the country. I think yesterday, Toyota announced they're leaving Mexico, and they're coming. And not that Mexico's thrilled about it, but they're leaving Mexico, and they're coming to the United States to build what will be, I believe, the largest automobile plant either in the world or at least in this country.

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

Daniel.

### *Beef Prices/Egg Prices*

*Q.* A quick domestic question: You announced on Truth Social a couple days ago that Walmart was cutting their price for——

*President Trump.* Yes.

*Q.* ——a pound of beef by 15 percent. How big of a deal is that for American customers this summer?

*President Trump.* So Walmart has agreed to cut their prices very substantially, because things are going down. We're getting it down.

We inherited very high prices. We inherited the highest prices in the history of our country—or 48 years, to be exact, but I don't believe that. I think it's in history. So, under Biden they had tremendous inflation. Under the "Dumocrats," we had tremendous inflation, record-setting inflation.

And now, inflation is way—everything is great. We have—the prices are coming down. But we inherited—you know, they talk about different—they use different words to describe it.

They had very high prices. The prices are coming down. And when the oil comes—you know, the oil is coming way down. The oil dropped by 50 percent in the last month, and when that comes down, it brings everything else down. No, it's affordability, and they came up with the word "affordability."

You know, like, I take over, I'm there for 1 day, and they say: "Affordability. Affordability." I said, "I've been here for one"—remember with the eggs? The first day or two days later. I have my first news—and they talked about eggs. They said, "The eggs have gone up five times." I've been in office for one day. And I said, "Well, we'll have to do something."

In fact, they told me not to order eggs for the Easter egg hunt at the White House. I should use plastic. I said, "We're not doing that." And by the time we came—it was a couple of months later that happened, and we ordered thousands of eggs. And right now, eggs are way down.

The prices are way down. And they're coming down further.

So they made up a phony word that they used. They said, "Affordability." They're the ones that caused the affordability prices. I didn't. But I brought it down.

And the oil is coming down very big.

#### *Oil Markets and Prices/U.S. Military Operations in Iran*

*Q.* Mr. President, Brent crude is up slightly today on the announcement that——

*President Trump.* A little bit, yes, because we hit them. Any time we hit them, it goes up a little bit. Two dollars.

*Q.* Is that what you mean—is that what you meant when you said that we might see oil prices lift a little in response to——

*President Trump.* A little bit, yes. Two dollars. Very little. It's down from—let's say, \$135 down to \$69. It's dropping.

And everything else drops with—when—as oil goes, so goes everything else.

But anytime we hit—if we hit Iran, oil goes up a little bit. It's all right.

*Q.* Mr. President, do you think Israel——

*President Trump.* And you know what we're doing? We're denuking it. All right? We're denuking Iran. They're not going to have a nuclear weapon.

All right. One more question.

#### *Israel/Lebanon/Border Security/District of Columbia/Use of Military Personnel in U.S. Cities*

*Q.* Sir, do you think Israel should withdraw troops from southern Lebanon?

*President Trump.* Well, I talked to Bibi about that. Yes, I think they're going to. I think they want to. I don't think it's a question of me, I think it's a question they want to.

And they're getting along with Lebanon. They're signing deals with Lebanon—first time ever.

Marco, talk about that, if you'd like.

*Secretary Rubio.* Yes, we have an agreement that—and it calls—that's the goal, at the end. Obviously, Israel is concerned about their security. But the President did a great job bringing those two countries together for the first time ever.

*President Trump.* It's a big thing. First time in many years, right?

*Secretary Rubio.* Oh, most definitely.

*President Trump.* So we have a deal with Israel and Lebanon. And, yes, they'll leave. And I think it's going to work out very well.

But we're here for this, because Syria has turned around as fast as I've ever seen.

Well, actually, I turned the United States around very fast too. I inherited from a man who was not smart—not a smart person. We inherited from the man where—they were running this country so badly with the open borders.

Think of it. Twenty-five million people allowed into our country, and that includes 11,888 murderers, most of whom murdered more than one person. Okay? And we got most of them out, or we have them in jail, and we've done a great job.

Washington, DC, now, is considered one of the safest cities in the country.

If he came to Washington, DC, a year and a half ago, he'd fear for his life—even though he never feared for his life before—[*laughter*—because it was very dangerous.

But somehow his territory might have even been a little more dangerous. I joke, because you know he comes from a rough environment. Would you say that's right, Tom Barrack? It's sort of funny to think. I don't think he'd be too concerned with Washington a year and a half——

But we had a very, very unsafe Washington, DC, and now it's one of the safest cities in the country. We put the military in. We brought the—it's—Washington went from being an unsafe to one of the safest cities.

And crime is down 94 percent. We don't play games. And we removed over 5,000 career criminals, many of whom came in through the open borders of Joe Biden.

We did the same thing with Memphis, Tennessee. We did the same thing with—in Louisiana. You have to speak to the Governor, because New Orleans, the crime rate is down 78 percent, seven—in a little while. And they had the best Mardi Gras they've ever had. So we're doing a good job.

[*President Trump gestured to President Shara'.*]

And he's done a great job too.

And I thank you very much. Thank you very much, everybody. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:21 p.m. at the Beştepe Presidential Compound. In his remarks, he referred to U.S. Ambassador to Turkey and Special Envoy to Syria Thomas J. Barrack, Jr.; and Gov. Jeffery M. Landry of Louisiana. President Shara' spoke in Arabic, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter.

*Categories:* Interviews With the News Media : Exchanges with reporters, Ankara, Turkey; Meetings With Foreign Leaders and International Officials : Syria, President Shara'.

*Locations:* Ankara, Turkey.

*Names:* Barrack, Thomas J., Jr.; Bessent, Scott K.H.; Biden, Joseph R., Jr.; Erdoğan, Recep Tayyip; Landry, Jeffrey M.; Netanyahu, Benjamin; Rubio, Marco A.; Shara', Ahmad Husayn al-.

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