



Trump looks to remake America with sweeping second act



Donal Trump file pic

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North America editor, in Washington

Getty Images Image shows side profile of Donald Trump

Every new president begins a fresh chapter in American history. And when Donald Trump is inaugurated in a frigid Washington DC on Monday, he will be hoping to usher in a new era for this country.

The ceremony in the rotunda of the US Capitol, moved indoors for the first time in decades due to the bitter cold, will also mark the moment he starts being judged on action and not promises.

And he has promised seismic change as well as action on day one. At a raucous rally in the city on Sunday, Trump said he would sign a flurry of executive orders within moments of being inaugurated, covering issues ranging from immigration and deportations to the environment and transgender rights.

"You're going to have a lot of fun watching television tomorrow," he told the crowd here.

But even if his presidency begins with a serious bang, there are still questions about what Trump's second act will look like.

Will we feel the tectonic plates of power shift beneath our feet as he re-enters the White House? Can he deliver his pledged sweeping reforms? Will it be as apocalyptic as his opponents suggest?

Listening to some of his detractors, you would be forgiven for thinking the skies will darken and the birds will flee Washington as soon as he takes the oath of office.

Many worry he will try to rule as an autocrat and undermine American democracy. His predecessor, Joe Biden, pointedly used his final Oval Office address to warn of a dangerous oligarchy of unaccountable billionaires forming around Trump that threatens the basic rights and freedoms of Americans.

But no one can deny Trump, 78, has a clear mandate after his decisive election victory in November. He won the popular vote and the electoral college. He won a clean sweep of swing states. His agenda has the green light from voters.