

Transcript: Mayor Eric Adams Appears Live on MSNBC's "Morning Joe" With New Jersey Governor Phil Murphy

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Willie Geist: Joining us now, New Jersey Governor Phil Murphy, and New York City Mayor Eric Adams. Good morning to you both gentlemen. Since it sounds like we're really talking about New Jersey here, governor, my home state, tell us why you'd like to see the World Cup in Jersey.

Governor Phil Murphy: It's very much New York City and New Jersey. We believe we've got the most passion for the game, the biggest stars, the biggest economies. The combination of New York City and New Jersey is an unbeatable combo. We think we've got it all. A great stadium in MetLife. All that goes with the glamor and the pizzazz of New York City alongside the character and grit of New Jersey. We think, the mayor and I, that we're an unbeatable duo.

Mayor Eric Adams: Well said.

Joe Scarborough: So Mr. Mayor, talk about how this would work. It's going to be in North America across three countries, but New York City and New Jersey would be a host city as part of that combination. Is that right?

Mayor Adams: Yes. And we're a team. Those who are soccer fans, the governor is the striker. I'm the goalie. We are going to win the game for us. This is a perfect combination. And when you look at all of the locations that FIFA is looking at, we really represent the global approach to this. We are the most diversified region on the entire globe. Many of the fan base in other cities are located here, they're expatriates. So this is a perfect combination for us. And as they decide which location to host these games, we believe we are in the running. And we are looking forward to an announcement to determine who the cities are.

Scarborough: Do we have the infrastructure for this?

Mayor Adams: Yes. We are excited. Number one, we have an excellent transportation infrastructure, which is crucial. We have the hotel infrastructure, which is extremely important. We have the best law enforcement apparatus with the combination of the Jersey law enforcement personnel, ours to keep people safe and move them about. This is a huge economic benefit for our region and we're looking forward to it.

Geist: So, governor, I remember thinking back, and Mayor Adams, let you come out in it too, when there was this bid about 15 years ago when Mayor Bloomberg was trying to get the Olympics to come to New York City. New Yorkers said, sounds like traffic at the Lincoln Tunnel. No, thanks. They were going to build that stadium on the west side and you know the rest of it. What do you think the appetite is first for you, governor, in the state of New Jersey to bring this big tournament to our state?

Governor Murphy: The appetite is huge. This is the world's biggest sporting event. We hosted games back in 1994 all the way through to the semifinal. I know I speak on behalf of the mayor and myself, we want to not just be a city to host some games. We want to host the final of this World Cup. But the appetite is huge. You'll have plus or minus six games. That's a half a million fans. As the mayor said, huge economic benefit to both New York City and New Jersey. This is a home run for us. And we're going to be co-hosting a watch party later on today. So we better darn well make sure New York, New Jersey is selected. And we're really excited about that.

Geist: And mayor, a huge fan base in New York City, obviously for soccer, not just among native Americans, but immigrants who've come here where soccer is so big in their country. What makes our city so great is the people from all over the world would make up a ton of fans for these games.

Mayor Adams: And that's why this is a real win for FIFA as well, because they are attempting to expand their fan base in America. This is where sports thrive and grow. We see it with baseball and basketball. And to be able to have a real foothold here is crucial. And they have built out a pipeline. Many young people grew up on soccer, allowing them to have the level of exercise that's needed, team work to learn how to work together. And so we are excited about having many camps and many festivities where people can really enjoy and participate in this amazing event for our region.

Scarborough: Mr. Mayor, a lot of talk obviously over the past year about crime in New York City, not just New York City, but across America. Are you able to convince the people that are going to be making these decisions that you're going to start getting buy-in from other elected officials? Not only New York City, but in New York State on issues like bail reform on those efforts you're making to get guns off the street. Will you get that buy-in and can you convince the host committee you can get that buy-in?

Mayor Adams: And that's a great question, because when we think about how do we get guns off our streets and keep dangerous people off our streets, this is one of the examples of why these moments are important, because you know and I know, whenever you attract these large events to your municipalities, people want to know, will people be safe and are you going to ensure that those laws we pass won't impact on that public safety? And so every time we put together a package, we present how well we are going to protect those who come here, but it sends a message to all those who are part of the criminal justice system that the actions that they take also will impact on the economy of our region. And I'm going to continue to lift my voice up and show how important this is.

Scarborough: Your vision on crime and the balancing police reform with tough law enforcement obviously supported by many New Yorkers. The New York Post, though, is suggesting that you and AOC are battling each other for the hearts and minds of New York Democrats. I know you've said some pretty tough things about progressives in the past. I'm curious, what's your reaction to that headline? And is there a battle between you and AOC?

Mayor Adams: Well, first I consider myself as a pragmatic progressive, and I believe that people have hijacked the term of being progressive. What we pass in our budget is clear progressive legislation to uplift every day New Yorkers. And this is not really about Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, the congresswoman. This is about a philosophy in which I believe Americans believe in. I believe in Americans' system of government. I believe in what we stand for. And I am not going after any elected officials. They have their beliefs, but I think the overwhelming of New Yorkers want safe streets, educate their children, support businesses so we can move people into the middle class lifestyle that they deserve. And that's what I'm focused on. And that's what we are accomplishing. And this is part of that. By bringing these games here to New York, we are going to continue to employ and we're going to continue to come out of this pandemic with real good solid ways of bringing our city forward.

Geist: Governor Murphy, we've been talking about crime with Mayor Adams. You've been putting some pressure on your legislature there in New Jersey in the wake of the unthinkable tragedies in Uvalde and in Buffalo on gun reform. What does that look like in your state and how might the laws change there?

Governor Murphy: Yeah. We have among the safest gun safety laws in America. I think we're in the top couple of states, but we can be safer. And so we've got a gun reform package 3.0. We've already passed and signed two significant packages of legislation, but we need to do more. Whether it's how you store your ammunition, how old you should be to own a long gun. Just like you take a lesson to learn how to drive a car, you should do the same thing before you're purchasing a gun. Common sense stuff. So we're pursuing that with our legislature. I'm optimistic, actually, that we'll get meaningful progress on this, but we also need to get progress in Washington. 85% of the crime guns that are retrieved in New Jersey come from out of state. And so as strong as we might be in terms of our laws, we're not an island. We need the country to move forward as well. And God willing, we will get that.

Willie Geist: We're working on it in Washington right now as the work continues at the state level. New Jersey Governor Phil Murphy. New York City Mayor Eric Adams. Good luck. We'll all be watching that announcement today to see if the New York area will host some games in the World Cup. We'll talk to you both soon. Thanks for being with us.

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