

Mexico opposes renaming of the Gulf of Mexico

3rd February 2025



Creative Commons 2.0
via Dave*71 on flickr.com

U.S. President Donald Trump has ordered the renaming of the Gulf of Mexico. He wants the body of water, which is surrounded by the USA, Mexico, and Cuba, to be renamed the Gulf of America. Shortly after his inauguration on the 20th of January, President Trump said:

"America will reclaim its rightful place as the greatest, most powerful, most respected nation on Earth, inspiring the awe and admiration of the entire world." He added: "We are going to be changing the name of the Gulf of Mexico to the Gulf of America." The U.S. Department of the Interior declared that it "is proud to announce the implementation of name restorations that honor the legacy of American greatness".

The USA's Board on Geographic Names can change the name to Gulf of America on official U.S. maps. However, there is no international organization with the jurisdiction to mandate the global acceptance of place names. Mexico's President Claudia Sheinbaum has opposed the name change. She pointed out that the name "Gulf of Mexico" has existed for over four centuries. She also cited the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, which stipulates that a country's sovereign territory only extends 19 kilometres from its coastline. She retorted that if there were to be name changes, the United States should be called "Mexican America," as depicted on a map of the continent from 1607.

Sources: theconversation.com / aljazeera.com / reuters.com

Writing

All place-name changes should be the responsibility of the United Nations. Discuss.

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

president / Gulf of Mexico / Gulf of America / inauguration / awe / proud / legacy / geographic names / acceptance / sovereign / coastline / the sea / maps / continent

True / False

- 1) The article lists three countries as surrounding the Gulf of Mexico. T / F
- 2) President Trump ordered the renaming during his inauguration. T / F
- 3) President Trump said the Gulf of America would be awe-inspiring. T / F
- 4) The US government said the name change would honor a US legacy. T / F
- 5) The name "Gulf of America" will be used on all the world's new maps. T / F
- 6) Mexico's president said the name "Gulf of Mexico" is 600 years old. T / F
- 7) The UN says a nation's territory only stretches 19 km from its coastline. T / F
- 8) Mexico's president joked that the USA should be renamed. T / F

Synonym Match

(The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

- | | |
|------------------------|-----------------|
| 1. ordered | a. authority |
| 2. surrounded | b. putting back |
| 3. inauguration | c. encircled |
| 4. awe | d. state |
| 5. restoration | e. wonder |
| 6. jurisdiction | f. referred to |
| 7. cited | g. instructed |
| 8. stipulate | h. stretches |
| 9. extends | i. represented |
| 10. depicted | j. swearing in |

Discussion – Student A

- a) What do you think about what you read?
- b) Who should oversee the changing of place names?
- c) Have there been place-name changes you have disagreed with?
- d) What do you think of the name of your country?
- e) What do you think of looking at maps?
- f) What places on Earth would you like to rename?
- g) What advice do you have for Mexico's President Claudia Sheinbaum?
- h) What questions would you like to ask President Trump?

Phrase Match

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. body of | a. map of the continent |
| 2. Shortly after his | b. of American greatness |
| 3. America will reclaim its rightful | c. of place names |
| 4. inspiring the awe and admiration | d. United Nations Convention |
| 5. honor the legacy | e. of the entire world |
| 6. no international organization with | f. territory |
| 7. mandate the global acceptance | g. place as the greatest |
| 8. She also cited the | h. water |
| 9. a country's sovereign | i. inauguration |
| 10. as depicted on a | j. the jurisdiction |

Discussion – Student B

- What do you know about the Gulf of Mexico?
- What do you think about the name change to Gulf of America?
- What is awe-inspiring about the USA?
- What nations on Earth do you respect most?
- How great is your nation?
- What is the 'legacy of American greatness'?
- What is the legacy of your country?
- How has President Trump been doing since his inauguration?

Spelling

- udenuosdrr by the USA
- Shortly after his gtunuaraoiin
- inspiring the aww and admiration
- the eeirnt world
- the implementation of name raortiosetsn
- honor the ygclae of American
- on lafifoci U.S. maps
- no international organization with the niucjrtsdiio
- mndtaae the global acceptance
- which ptaestulis that
- a country's soiegrven territory
- as dcetpide on a map of the continent

Answers – Synonym Match

1. g	2. c	3. j	4. e	5. b
6. a	7. f	8. d	9. h	10. i

Role Play

Role A – The USA

You think the USA is the nation most worthy of respect. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their countries. Also, tell the others which of these is the country that needs to do better most (and why): the UAE, Switzerland or China.

Role B – UAE

You think the UAE is the nation most worthy of respect. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their countries. Also, tell the others which of these is the country that needs to do better most (and why): the USA, Switzerland or China.

Role C – Switzerland

You think Switzerland is the nation most worthy of respect. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their countries. Also, tell the others which of these is the country that needs to do better most (and why): the UAE, the USA or China.

Role D – China

You think China is the nation most worthy of respect. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their countries. Also, tell the others which of these is the country that needs to do better most (and why): the UAE, Switzerland or the USA.

Speaking – Nations

Rank these with your partner. Put the nations most worthy of respect at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- | | |
|----------|---------------|
| • USA | • China |
| • Mexico | • New Zealand |
| • Egypt | • Brazil |
| • UAE | • Switzerland |

Answers – True False

1	T	2	F	3	F	4	T	5	F	6	F	7	T	8	T
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.