



Written by [Paul Dragu](#) on January 22, 2026

Trump Backs Off Greenland Tariffs — Announces Future Deal Framework

President Donald Trump is canceling the tariffs he planned to level on countries that are resisting his aspirations to own Greenland. He announced Wednesday afternoon that a promising agreement over the strategic Arctic island was in the works.

“Based upon a very productive meeting that I have had with the Secretary General of NATO, Mark Rutte, we have formed the framework of a future deal with respect to Greenland and, in fact, the entire Arctic Region,” Trump [said](#) in a Truth Social post. “This solution, if consummated, will be a great one for the United States of America, and all NATO Nations. Based upon this understanding, I will not be imposing the Tariffs that were scheduled to go into effect on February 1st.”



AP Images

The president threatened to impose ten percent tariffs on countries that opposed his move for ownership of Greenland. The targeted countries included Denmark, the U.K., Norway, Sweden, France, Germany, the Netherlands, and Finland.

“Everything We Want”

In his social-media post, Trump didn’t provide details on the working agreement, including whether U.S. ownership of the island is part of it. Complete ownership is a clause he has framed as nonnegotiable. He [told](#) Fox Business about the working agreement:

We will have everything we want, we’re getting everything we want at no cost. It’s really being negotiated now but essentially it’s total access. There’s no end. There’s no time limit.

The BBC [reported](#) that diplomatic sources told their U.S. partner, CBS, that the working agreement does not include complete ownership.

The Wall Street Journal reported the working agreement might include mineral rights. [The Journal](#):

Negotiations that will follow are expected to include a potential revision of an existing U.S. agreement with Denmark that allows American forces to be stationed at bases in Greenland, in addition to giving the U.S. right of first refusal over investments in the island’s mineral resources, according to European officials.

The United States already has an agreement with Greenland that includes permission to station U.S. forces there. The Pituffik Space Base, formerly Thule Air Base, is operational today. There are about



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200 American soldiers there.

Europe Rattled

Trump's statements over the last few months have terrified the Europeans. He has said the United States will get Greenland "one way or the other" and "whether they like it or not." While he preferred to get it the "easy way," he said he was ready to go about it the "hard way." He has said that anything less than complete ownership is "unacceptable." White House Deputy Chief of Staff for Policy and Homeland Security Advisor Stephen Miller said, "Nobody is going to fight the United States militarily over the future of Greenland."

The primary stated reason for acquiring Greenland has been national security. In his latest statement on the matter, Trump mentioned that part of the working agreement includes details about the Golden Dome missile-defense system the United States is building. Apparently, Greenland plays a role in that.

The island has long been considered militarily strategic. Various U.S. administrations have tried to buy it, going back all the way to the Lincoln administration.

Denmark "Ungrateful"

Trump has said the area is now swarming with Russians and Chinese, and that it can only be properly protected with American defense. "The fact is no nation or group of nations is in any position to be able to secure Greenland other than the United States," Trump said during his World Economic Forum speech in Davos, Switzerland, on Wednesday. He brought up Denmark's swift fall to Germany during World War II, one that came about "after just six hours of fighting." He added that the United States then stepped in to prevent the Danish territory of Greenland from being taken by the Germans, which is true.

"But we saved Greenland and successfully prevented our enemies from gaining a foothold in our hemisphere," Trump said, adding, "so we did it for ourselves also." After the war, the United States gave Greenland back to Denmark. "How stupid were we to do that," Trump [said](#). "But how ungrateful are they now."

The Danes have stood their ground against Trumpian pressure. They have reiterated that Greenland is not for sale. Greenlanders, too, appear resistant to the idea of being under Uncle Sam's roof, if their leaders' statements are accurate indicators. The general consensus among the people who live there is that, if they had to choose a colonizing master, they'd rather stick with Denmark.

Payoff

There have also been reports suggesting that the Trump administration is considering bribing Greenlanders to join the United States with lump sums anywhere between \$10,000 to \$100,000. Danish Foreign Minister Lars Løkke Rasmussen has dismissed the idea. "I think there's no way that U.S. will pay for a Scandinavian welfare system in Greenland, honestly speaking," he [told](#) Fox News. "You haven't introduced a Scandinavian welfare system in your own country."

The Europeans have sent to the island a small collection military troops from Denmark, France Germany, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Norway, and Sweden. The move was outwardly framed as a show of strength against potential Chinese and Russian aggression, but the general understanding is that the troops are there to send Trump the message that the Europeans will indeed fight for Greenland.



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This saga is far from over. For now, Trump appears happy with the direction this is heading in. Whether that remains to be the case tomorrow is anybody's guess.



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