

US accepts 'unconditional donation' of Qatari jet, cost of retrofitting is classified: Sources

The Air Force plans to retrofit the plane for Trump's use.

By [Anne Flaherty](#)

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US formally accepts Qatari jet as new Air Force One The Trump administration is accepting the lavish 747-8 jumbo jet as a gift from the government of Qatar to be used as Air Force One.

Roberto Schmidt/AFP via Getty Images

The Trump administration has accepted the "unconditional donation" of a luxury jet from Qatar, with no stipulation on what should happen to the aircraft after President [Donald Trump](#) leaves office, according to an agreement reviewed by ABC News.

The memorandum of understanding, or MOU, was signed earlier this month by Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth and Qatar's Minister of State

for Defense Affairs, Soud bin Abdulrahman Al-Thani.

The deal paves the way for the Air Force to begin the process of retrofitting the plane -- dubbed a “flying palace” because of its luxurious finishes -- for the president’s use.

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Sources told ABC News earlier this year that after the president left office, the plan called for transferring ownership of the plane to the Trump presidential library foundation.



A Qatari Boeing 747 sits on the tarmac of Palm Beach International airport after President Donald Trump toured the aircraft, Feb. 15, 2025.

Roberto Schmidt/AFP via Getty Images

The cost of refurbishing the plane is classified, although lawmakers have speculated that it could cost as much as \$1 billion.

The Air Force referred questions on the deal to Hegseth's office, which referred a reporter back to the Air Force.

“Why would we ask the American taxpayer to spend upwards of \$1 billion on a plane that would then only be used for a handful of months and then transfer directly to the president? That doesn't sound like a wise use of taxpayer dollars,” said Sen. Chris Murphy, D-N.Y., during a Senate hearing in June.

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Air Force Secretary Troy Meink told lawmakers that the money to refurbish the jet would be pulled from a program intended to replace aging nuclear missiles, called the Sentinel intercontinental ballistic missile program.

But Meink said the Sentinel nuclear program, which is over budget, wouldn't be immediately impacted because it was being restructured.

Trump has long complained about the primary aircraft used in the current Air Force One fleet, which are Boeing 747-200 jumbo jets that

have been operational since 1990. The Air Force is under contract with Boeing to replace those aircraft.

“The aircraft is donated in its current condition (“as is”), without any guarantees or warranties, unless otherwise agreed upon in future arrangements,” the new memo states.

“The donation is unconditional, and the aircraft may be used or disposed of by the DOD in its sole discretion, in any manner it deems appropriate, so long as such use or disposal remains in accordance with [United States](#) laws,” the memo later adds.

Nothing in the agreement should be “interpreted or construed” as “an offer, promise, or acceptance of any form of bribery, undue influence, or corrupt practice,” the memo adds, calling it a “bona fide gift.”

The Washington Post first reported the details of the agreement.

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