

On his first day back in office, President Donald Trump announced the United States' withdrawal from the World Health Organization (WHO), reigniting a contentious issue from his previous administration.

Speaking at the White House, Trump criticized the WHO, claiming, "World Health ripped us off," and argued that the U.S. contributed disproportionately compared to China.

The United States, historically the largest donor to the Geneva-based organization, has played a crucial role in funding global health initiatives. Trump's withdrawal is expected to prompt a significant restructuring of the WHO and disrupt efforts in combating pandemics and other health crises.

This marks Trump's second attempt to sever ties with the WHO, following a similar move during his first term. That decision was later reversed by his successor, Joe Biden. Trump's new executive order not only halts U.S. government funding but also directs agencies to seek "credible and transparent" alternatives to the WHO.

The move comes at a precarious time, as fears over the H5N1 bird flu pandemic grow. The virus has infected dozens and claimed one life in the U.S., raising alarm about global preparedness. Meanwhile, WHO member states are negotiating a pandemic treaty—discussions now proceeding without U.S. input.

In addition, the Trump administration plans to dismantle Biden's 2024 U.S. Global Health Security Strategy, which emphasized disease prevention and response measures.

Health experts and international leaders have expressed concern over the withdrawal's potential to weaken global health coordination, especially as countries confront ongoing and emerging threats. The coming months will reveal the full impact of this decision on international health security and the WHO's future.