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TRANSCRIPT: MAYOR ERIC ADAMS APPEARS LIVE ON MSNBC'S "MORNING JOE"

Mika Brzezinski: Welcome back to Morning Joe. It is 10 minutes before the top of the hour. New York City Mayor Eric Adams announced last Saturday the city will open a fifth relief center for asylum seekers. The new center comes after Adams said the city is at a "breaking point" with asylum seekers.

According to figures released by the mayor's office, roughly 40,000 asylum seekers have arrived in the city since last spring. Mayor Adams says nearly 30,000 remain in the city's care. He has requested aid from both the state and the federal government. And Mayor Adams joins us now.

Joe Scarborough: Mr. Mayor, thank you so much for being with us. How serious is the crisis at the border and what pressure is it putting on you as a mayor of New York City?

Mayor Eric Adams: Well, I believe that when I took the trip to El Paso, you could see firsthand the impact of how it not only harms the foundation of El Paso, but look at Chicago, Houston, Washington, New York City. This is just unfair for cities to carry the weight of a national problem. We are going to open four more hotels, emergency hotels, we had to open HERRCs. This is a major financial impact on New York City and cities across this country that are receiving the brunt of it.

Scarborough: What have you said to White House officials about the importance of bringing more order to the border?

Mayor Adams: In coordination, I was told that we have an individual that's coordinating the operation, and as I shared with White House officials, why don't I know who that is? It's about having a real decompression strategy, looking at who's coming in and ensuring that it is really a burden by the entire country, not just a few cities, and just the pathway continues to lead to New York.

We have to have real comprehensive immigration policies, and I think that the Republicans have blocked it for many years. We have to come to the table to do so, but that's a long-term plan.

What's the short-term plan? If my house is burning, I don't want to hear about fire prevention. Let's put out the fire. And the fire right now is the over-proliferation of migrant and asylum seekers in several cities in the country.

Jonathan Lemire: So Mayor Adams, you were also elected, of course, to take on the challenge of crime. And we've talked a lot this week about guns and, of course, these terrible mass shootings we've seen across the country. Talk to us about where things stand right now and then ongoing balance of fight against violence in terms of both guns but also the crime. We see the front page of the New York Post here this morning — I'll hang it up — talking about how there are some here in the Bronx shopkeepers that there's a sense of feeling the police aren't doing enough, that they're fed up with NYC crime. Shop owners are hiring private guards to fight back. Is that a wise strategy? What more can be done here?

Mayor Adams: No, it is a wise strategy, because I say this over and over again, not only must the numbers reflect safety, but people must feel safe. There's a new survey that came out in the transit system, where riders have shown that they feel much safer in the system. Because we did the right thing, 1,200 officers placed in the system, different shifts, really zeroing in on those who are violent and those who are dealing with mental health illnesses.

We had a summit two weeks ago with all of our major chains to look at the repeated grand larcenies and larcenies that are taking place in stores and we're going to come out with a major initiative in that place. People must feel safe and we must make sure that businesses are safe in the city and that's what the NYPD is doing. But we have a real problem with recidivism in the city.

Now, the conversation is responsible and irresponsible. It is irresponsible to have 1,700 people repeatedly in our criminal justice system, a revolving justice system, juror justice system. We must zero in on them and take them off our streets.

Reverend Al Sharpton: Talking about summits, about three weeks ago, you participated in a summit. We had a National Action Network with state officials, state attorney general, DAs. And one of the things that I think you helped in coming out of that with then, which your Deputy Mayor Sheena Wright has been following up, is that those in the Black and brown community, that has the disproportionate amount of victims, are really not that far apart in terms of concern as how we get there.

And I think it's been unfair that some people have been labeled, like the majority leader, Andrea Stewart-Cousins, and the speaker and all like they just want to open the doors to jails and let people out. But at the same time, we've got to stop this violence, talk about how we really must have a synergy of saying you can't be progressive and keep letting people become victims. But at the same time, we're not going to give up our civil liberties in order to deal with this because some people have gotten hysterical.

Mayor Adams: Yes, and your quote the other day really hit it on the mark. I mean, you and I — you think about over almost 40 years of fighting for the reforms that you see people talking about now. This has been our life story, but those forms must be matched with public safety and

what we want to return to Albany and say, let's look at what needs to be done to ensure we zero in on recidivism. It's something that's really not mentioned often. We put in place reforms, particularly discovery, but we didn't finance it.

Reverend Sharpton: Right.

Mayor Adams: This is hurting both defense attorneys and prosecutors and we can seek the justice we deserve with the safety we need, and that's what we must target.

Donny Deutsch: Mr. Mayor. Great to talk to you. Want to talk a little bit about just Democrats in New York in general and how many believe that basically that we cost the Democrats the House by losing four seats. And the big miss there was missing on crime. How did the candidate, it's such an obvious issue, they just put up a chart. 76 percent of New Yorkers say crime is a very, very important issue to them. How did the entire party miss it so badly in the last election and ostensibly cost Democrats the House?

Mayor Adams: Well, I love that, because the party, I believe, articulates long-term solutions to a problem. And that's fine to do so and we should have a long-term plan. We should have prevention. But people are saying, what about right now? How are we going to intercede with that 16-year-old child that was stabbed, or that mother who was shot by a random bullet?

And I find that the party is often reluctant to talk about the success that they have in public safety. Democratic Party has sponsored and supported police by putting funding. The president came out with major dollars around crisis management teams, but that was not articulated.

For some reason, I think the party believes that if you talk about the proper role and balance of police in cities, that all of a sudden you're going to be stating that you're going to turn back the clock to go back to over incarceration. That is just not true. And the everyday American and New Yorker, they're concerned about what's happening on their block and we were not talking to the block.

Elise Jordan: Well, and to that concern about what's happening on your block, I have plenty of friends in New York City who are avoiding the subway still. Because there have been so many horrible instances, a lot of them connected to individuals who are suffering from mental illness and then injuries. There have been deaths by being pushed onto the subway tracks. What do you have to say to New Yorkers about the safety of taking the subway these days?

Mayor Adams: Well, actually, New Yorkers said to us, the customer survey that I believe the numbers are going to be revealed, they're saying they feel safer. They feel it's cleaner. They feel they're seeing less people with mental health illness that they can't take care of themselves. We took a very strong position that we were not going to walk past individuals who meet that criteria. We took a lot of heat.

But the reality is, everyday New Yorkers don't want to see someone on their subway system, or sleeping on their stoops, or in their hallways, on ATM machines, that can't take care of

themselves, their basic needs. And we responded to that and we're going to continue to do so. 1,200 officers in our subway system. We must be safe in our subway system. It's the lifeblood of our system.

Six felony crimes a day on average, 2.9 million people use that system every day. We're going to get rid of the six felonies, but we want to make sure people know that 2.9 million of their residents are getting to where they need to go every day because the NYPD's out there doing their job.

Brzezinski: New York City Mayor Eric Adams, thank you so much for being on this morning.

Mayor Adams: Thank you. Good to see you.

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