

# Trump Says He Intends to Impose 10% Tariffs on Chinese Imports on Feb. 1

*The president said the planned duties were a response to China's failure to curb fentanyl exports.*

**By Alan Rappeport**  
**New York Times**

President Trump said on Tuesday that he intended to impose a 10 percent tariff on Chinese imports into the United States on Feb. 1, a decision that is sure to escalate trade tensions between the world's largest economies.

Speaking at the White House, Mr. Trump said that the tariffs were in response to China's role in America's fentanyl crisis. Mr. Trump said that [China was sending fentanyl](#) to Canada and Mexico, from where it would be transported into the United States.

The tariff threat comes after Mr. Trump [said on Monday](#) that he planned to impose a 25 percent duty on imports from Canada and Mexico as punishment for allowing fentanyl and illegal immigrants to cross into the United States.

"We're talking about a tariff of 10 percent on China based on the fact that they're sending fentanyl to Mexico and Canada," Mr. Trump said.

At a news briefing in Beijing on Wednesday, Mao Ning, a spokeswoman for China's Foreign Ministry, said China would "safeguard" its interests. "We always believe there is no winner in a tariff or trade war," she added.

Those tariffs would come on top of levies that Mr. Trump imposed on more than \$300 billion worth of Chinese imports during his first term. Those tariffs were kept in place by former President Joseph R. Biden Jr., who [imposed additional levies](#) on Chinese electric vehicles, solar cells, semiconductors and advanced batteries.

Mr. Trump's pledge to hit China, Canada and Mexico with tariffs is expected to result in retaliatory action against U.S. industries. Economists have warned that a global trade war could cause inflation to rebound and blunt U.S. economic growth.

Mr. Trump signed an [executive order](#) on Monday directing various agencies to study a wide variety of trade issues with an eye toward future tariffs, but he did not impose any new levies immediately, as he had previously threatened.

Instead he ordered U.S. officials to examine flows of migrants and drugs from Canada, China and Mexico to the United States, and the compliance of those three countries and others with their existing trade agreements with the United States.

Mr. Trump negotiated a new trade deal with Canada and Mexico during his first term: the United States-Mexico-Canada-Agreement, or U.S.M.C.A. He also agreed to a limited trade pact with China that was supposed to reward American farmers.

He has since said that he wants to rewrite both agreements during his second term.

Mr. Trump and Xi Jinping, China's president, spoke last week and discussed trade, fentanyl and areas where the world's two largest economies could work together.

After Mr. Trump's tariff action against China in his first term, he signed on to a broad economic agreement in 2020.

Relations between the countries unraveled during the pandemic, which Mr. Trump blamed on China, and Beijing failed to live up to many of its agreements in the deal, including to purchase American farm products.

Scott Bessent, Mr. Trump's pick to be Treasury secretary, said during his [confirmation hearing last week](#) that he planned to press his Chinese counterparts to start buying U.S. farm products [as their government had promised](#).

The Treasury nominee also said that he would press his Chinese counterparts to purchase additional products to make up for what the country was supposed to buy over the last four years.

*Keith Bradsher contributed reporting from Beijing.*