

Israel-Hamas war

Donald Trump to host Israeli leader Benjamin Netanyahu

Gaza ceasefire and Iran nuclear threat to be discussed by US president and Israel's premier at White House next week



Benjamin Netanyahu is the first international leader to be invited to the White House since Donald Trump's return © Saul Loeb/ AFP/Getty Images

Neri Zilber in Tel Aviv 4 HOURS AGO

Donald Trump will meet Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu next week in Washington, becoming the first foreign leader to receive an invitation to the White House since the US president returned to office.

Israeli officials said the meeting was due to take place on Tuesday, and would mark the first overseas trip by the veteran Israeli leader since the International Criminal Court issued [an arrest warrant](#) against him last year over allegations of war crimes stemming from the Gaza war.

The two leaders are expected to discuss negotiations over a permanent ceasefire in [Gaza](#), the Iranian nuclear threat, and the prospects of a normalisation agreement between Israel and Saudi Arabia.

In a formal invitation sent to Netanyahu on Wednesday and shared widely in the Israeli media, Trump wrote: "I look forward to discussing how we can bring peace to Israel and its neighbours, and efforts to counter our shared adversaries."

"It will be my honour to host you as my first foreign leader during my second term," Trump added.

The US president has generated outrage across the Arab world in recent days after

making repeated calls that [Egypt and Jordan help “clean out”](#) Gaza by taking in much of the shattered enclave’s population.

Netanyahu’s trip to Washington so soon after Trump’s inauguration will mark a triumphant return to the White House after several years of tensions with the administration of former president Joe Biden.

Steve Witkoff, Trump’s Middle East envoy, arrived in Israel on Wednesday for meetings with Netanyahu and other senior officials. He is also expected to visit Gaza to assess the fragile ceasefire agreement he helped to conclude this month, and which halted over a year of fighting between Israel and Palestinian militant group Hamas.

According to the terms of the deal, six additional Israeli hostages held by Hamas are expected to be released in the coming days, along with hundreds of Palestinian prisoners from Israeli prisons.



Hundreds of thousands of displaced Palestinians have begun returning to their homes © Mohammed Saber/EPA-EFE/Shutterstock

Hundreds of thousands of displaced Palestinians have also begun returning to their homes in northern Gaza, after international mediators over the weekend were able to resolve a crisis and keep the US-brokered truce on track.

Biden did not host an Oval Office summit with Netanyahu after the Israeli premier returned to power in late 2022, reflecting concerns over far-right members in his ruling coalition and its efforts to undermine the country’s judicial system.

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After Hamas's October 7 2023 attack on southern Israel, and the subsequent Gaza war, tensions grew between the two leaders over military strategy as the civilian death toll soared in the coastal enclave.

Yet US leaders across much of the political spectrum, including Biden, criticised the ICC's decision to issue arrest warrants against Netanyahu and his then-defence minister, Yoav Gallant, over allegations of "crimes against humanity and war crimes" in Gaza. The US and Israel are not members of the court.

Netanyahu ultimately did meet Biden at the White House last July, but only after Republican lawmakers on Capitol Hill invited the Israeli leader to address a joint session of Congress.

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