

Trump Ousts National Security Adviser Mike Waltz

Waltz to be nominated U.S. ambassador to the U.N., Secretary of State Marco Rubio will take on added role of interim national security adviser

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Wall Street Journal**

WASHINGTON—President [Trump](#) is replacing national security adviser Mike Waltz roughly a month after he [put a journalist on a group text chat](#) in which advisers discussed a sensitive military operation, making him the first top official to lose his job in Trump’s second term.

Trump said on social media on Thursday that Waltz would be nominated as U.S. ambassador to the United Nations. Secretary of State Marco Rubio will step in as interim national security adviser, Trump said, and he will continue to also serve in his current role.

“From his time in uniform on the battlefield, in Congress and, as my National Security Advisor, Mike Waltz has worked hard to put our Nation’s Interests first. I know he will do the same in his new role,” Trump wrote on Truth Social.

Waltz [lost favor with the president](#) and senior advisers after the Atlantic revealed that he [added a journalist to a chat](#) on the nongovernment messaging app Signal, a crisis that dominated headlines and became one of the first major embarrassments for the administration. Trump declined to fire Waltz immediately, but privately expressed his frustration with Waltz.

Trump and senior administration officials, including White House chief of staff Susie Wiles, had been frustrated with Waltz even before the Signal debacle. Waltz hired aides that his critics said didn’t appeal to Trump’s MAGA base and struggled to relay the [president’s national-security priorities](#) on television—once seen as the former Florida congressman’s strength, according to administration officials.

He also was sometimes ideologically out of step with Trump, pushing more traditionally hawkish views on Ukraine and Iran, and clashed with other White House officials, people close to Trump said. Some on Trump’s team also found him imperious and condescending, particularly to White House staff, administration officials said.

The U.N. role requires Senate confirmation. Democrats and Trump administration critics pointed out that Waltz could face another round of questions about “Signalgate” at a confirmation hearing.

Trump has long cared little about the U.N. job, partially because it is in New York and he doesn't need to regularly see the envoy, and also because he disdains the organization. Rep. Elise Stefanik, the New York Republican, was originally tapped to be U.N. ambassador but [was asked to step aside](#) to bolster Republican numbers in the House.

"I'm deeply honored to continue my service to President Trump and our great nation," Waltz said after Trump's announcement.

Waltz's deputy, Alex Wong, is also being removed, people familiar with the matter said. The former aide to Sen. Tom Cotton (R., Ark.) and senior negotiator during Trump's first-term nuclear diplomacy with North Korea was seen by the president's allies as a Waltz loyalist. Wong had been attacked by outside Trump allies, who asserted without evidence that he was pro-China. Other National Security Council staffers Waltz hired are also likely to lose their jobs, the people said.

Waltz was planning to travel to Michigan on Tuesday for the [president's rally](#) marking the first 100 days in office, but Trump told him not to attend, according to administration officials.

Senior U.S. officials said Waltz had been marginalized during debates on key decisions, namely starting [talks with Iran over its nuclear work](#) and [brokering a peace deal between Russia and Ukraine](#). Steve Witkoff, Trump's envoy to both of those negotiations, and Rubio proved more influential in those deliberations, the officials said, noting that Rubio had recently been spending much of his time at the White House.

State Department spokeswoman Tammy Bruce said she learned of Rubio's appointment when reporters asked about it at a briefing on Thursday. "It's clear that I just heard this from you," she said.

Rubio, who was confirmed 99-0 by the Senate, has become a key Trump administration player. He's worked in tandem with Witkoff, and aptly defended the administration on television. The first Hispanic American to serve as the country's chief diplomat, Rubio has also positioned himself as a top advocate of Trump's hard-line immigration policies.

He has visited eight countries in Latin America and the Caribbean [to press Trump's priorities](#), including threatening Panama with consequences if the country didn't cooperate on U.S. security demands, and negotiating a deal with El Salvador's President Nayib Bukele to accept U.S. deportees in his prisons.

In his first three months on the job, Rubio led a [significant overhaul of the State Department](#). He also oversaw the dismantling of USAID, where he is now acting administrator.

The only person to previously serve as both Secretary of State and national security adviser simultaneously was Henry Kissinger under Richard Nixon. "I guess we're going to have another one," Bruce said.

Waltz, the former Green Beret who was one of Trump's strongest backers while in Congress and during the 2024 campaign, lasted just 102 days as national security adviser. He stayed in his role nearly five times longer than retired U.S. Army Lt. Gen. Mike Flynn, who was first to serve as national security adviser during Trump's first term. [Trump fired Flynn](#) for lying to the Federal Bureau of Investigation about contacts with senior Russian officials during the 2016 election cycle. They later reconciled and Trump has spoken publicly about bringing the retired three-star general back into his inner circle.

Trump cycled through four national security advisers during his first term.

Waltz had already survived one round of cuts to the National Security Council. Far-right conspiracy theorist Laura Loomer in April convinced Trump that Waltz had hired aides harmful to his agenda, leading to [the ouster of at least four staffers](#). Waltz kept his job, though the episode was indicative of how he had lost influence with the president and control over his own team.

Waltz cut a diminished figure after the revelation he had inadvertently placed the Atlantic's Jeffrey Goldberg into the Signal chat where senior officials like Vice President [JD Vance](#) and Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth debated coming strikes on the Houthis. Waltz also [referenced intelligence provided to the U.S. by Israel](#) in the discussion on the encrypted-but-unclassified system.

The report sent shock waves through Washington and immediately sparked questions about Waltz's future. Trump stood by Waltz, calling the Signal story overblown by the media as aides said the president had complete confidence in him.

Soon after news of the Signal chat broke, Trump let Waltz know in a one-on-one meeting that the national security adviser would keep his job.

But Trump continued to ask personal allies in the White House and Mar-a-Lago, his private Florida club, what they thought of Waltz, a sign that the president was considering alternatives.

On Wednesday, Waltz appeared to be using the Signal app on his phone during a Cabinet meeting at the White House, according to photos captured by a news photographer in the room. The photos show messages from Rubio, Witkoff, Vance and Director of National Intelligence Tulsi Gabbard. A Waltz spokesman didn't immediately respond to a request for comment.

[Hegseth has come under fire](#) for using his personal phone to relay information about the Houthi operation on a second Signal chat that included his wife. Some current and former defense officials have accused him of running a dysfunctional front office at the Pentagon.

Trump, as he did initially with Waltz, has insisted he stands by his defense chief.