

Prime minister says Greenland does not want to be American or Danish



Mute Egede, who previously said territory "Not for sale," underlined people's desire to be "master of own house."

Greenlandic Prime Minister Mute Egede said he was "ready to talk" to US President-elect Donald Trump at a news conference in Copenhagen, Denmark, on January 10, 2025 [Tom Little/Reuters]

Nuuk, January 11 (RHC)-- Greenlanders do not want to be American or Danish, the Arctic island's prime minister has said, after U.S. President-elect Donald Trump refused to rule out using military force to acquire the territory.

Prime Minister Mute Egede, who had insisted the territory was "not for sale" after Trump flagged his "ownership and control" intentions last month, expressed his openness to engage with the United States at a news conference in Copenhagen on Friday.

However, he also underlined Greenland's independence aspirations, which have gained momentum in recent years as Danish colonial abuses against the predominantly Inuit population have come to light.

"Greenland is for the Greenlandic people. We do not want to be Danish, we do not want to be American. We want to be Greenlandic," he said at a news conference alongside Danish Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen.

"We have a desire for independence, a desire to be the master of our own house ... This is something everyone should respect," said Egede.

"But that doesn't mean we are cutting all ties, all cooperation and all relations with Denmark," he added. He also noted that Greenland is part of the North American continent, and "a place that the Americans see as part of their world". He said he was open to holding talks with Trump about what "unites us."

"Cooperation is about dialogue. Cooperation means that you will work towards solutions," he said.

Danish Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen, who also attended the news conference, said: "The debate on Greenlandic independence and the latest announcements from the US show us the large interest in Greenland. Events which set in motion a lot of thoughts and feelings with many in Greenland and Denmark. "The U.S. is our closest ally, and we will do everything to continue a strong cooperation," she said.

Trump claims U.S. ownership "absolute necessity"

Trump earlier this week refused to rule out using military or economic force in order to bring Greenland under U.S. control. Trump said last month that "ownership and control" of Greenland was an "absolute necessity" for the United States, as it seeks to counter growing Russian and Chinese interest in the Arctic region.

Trump had previously floated buying Greenland during his first term as president from 2017 to 2021, even postponing a 2019 visit to Denmark after Frederiksen rebuffed the idea.

A "private" visit to the territory this week by his son, Donald Trump Jr, sparked further speculation that the president-elect would make a push to buy Greenland when he takes office on January 20th.

The U.S. maintains a military base in the northern part of the strategically important territory, home to 57,000 people.

Greenland was a Danish colony from 1721 until 1953 but is now a self-governing Danish territory. In 2009, it secured the right to claim independence through a vote.

[SOURCE: AL JAZEERA and NEW AGENCIES]



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