

The withdrawal stems from Executive Order 14199, issued on February 4, 2025, in which Mr Trump pledged to cut funding to certain United Nations bodies and reassess US support for all international organisations.

BY FRANKLIN DRAKU

A decision by President Donald Trump to withdraw the United States from 66 international organisations has sparked sharp reactions across the globe.

Some critics branded the move "outrageous," while others insisted it would not derail the fight against climate change.

The withdrawal stems from Executive Order 14199, issued on February 4, 2025, in which Mr Trump pledged to cut funding to certain United Nations bodies and reassess US support for all international organisations.

He subsequently directed the Secretary of State, in consultation with the US representative to the UN, to review every intergovernmental organisation, convention, and treaty involving US membership or funding, and to identify those deemed contrary to American interests.

"The Secretary of State has reported his findings as required by Executive Order 14199. I have considered the Secretary of State's report and, after deliberating with my Cabinet, have determined that it is contrary to the interests of the United States to remain a member of, participate in, or otherwise provide support to the organisations listed in section two of this memorandum," Mr Trump declared.

"Consistent with Executive Order 14199 and pursuant to the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, I hereby direct all executive departments and agencies to take immediate steps to effectuate the withdrawal of the United States from the organisations listed in section two of this memorandum as soon as possible. For United Nations entities, withdrawal means ceasing participation in or fund-

# US throws climate change campaign to the winds



US President Donald Trump. PHOTO/REUTERS

ing to those entities to the extent permitted by law," he added.

The announcement drew swift backlash from affected organisations. The Sustainable Energy and Environmental Coalition Institute (SEEC Institute) condemned the decision, adding that the US exit from the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), the International Renewable Energy Agency, UN Oceans, UN Water, and other treaties amounted to a continuation of the administration's assault on climate and clean energy efforts.

"It isolates America, damages our credibility, and ultimately hurts every American. Climate change is real," the institute stated.

Founded in 2024 to complement the Sustainable Energy and Environment Coalition (SEEC), a congressional caucus established in 2009, the SEEC Institute connects lawmakers with the private sector, civil society, and academia to strengthen dialogue and accelerate progress on climate and energy policy.

Mr Max Frankel, the executive director of SEEC Institute, emphasised that the impacts of climate change are undeniable.

"Far from protecting America's interests, leaving these agreements gives up our seat at the international decision-making table. We heard loud and clear at COP 30 in Brazil that the world

is moving forward with decisive action that will allow them to seize the economic opportunities of a low carbon future, with or without the US. Today's action only makes it more likely that we will be left behind," he said.

He added, "SEEC Institute was created to find the biggest, most durable solutions possible, and we will continue to do just that alongside members of congress, state and local leaders, and civil society and private sector partners, regardless of any roadblocks."

Mr Trump added that the secretary of state would provide further guidance to agencies on implementing the memorandum.

## Financial fallout

Secretary of State Marco Rubio defended the move, arguing it would end taxpayer funding for entities that advance "globalist agendas" over US priorities. He said many organisations waste resources on ineffective or hostile programmes.

"Many of these bodies promote radical climate policies, global governance, and ideological programmes that conflict with US sovereignty and economic strength. American taxpayers have spent billions on these organisations with little return, while they often criticise US policies, advance agendas contrary to our values, or waste taxpayer dollars by purporting to address important issues but not achieving any real results. By exiting these entities, President Trump is saving taxpayer money and refocusing resources on America First priorities," Mr Rubio said.

Yet David Widawsky, director of the World Resources Institute, called the decision a "strategic blunder." He warned that abandoning the UNFCCC undermines decades of international climate cooperation and forfeits US influence.

"Pulling out of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change is a strategic blunder that gives away American advantage for nothing in return. The 30-year-old agreement is the foundation of international climate cooperation. Walking away doesn't just put America on the sidelines, it takes the US out of the arena entirely," Mr Widawsky said.

## SOME AFFECTED ENTITIES

- 24/7 Carbon-Free Energy Compact
- Colombo Plan Council
- Commission for Environmental Cooperation
- Education Cannot Wait
- European Centre of Excellence for Countering
- Hybrid Threats
- Forum of European National Highway Research Laboratories
- Freedom Online Coalition
- Global Community Engagement and Resilience Fund
- Global Counterterrorism Forum

- Global Forum on Cyber Expertise
- Global Forum on Migration and Development
- Inter-American Institute for Global Change Research
- Intergovernmental Forum on Mining, Minerals, Metals, and Sustainable Development
- Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
- Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services
- International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property

- International Cotton Advisory Committee
- International Development Law Organisation
- International Energy Forum
- International Federation of Arts Councils and Culture Agencies
- International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance
- International Institute for Justice and the Rule of Law
- International Lead and Zinc Study Group
- International Renewable Energy Agency