

Ynet-News, January 17, 2025 – Friday 10<sup>th</sup> Month

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Government approves hostage deal with Hamas after seven-hour debate

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Israel names 95 PA prisoners to be released in first phase of hostage deal

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Spins have dissipated; we stay in Philadelphi & perimeter, Israel can return to fight

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Hostage release pushed to Monday, will coincide with Trump's inauguration

01.16.25 – Th- - - News – Thursday

Ben-Gvir threatens resignation over proposed reckless hostage deal

01.16.25 – Th- - - News – Thursday

Russia demands Hamas fulfill release of Sasha Trupanov as part of the deal

01.16.25 – Th- - - News – Thursday

Miles of tunnels and thousands of terrorists: Hamas still has two brigades

01.16.25 – Th- - - News Placed in January 16 spot – Thursday

Cease-fire in effect Sunday at 12:15 p.m. - 3 hostages will be returned to Israel

01.16.25 – Th- - - News – Thursday

PM thanks Trump & Biden for ending suffering of hostages and their families

01.15.25 – We- - - News – Wednesday

Amnesty International Venice presented "Gaza genocide"; backlash changed the title

01.15.25 – We- - - News – Wednesday

Trump to sanction ICC officials over arrest warrants for Netanyahu, Gallant

01.15.25 – We- - - News – Wednesday

Gazans celebrate cease-fire deal, Hamas terrorists join crowd

01.15.25 – We- - - News – Wednesday

33 hostages, at least 3 each week over 6 weeks, 30 prisoners exchange for each

01.15.25 – We- - - News – Wednesday

Trump pushed hostage deal: ensures Gaza never becomes a terrorist safe haven

01.15.25 – We- - - News – Wednesday

Russia sponsored wave of package detonations at airports in Europe

01.15.25 – We- - - News – Wednesday

Erdogan demands Israeli withdrawal from Syria, warns of unfavorable outcomes

01.15.25 – We- - - News – Wednesday

West Bank man arrested hanging signs inciting violence against IDF troops

01.15.25 – We- - - News – Wednesday

PA prisoner caught on body camera, smuggling notes in mouth ahead of release

01.15.25 – We- - - News – Wednesday

Hamas accused of stalling hostage deal, PA shift blame to Israel

01.15.25 – We- - - News – Wednesday

Israeli guards to film prisoners during hostage releases to prevent false claims

01.15.25 – We- - - News – Wednesday

Saudi normalization a huge priority to Trump & future of Israel

01.15.25 – We- - - News – Wednesday

Military jeep hit explosive device in West Bank, wounding three Israeli soldiers

01.15.25 – We- - - News – Placed in January 15 spot – Wednesday

Iran official alleges Israel sabotaged sourced nuclear equipment with explosives

01.15.25 – We- - - News – Wednesday

Hostage deal Phase II explained: What's next and why the silence?

01.15.25 – We- - - News – Wednesday

Phases, numbers & conditions | emerging deal as negotiations continue

01.14.25 – Tu- - - News – Tuesday

IDF launches airstrike on Jenin in West Bank, supporting PA security forces

01.14.25 – Tu- - - News      Placed in January 14 spot – Tuesday  
Supreme Court rejects appeal to terror compensation law; PA must pay victims

01.14.25 – Tu- - - News      – Tuesday  
ICC prosecutor tells Judges to reject Israeli appeal on Gaza war probe

01.14.25 – Tu- - - News      – Tuesday  
Katz introduces Haredi law drafting 4,800 first year, 5,700 in second year

01.14.25 – Tu- - - News      – Tuesday  
Warning: Iranians bait Israeli civilians abroad, to kidnap them

01.14.25 – Tu- - - News      – Tuesday  
Ben-Gvir & Smotrich announced they would vote against the hostage deal

01.14.25 – Tu- - - News      – Tuesday  
 Hamas list of hardened prisoners must be released when a deal is agreed

01.14.25 – Tu- - - News      – Tuesday  
IDF intercept Yemen missile early on Tuesday, launched by Yemen Houthi rebels

01.13.25 – Mo- - - News      – Monday      Full Moon 4:27pm  
Agreement may be Tuesday; most of 33 hostages on Hamas list are alive

01.13.25 – Mo- - - News      – Monday      Full Moon 4:27pm  
Hamas engaging in guerrilla warfare, using rubble for hidden explosives

01.13.25 – Mo- - - News      – Monday      Full Moon 4:27pm  
Annual 2024 report: 1,866 terror acts, 134 killed, 16,300 rockets, 399 drones

01.13.25 – Mo- - - News      – Monday      Full Moon 4:27pm  
Hind Rajab Foundation (HRF) filed ICC arrest of top Israel general in Italy

01.13.25 – Mo- - - News      – Monday      Full Moon 4:27pm  
IAF intercept a missile from Yemen to Jordan Valley, Samaria, no injuries or damage

01.13.25 – Mo- - - News      – Monday      Full Moon 4:27pm  
Key issues for 33 hostages; north Gaza, Egypt Corridor, hard-prisoners

01.13.25 – Mo- - - News      – Monday      Full Moon 4:27pm  
Emerging deal; 42 days IDF stay on Egypt border, 33 released for 100s of prisoners

01.13.25 – Mo- - - News      – Monday      Full Moon 4:27pm  
Knesset to approve 1 billion shekels for massacre victims, but it's not enough

01.13.25 – Mo- - - News      Placed in January 13 spot – Monday      Full Moon 4:27pm

24 dead since Tuesday: Wildfires continue to rage through Los Angeles

01.12.25 – Su- - - News – Sunday

Israeli Druze leader travels to US to rally support for Syrian Druze protection

01.12.25 – Su- - - News – Sunday

Israel strikes Lebanon smuggling targets near Syrian border, presented by monitors

01.12.25 – Su- - - News Placed in January 12 spot – Sunday

Biden urges PM for cease-fire before he leaves White House

01.12.25 – Su- - - News – Sunday

PA official claims over 3,000 prisoners to be released for 25 hostages in first phase

01.12.25 – Su- - - News – Sunday

Pro-PA critics claim Hamas rapes did not happen; victims died or have no evidence

01.12.25 – Su- - - News – Sunday

IDF intensifies West Bank operations; tactic plans to seize camp areas

01.11.25 – Sa- - - News – Saturday

Mossad, Shin Bet & US hope to secure hostage deal in Qatar

01.11.25 – Sa- - - News Placed in January 11 spot – Saturday

West Bank mosques used as training centers & sniper base to attack IDF soldiers

01.11.25 – Sa- - - News – Saturday

Hind Rijab Foundation barred from Denmark pro-Palestine conference

01.17.25 – Fr

Government approves hostage deal with Hamas after seven-hour debate

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Government approves hostage deal with Hamas after seven-hour debate  
Agreement ratified with 24 ministers voting in favor and 8 against, marking final endorsement before implantation expected to begin on Sunday; 33 hostages expected to be released as part of initial phase  
Itamar Eichner|16:49

After more than seven hours of deliberations, the Israeli government officially approved a hostage deal with Hamas early Saturday by a vote of 24 ministers in favor and eight against. This marks the final endorsement of the agreement, which is expected to begin implementation on Sunday.

The ministers who opposed the deal include those from the Otzma Yehudit and Religious Zionist parties, as well as Amichai Chikli and David Amsalem of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's ruling Likud Party.

At the meeting, Netanyahu said former U.S. President Donald Trump has pledged to restore military supplies halted under the Biden administration if the cease-fire with Hamas collapses and Israel resumes combat operations in the Gaza Strip. "This is significant because if we don't reach the next stage of the deal, we will have the tools to return to fighting," Netanyahu told ministers during a government meeting to approve a proposed hostage deal with the Palestinian terrorist group. "Trump is giving full backing for Israel to resume the war if the agreement is breached."

The meeting, which began late after six hours of deliberations in the Security Cabinet, aims to finalize a deal to release 33 hostages held by Hamas. The first phase of the agreement is set to begin Sunday, with Israel releasing 95 Palestinian prisoners in exchange for three hostages.

Netanyahu also addressed the timing of the deal, saying, "For months, we couldn't make progress—not because a deal existed, but because Hamas resisted any agreement. The situation changed due to the bravery of our fighters and actions we've taken in the region, including significant blows to the Iranian axis. Hamas remains isolated, which led to their decision to fold and accept this deal."

For the 33 hostages expected to be released from Hamas captivity in the first phase of the deal, Israel will release nearly 2,000 Palestinian prisoners, including hundreds serving life sentences.

The initial phase will span 42 days. Under the agreement, three hostages will be freed on the first day, four more on the seventh day and three additional hostages will be released each week. In the final week, the remaining 12 hostages will be freed, along with Avera Mengistu and Hisham al-Sayed, two Israeli nationals who have been held in Gaza since 2014 and 2015, respectively.

Earlier on Friday, the Security Cabinet recommended that the government approve the deal despite opposition from Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich and National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir, with the latter vowing to exit the coalition if ministers greenlight the deal. Other ministers opposed but were not eligible to vote.

Prime Minister Netanyahu sought to reassure skeptics, particularly Smotrich, saying that U.S. President Joe Biden and President-elect Trump had provided guarantees that if negotiations for the next phase of the agreement fail and Hamas refuses to accept Israel's security demands, Israel can resume full-scale military operations with U.S. backing.

IDF Chief of Staff Lt. Gen. Herzi Halevi emphasized that troop deployment in the Philadelphi Corridor would increase during the first phase of the deal, ensuring stronger control. According to him, the agreement is based on the force deployment map for the corridor that was approved by the Security Cabinet last August. Under this map, the IDF will be able to maintain a larger presence in the corridor than it had before the deal's implementation.

Shin Bet Director Ronen Bar warned ministers of an anticipated increase in terror activity in the West Bank, calling for proactive measures to counter it.

Halevi echoed the warning, saying the military is prepared to respond with full force if needed. He also cautioned that Hamas may use the cease-fire to rebuild its terror infrastructure.

Despite the risks, all senior security officials, including Bar, Halevi, Mossad Director David Barnea and National Security Council head Tzachi Hanegbi, urged ministers to back the hostage deal.

During the meeting, Barnea noted that Israel retains leverage over Hamas to ensure compliance with the deal. Senior security officials assessed that Hamas has an interest in respecting the agreement and extending the cease-fire as long as possible.

The Security Cabinet decision also drew attention to logistical issues, as debates over holding a government session on Friday, before the start of Shabbat, caused delays. Some ministers were prepared to leave written votes to meet religious considerations, while judicial sources clarified that the High Court would not delay the deal, even holding emergency hearings on Saturday if needed.

01.17.25 – Fr

Houthis threaten to resume attacks on Israel if Gaza cease-fire collapses

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Houthis threaten to resume attacks on Israel if Gaza cease-fire collapses

Ahead of cease-fire deal and hostage release, Yemeni rebels pledge continued support for Palestinians, vowing to 'expel the Israeli enemy'; departing from past statements on Gaza, spokesperson declares, 'The goal is to liberate every inch of Palestine'

Lior Ben Ari|12:17

Houthi military spokesperson Yahya Saree warned Friday that the Yemeni militia would escalate attacks on Israel if the recently declared Gaza cease-fire is violated.

Speaking at a rally in the capital of Sanaa, Saree claimed responsibility for alleged missile and drone strikes on Israeli and U.S. targets, including cruise missile launches at

Eilat and drones targeting Tel Aviv, Ashkelon and the USS Harry S. Truman aircraft carrier. However, no evidence has emerged to substantiate these claims.

Saree's remarks marked a shift in rhetoric. While previous statements called for ending aggression and lifting the siege on Gaza, Saree now vowed to "liberate every inch of Palestine and expel the Israeli enemy."

He added that the Houthis remain committed to monitoring the situation in Gaza and are prepared to act against any perceived escalation by Israel.

The rally was one of many pro-Gaza demonstrations regularly held in Yemen since the war began, with Sanaa hosting the largest events. Houthi leader Abdul-Malik al-Houthi echoed Saree's stance, describing the cease-fire as "one round in the confrontation with the Israeli enemy" and reiterating the group's commitment to supporting the Palestinian cause until "Palestine is free of occupation."

Critics accuse the Houthis of leveraging the Palestinian issue to divert attention from Yemen's severe humanitarian crisis, where hunger, disease and poverty are rampant in Houthi-controlled areas. Despite the criticism, the Houthis claim their alignment with other regional anti-Israel forces has yielded significant successes, and they remain ready to escalate if Israel reneges on the cease-fire agreement.

01.17.25 – Fr

Israel names 95 PA prisoners to be released in first phase of hostage deal

01.17.25 – Fr

Israel names 95 Palestinian prisoners to be released in first phase of hostage deal

First phase would secure freedom of 3 female hostages held in Gaza, contingent on government approval; if approved, first release set for no earlier than Sunday at 4:00 p.m. Tova Zimuky09:47

Israel is set to release 95 Palestinian prisoners as part of the first phase of a deal to secure the release of three female hostages held in Gaza.

The names of the prisoners, published on the Justice Ministry's website, are contingent upon government approval of the agreement. A Cabinet meeting to finalize the deal, originally scheduled to convene at 3 p.m., has yet to take place. If approved, the first release is set for no earlier than Sunday at 4:00 p.m.

Under the first stage of the agreement, 33 hostages, held by Hamas in Gaza for 469 days, are slated for release. In exchange, Israel will free nearly 2,000 Palestinian prisoners, including hundreds serving life sentences. The final number depends on how many hostages are returned alive in this initial phase, following over 15 months in captivity.

Under the deal, 210 minors and women will be released for five female civilian hostages and two children from the Bibas family. For five female soldiers, 150 prisoners serving life sentences and 100 others will be freed.

Additional releases include 110 lifers for nine ill or injured hostages, 30 lifers and 270 others for 10 elderly hostages, and 60 prisoners along with 47 re-incarcerated Shalit deal detainees for Avera Mengistu and Hisham al-Sayed, two Israeli nationals who have been held in Gaza since 2014 and 2015, respectively. Furthermore, 1,000 Palestinians arrested after October 8 will be freed, excluding those involved in the October 7 attacks.

Life-sentenced prisoners will also be released to the West Bank and East Jerusalem. However, Israeli officials stressed that convicted murderers will not be among those returned to these areas. Cabinet discussions revealed data showing that 82% of prisoners freed in previous deals resumed terrorist activities.

The government's deliberations follow the Security Cabinet's earlier approval of the deal, which included extensive debate. Israel's military leadership presented plans to ensure heightened troop presence in critical areas during the initial phase of the agreement.

01.17.25 – Fr

Spins have dissipated; we stay in Philadelphi & perimeter, Israel can return to fight

01.17.25 – Fr

As government set to vote on hostage deal, Netanyahu says secured US guarantees to resume war

Security Cabinet approves hostage deal after 4 hours, with Smotrich and Ben-Gvir opposing; PM says Biden and Trump guaranteed Israel can resume fighting if Phase II fails; lifers will be freed to West Bank and East Jerusalem, excluding murderers  
Itamar Eichner|08:48

After four hours of deliberations, the Security Cabinet approved a hostage deal on Friday, under which 33 hostages held by Hamas for 469 days will be freed in exchange for nearly 2,000 Palestinian prisoners, including hundreds serving life sentences.

The government is now set to approve the agreement, with the release process expected to begin on Sunday.

A statement from Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's office said the decision was reached after "considering all political, security and humanitarian aspects" and assessing that the deal supports Israel's war objectives.

National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir and Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich voted against the deal, citing concerns over its impact on national security. Other ministers opposed but were not eligible to vote.



The agreement has sparked significant debate, with data presented during the meeting showing that 82% of released prisoners in past deals returned to terrorism.

Prime Minister Netanyahu sought to reassure skeptics, particularly Smotrich, saying that U.S. President Joe Biden and President-elect Donald Trump had provided guarantees that if negotiations for the next phase of the agreement fail and Hamas refuses to accept Israel's security demands, Israel can resume full-scale military operations with U.S. backing.

The deal allows the release of life-sentenced prisoners to the West Bank and East Jerusalem but excludes high-profile murderers from entering those areas. During discussions, IDF Chief of Staff Lt. Gen. Herzl Halevi emphasized that troop deployment in the Philadelphi Corridor would increase during the first phase of the deal, ensuring stronger control.

President Isaac Herzog welcomed the decision, calling it "a vital step toward fulfilling the highest covenant between the state and its citizens." However, he acknowledged the challenges and sacrifices involved, urging unity as the country faces difficult moments. Ben-Gvir, however, remained fiercely critical after the vote, expressing heightened concerns over the release of prisoners to areas where they could return to terrorism. "I urge my colleagues in Likud and the Religious Zionist Party to join me in stopping this reckless deal before it's too late," he said.

In a statement released by Netanyahu's spokesperson Omer Dostri, he wrote: "All the spins have dissipated: there would be no deal if the prime minister insisted on staying in Philadelphi – we are staying; no deal if the prime minister insisted on not committing to ending the war – no commitment was made; no deal if the prime minister insisted Israel remains within the perimeter – we are staying; no deal if the prime minister insisted Israel could return to fighting – there are guarantees."

The Security Cabinet decision also drew attention to logistical issues, as debates over holding a government session on Friday, before the start of Shabbat, caused delays. Some ministers were prepared to leave written votes to meet religious considerations, while judicial sources clarified that the High Court would not delay the deal, even holding emergency hearings on Saturday if needed.

01.17.25 – Fr

Settlers to ban "West Bank", to mandate "Judea and Samaria" in US documents

01.17.25 – Fr

Initiative launches West Bank support caucus in US Congress

Congressional Friends of Judea and Samaria aims to lift sanctions from Jewish settlers in the West Bank and address the area with its Israeli naming convention

Elisha Ben Kimon|04:42

Over 20 members of the U.S. Congress recently attended a historic launch event for the caucus supporting the West Bank in Congress. The event took place just days before the inauguration of incoming U.S. President-elect Donald Trump.

Among the attendees were relatives of hostages, including ex-hostage Aviva Siegel whose husband Keith, an American citizen, is still held in Gaza, as well as Yarden Gonen, sister of hostage Romi Gonen. Other attendees included members of the incoming Trump administration, evangelical community leaders and representatives of Jewish communities in the U.S.

The caucus was initiated by Yossi Dagan, head of the Samaria Regional Council, in collaboration with New York Republican Representative Claudia Tenney. According to Dagan, the goal is "to deepen the ties between Israel and its friends in Congress and advance legislative initiatives supporting Jewish settlement." The caucus plans to promote new legislation banning the use of the term "West Bank" in official U.S. government documents, mandating instead the use of "Judea and Samaria." It also seeks to work with the incoming administration to lift sanctions on settlement activity and strengthen international support for the settlement enterprise.

Speaking at the event, Dagan said, "Today we start a marathon together — one that will lead us to victory: a victory for historical justice. Judea and Samaria aren't just about historical justice for the Jewish people.

"Samaria is the security belt for Tel Aviv, Ben Gurion Airport and the State of Israel as a whole. Judea and Samaria are also protecting the United States and all Western culture."

Tenney added, "We're working to raise awareness of the historical importance of Judea and Samaria in the U.S. Congress, aiming to unite voices across America and globally in support of the region."

Republican Representative Tom McClintock from California added, "Judea and Samaria are an inseparable part of the historical land of the Jewish people, with roots spanning thousands of years.

"Beyond their historical importance, they carry critical security significance. The events of October 7 demonstrated that Israel can't be secure without full sovereignty over its historic territories. The two-state solution experiment in Gaza has proven to be a failure."

01.17.25 – Fr

Confirmed list of 33 hostages set to be released in deal's first 42 days (six weeks)

01.17.25 – Fr

These are the 33 hostages set to be released in deal's first phase

Hostages' families receive notice of updated list confirmed by Hamas that includes Israeli women, children and elderly set to be freed after being abducted on October 7

Itamar Eichner|03:49

Following the signing of a hostage deal between Israel and Hamas on Friday, the IDF informed the hostages' families about the list of names Israel requested for release which

Hamas approved. The updated list included the 33 individuals, as well as others hoping their relatives — both living and deceased — will be released in the deal's second phase.

The list aligns with the one Hamas approved earlier this month, based on a roster Israel submitted months ago. However, the families weren't provided information regarding the hostages' conditions.

The first to be released are expected to be women abducted from kibbutzim and the Nova Music Festival: Romi Gonen, Emily Damari, Arbel Yehud, Doron Steinbrecher and Shiri Bibas and her young children, Ariel and Kfir. Subsequently, five female IDF lookouts captured at the Nahal Oz base will be freed: Liri Albag, Karina Arielev, Agam Berger, Daniella Gilboa, and Naama Levy.

The list also includes 10 men aged 50–85: Ohad Ben-Ami, Gadi Moses, Keith Siegal, Ofer Calderon, Eliyahu Sharabi, Itzik Elgart, Shlomo Mansour, Ohad Yahalomi, Oded Lifshitz and Tsahi Idan.

Additionally, nine other injured or ill hostages are set to be released in the deal's first phase: Yarden Bibas, Sagui Dekel Hen, Yair Horn, Omer Wenkert, Alexander Trufanov, Eliya Cohen, Or Levy, Tal Shoham and Omer Shem Tov. Also included are Avera Mengistu and Hisham al-Sayed, who have been held captive in Gaza for nearly a decade.

Hamas plans to release the hostages over 42 days (six weeks), with at least three hostages freed weekly. Living hostages will be released before the deceased. Under the terms of the deal, women will be released first in two stages: three women on the first day and four on the seventh day.

During the cease-fire's sixth week, Hamas is expected to release al-Sayed and Mengistu under the humanitarian category. Hamas thus far hasn't provided Israel with the complete list of living hostages, which it's scheduled to deliver on the cease-fire's seventh day.

01.17.25 – Fr

Likud defends deal: Allows Israel to return to fighting under US guarantee

01.17.25 – Fr

Likud defends deal: 'Allows Israel to return to fighting under American guarantee'

It is the first time the party has published an official statement on the deal. Claims it will allow Israel to 'maintain full control of the Philadelphi Corridor and the security buffer that surrounds the entire Gaza Strip'

Moran Azulay, Itamar Eichner|16:53

The Likud party issued a statement Thursday evening against National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir, in which it stated, that the "existing deal allows Israel to return to fighting under American guarantee" - the first time any official has addressed this, after a series of references attributed to a "political figure."

The party's statement against the minister, who threatened to leave the government coalition - at least temporarily - over the cease-fire and hostage release deal, also claimed that "anyone who dismantles a right-wing government will be remembered as a global disgrace."

The statement then details the reasons why Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu agreed to the deal, including that it allows Israel to "receive the weapons and means of warfare it needs, maximize the number of live hostages released, maintain full control of the Philadelphi Corridor and the security buffer that surrounds the entire Gaza Strip, and achieve dramatic security achievements that will ensure Israel's security for generations." Otzma Yehudit responded to Likud in a statement. "We expect our friends in the Likud to express appreciation for the ideological step of Otzma Yehudit, which stood by its values against the reckless deal, which endangers Israel's security, undermines the achievements of the war, and constitutes a complete victory for Hamas," the party said in a statement that also was posted on social media.

"This deal is a violation of all of the prime minister's public commitments to his partners and the Israeli public. It includes stopping the war, leaving the Philadelphia Corridor, abandoning the Netzarim Corridor, returning the terrorists to the northern Gaza Strip without inspection, and releasing hundreds of murderers with Jewish blood on their hands," the statement continued.

"As we said, we will continue to support the coalition and will not allow the left to overthrow the Prime Minister, but we will not sit in a government that makes such immoral agreements. We will remind the Likud that, even before October 7, the Otzma Yehudit faction came out against the 'Gaza' conception policy" (of appeasing Hamas). "Unfortunately, we were right then, we were right in many other cases, and I hope we are wrong this time."

The agreement stipulates that in phase two of the deal, which would take place after 50 days, Israel will make a full withdrawal from the Philadelphi Corridor. The agreement also stipulates that the temporary cease-fire will continue as long as negotiations on the second phase continue, which will begin on the 16th day of the first phase - and the mediators are committed to working within its framework to continue the negotiations. This clause calls into question the continued presence in Philadelphi if the negotiations on the second phase drag on beyond the first phase, and the U.S. under Trump may force Israel to continue participating in the talks.

The big question is whether incoming President Donald Trump, who has put a lot of pressure on Hamas and Netanyahu in recent weeks in an attempt to reach a deal, will actually allow Israel to quickly return to fighting after the first phase. According to sources in Israel, Netanyahu has reached an understanding with the Trump administration that he will back Israel if it decides to return to fighting if Hamas violates the agreement. The problem is that it is not at all certain that in real time the president-elect will give Israel the green light to return to fighting the terrorist organization, after promising in his victory speech that he "ends wars, not starts them."

In a post he published Wednesday night on his social network Truth Social, Trump also signaled that he was moving toward a complete end to the war. He promised to work with Israel and U.S. allies to ensure that Gaza "NEVER again becomes a terrorist safe haven," and he also promised to expand the Abraham Accords, which he led at the end of his previous term, under which Israel signed a normalization agreement with the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain and Morocco.

"We will continue promoting PEACE THROUGH STRENGTH throughout the region, as we build upon the momentum of this ceasefire to further expand the Historic Abraham Accords. This is only the beginning of great things to come for America, and indeed, the World!" he wrote.

01.16.25 – Th

Hostage release pushed to Monday, will coincide with Trump's inauguration

01.16.25 – Th

Hostage release likely pushed to Monday, will coincide with Trump's inauguration Deal has been officially announced, and prisoners to be released identified, but prime minister won't convene cabinet until every i dotted and t crossed; With Cabinet meeting likely delayed until Saturday night, release of first hostages delayed as well  
Itamar Eichner, Shilo Freid, Einav Halabi 14:04

The last-minute crisis toward the cease-fire and hostage-release deal has been resolved, but the government meeting to approve the deal has been delayed, as well as the first round of hostage releases.

Israeli officials said Thursday evening that the crisis surrounding the identity of the Palestinian terrorists who will be released in the hostage deal has been resolved. "There is a deal," they announced. However, a political source later stated that a final agreement has not yet been reached and, contrary to previous estimates, the government will not meet Friday to approve the deal, but only on Saturday night.

This means that the cease-fire and the first release of the hostages will not begin on Sunday as planned, but only on Monday. Monday is the day that President-elect Donald Trump is sworn in - a date he himself declared as the deadline for the release of the hostages. Trump will be sworn in at 7:00 p.m. Israeli time. According to the agreement, the first three hostages will be released on the first day of the deal's implementation, and four more will be released on the seventh day.

Senior Israeli officials said Thursday evening that it is likely that if a "final green light" is received from the team continuing talks in Doha, the political-security cabinet will convene Friday to approve the deal, but according to the officials, there will not be enough time for another required meeting of the government plenum, and therefore the first release of kidnapped women can only take place on Monday.

Friday's cabinet meeting is expected to be very long, and for this reason it was preferable postpone the government meeting until Saturday evening. Only after that will the list of Palestinian prisoners who will be released be published, and an additional period of time will be given for petitions to the High Court against the release of individual terrorists. It is impossible to petition the High Court at the end of the week, so even convening the government after the Sabbath will not change the course of events, and only on Saturday evening will it be possible to begin the appeal process, which they hope to shorten from 48 hours to 24 hours.

The political source claimed that there is still no final conclusion and therefore there is still no official decision on convening the cabinet and government.

"Prime Minister Netanyahu is adamant on finalizing all the details of the agreement before he brings it to the cabinet and government for approval," the political source said. "This is how he firmly opposed Hamas' demand to change the deployment of our forces on the Philadelphi Corridor and this is how he firmly stands against other demands from Hamas today, which deviate from the understandings reached during the negotiations. It seems that this insistence is bearing fruit, but until things are fully agreed upon, Prime Minister Netanyahu will not convene the cabinet and government," he added.

Despite the apparent postponement, the Israeli delegation in Doha, the capital of Qatar, is expected to return to Israel in the coming hours. The cabinet and government meeting was first supposed to take place Thursday, but was postponed due to disagreements that emerged at the last minute over the deal.

In the background is also the coalition crisis that threatens the Netanyahu government, and on Thursday evening, Minister of National Security Itamar Ben-Gvir announced that he and his whole party would resign from the government over the deal.

Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich also opposes the deal, but is not yet threatening immediate resignation and is demanding the resumption of fighting immediately after the end of the first phase as a condition for his remaining in the government.

Shas Chairman Aryeh Deri announced earlier this evening that he had received "a final announcement that all obstacles have been overcome, and the hostage deal is underway." According to Deri, who congratulated Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on the agreement, "the parties are now busy with the final technical wording."

Deri, who spoke at the annual Shas conference in Jerusalem, also addressed the widespread opposition to the deal in the coalition, saying: "I understand the opposition, I feel this pain, it's not easy to release murderers, but we all know what the commandment of ransoming captives is. We grew up in the seminary of Rabbi Ovadia Yosef and we know how important the commandment of ransoming captives was for him."

Deri's remarks came against the backdrop of a dispute that emerged at the last minute over the identities of the terrorists who would be released – including prisoners sentenced to life imprisonment. The parties argued over who is defined as "symbolic" – serious terrorists that Hamas has a great interest in releasing, and that Jerusalem does not wish to include in the deal.

The BBC reported that Hamas tried at the last minute to include the names of two "symbolic" terrorists imprisoned in Israel, so that they would be released as part of the deal. According to the report, this is an effort by the terrorist organization to project an

"image of victory" and restore its popularity in the Gaza Strip, which was "significantly affected" by the events of the war, after many Palestinians – including in Gaza – said that Hamas was responsible for their suffering following the October 7 massacre.

At the same time, a Hamas source told the Quds TV network, which belongs to the terrorist organization: "The differences and interpretations that were reversed regarding some of the provisions of the cease-fire agreement have been resolved." He said that the final agreement will be signed this evening.

Behind the scenes, a Shin Bet "battle" was underway in the last dramatic hours over the names of the prisoners who would be released - or, more importantly, who would not be released. Shin Bet head Ronen Bar and his team in Doha sat with the lists and insisted on hours-long discussions with the mediators about each and every name. Their goal was that the list would not include terrorists who were a veto from the Shin Bet's perspective, such as symbols or figures who could immediately influence the area, rehabilitate Hamas, or inspire terrorism. This is why the Israeli delegation was delayed in Doha, and this is what made it possible to move forward during the day and arrive towards the closing.

Another dispute concerned the question of presence on the Philadelphi Corridor, where, according to the prime minister's spokesman, Omer Dostri, the differences of opinion concerned changes demanded by Hamas in the way forces would be deployed along the axis during the cease-fire. Israel had earlier estimated that the crisis would be resolved. "This is nothing more than last-minute arm-twisting," said an Israeli official. The deal, he clarified, is "irreversible."

White House National Security Council spokesman John Kirby also said earlier that he was confident that the release of hostages could begin on Sunday, although "there are still some details that need to be worked out, and we are working very hard on them right now." A US official later told Reuters that both Biden's envoy to the region, Brett McGurk, and Trump's envoy, Steve Witkoff, were still in Doha, working to resolve the dispute.

Meanwhile, an embarrassing incident occurred this evening at Secretary of State Anthony Blinken's briefing on the hostage deal, during which reporters stormed in. "Criminal! You belong in The Hague," shouted Sam Husseini, an independent journalist and longtime critic of Washington's approach to the world. He was removed by security guards while continuing to shout. Blinken was interrupted twice more, and one of the reporters shouted at him: ""Why did you keep the bombs flowing when we had a deal in May?"

Blinken also expressed confidence in the briefing that the agreement would be implemented on Sunday, noting that he and other officials were working to resolve the remaining issues. "It's not surprising that in the process, in negotiations that have been so complicated, there would be problems. We are working to resolve that right now." He added that the deal needed to be fully implemented, and called for a plan to be completed that would provide Gaza with an interim government, security and reconstruction — and also ensure that the fighting does not resume.

"It will take a lot of effort, political courage and compromise to make that possible, to try to ensure that the gains that we have made over the last 15 months at tremendous and excruciating cost are actually fixed," he said.

A new poll conducted by the Institute for National Security Studies (INSS) shows that over 70% of Israelis support the hostage deal and a normalization arrangement with Saudi Arabia, including a path to separation from the Palestinians. An absolute majority of 72.5% of the entire Israeli population indicated that they would support a political plan by incoming President Donald Trump that includes the return of the hostages, an end to the war, normalization with Saudi Arabia, a moderate coalition against Iran, and a path to separation from the Palestinians. Only 14.5% of Israeli society as a whole indicated that they would oppose such a plan.

01.16.25 – Th

Ben-Gvir threatens resignation over proposed reckless hostage deal

01.16.25 – Th

Ben-Gvir threatens resignation over proposed hostage deal, calls it 'reckless' 'This deal will erase the progress we have made and bring an end to the fighting' Ben-Gvir said; Earlier in the week he said that 'with our political power, we have managed to prevent the agreement so far' Ynetnews|13:35

National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir denounced the emerging hostage deal in a Thursday night press conference, calling it a "reckless agreement" and threatening to exit the coalition.

Ben-Gvir criticized the proposed deal for including a withdrawal from the Philadelphia Corridor and halting military operations, warning it would undermine the war's achievements and fail to secure the release of all remaining hostages.

"This deal will erase the progress we have made and bring an end to the fighting," Ben-Gvir said. "If the agreement is approved, we will submit letters of resignation and no longer be part of the government."

He added that his faction would only rejoin the coalition if military operations resumed with the clear goal of achieving decisive victory and fulfilling the war's objectives.

Miles of tunnels and thousands of terrorists: This is what Hamas looks like after the deal Prior to the announcement, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's confidant, Natan Eshel, announced that Ben-Gvir has resigned from the government. Ben-Gvir has been threatening to resign from the government if the hostage deal reached between Israel and Hamas goes ahead, and even suggested that Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich join him in the move.

Ben-Gvir's statement comes in the shadow of the crisis in the negotiations after the deal was approved Wednesday night, but senior sources said that "there was no political connection to the crisis. There were issues on which Hamas tried to squeeze out a few



additional concessions - and was rebuffed. Regarding the schedule of discussions, it is likely that if we receive a final green light from the team in Doha, there will be a cabinet discussion on Friday and a government discussion on Saturday night. After that, there will be 24 hours for petitions to the High Court of Justice, and on Monday the implementation of the agreement will begin."

On Tuesday, after the breakthrough in the talks, Ben Gvir went on the attack and said that this was a "surrender deal to Hamas," and called on Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich to resign from the government if it was approved. "Otzma Yehudit alone does not have the ability to prevent the surrender deal," he said at the time. After a year during which Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu denied that Israel had torpedoed deals, Ben Gvir proudly admitted that "with our political power, we have managed to prevent the agreement so far."

01.16.25 – Th

Russia demands Hamas fulfill release of Sasha Trupanov as part of the deal

01.16.25 – Th

Russia demands Hamas fulfill promise: 'We expect the release of Sasha Trupanov' Moscow urges terror group to release hostage with Russian citizenship; 'Question of his speedy return raised during our regular contacts'; Moscow welcomes deal, saying: 'We believe agreement will contribute to establishment of independent Palestinian state with East Jerusalem as its capital'

Itamar Eichner|12:52

Russian Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova said Thursday that Moscow "expects the release of hostage Sasha Trupanov from Gaza as part of the deal."

Russia welcomed the cease-fire and hostage release deal, and Zakharova noted that "the question of his speedy return home was raised during our regular contacts with Hamas representatives."

Alex (Sasha) Trupanov, 29, a dual Russian-Israeli citizen, was kidnapped on October 7 along with his mother Yelena, his grandmother Irena and his girlfriend Sapir Cohen from the family home in Kibbutz Nir Oz. The three women were released in the hostage deal in late November 2023, after 54 and 55 days in captivity. Sasha's father, Vitaly, was murdered in the Hamas massacre.

Sasha was included in the list published by the terrorist organization earlier this month under the humanitarian category, but at this time a final list of hostages expected to be released in the deal has not been published.

Palestinian Islamic Jihad has released several videos of Trupanov from captivity, the last of which was about two months ago. In the previous video, also released in November, Trupanov addressed his family and spoke about the difficulty of his long stay in captivity.

He said at the time that "for a whole year my life has been in danger. My life has been in danger mainly because of the military efforts that are supposed to free us. The only good thing they did for the prisoners was the first cease-fire." However, the things said in the videos were likely dictated by the captors as part of the psychological warfare of the terrorist organizations in Gaza.

Russia has received assurances from Hamas and wants to make sure that Trupanov is included in the current deal. Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Mikhail Bogdanov personally spoke with the deputy head of the terrorist organization's political bureau, Mousa Abu Marzook. A few days earlier, he also spoke with the head of Hamas' political bureau abroad, Khaled Meshaal.

According to Russia, the Palestinians expressed their appreciation in the talks for Moscow's consistent efforts to guarantee the rights of the Palestinian people, as well as its position on the issue. The senior officials shared the Russian deputy minister's talks on a cease-fire early in the negotiations, and Bogdanov asked them to ensure Trupanov's release from captivity.

The Russian Foreign Ministry statement after the deal was reached said that "Russia praises the work of the Qatari and Egyptian mediators. Their diplomatic efforts deserve the highest appreciation and, at the final stage, representatives of the new American administration also joined the marathon of negotiations. We expect that the implementation of the current agreement will contribute to stabilizing the situation in Gaza, create conditions for the temporary return of the displaced and enable the start of reconstruction work on what was destroyed in the war. Israeli hostages and Palestinian prisoners will be reunited with their families, and we hope that the implementation of the agreement will be an important practical step toward long-term normalization of the Israeli-Palestinian issue, and create conditions for recovery in the entire Middle East, including in Syria, Lebanon and Yemen."

"We believe that the agreement will contribute to the formation of the conditions required to establish a process of a comprehensive political settlement to the Palestinian problem on a recognized international legal basis," the ministry continued.

"Its ultimate goal is the establishment of an independent Palestinian state within the 1967 borders, with East Jerusalem as its capital, while living in peace and security with Israel. We are convinced that there is no logical alternative to this approach, only the implementation of a two-state formula, which will be approved by the resolutions of the General Assembly and the Security Council, will help the people of the Middle East break the cruel cycle of violence and establish a sustainable peace."

01.16.25 – Th

Miles of tunnels and thousands of terrorists: Hamas still has two brigades

01.16.25 – Th

Miles of tunnels and thousands of terrorists: This is what Hamas looks like after the deal

Hamas still retains undiscovered tunnels, untouched brigades and thousands of terrorists, but much of its leadership has been eliminated; Despite significant IDF successes in Jabaliya, Beit Hanoun and across Gaza, the ground campaign is far from over and could continue for years

Yoav Zitun|10:34

Senior political and military officials are deliberately maintaining an air of ambiguity regarding the aftermath of the agreement reached Wednesday and the continuation of the fight against Hamas following the conclusion of phase two of the cease-fire and hostage-release deal. However, for the commanders involved in the protracted and complex mission, it is clear that further action will be necessary.

Despite the conspicuous silence from Israeli authorities, reports from foreign sources – left unchallenged by Jerusalem – and insights from former insiders suggest that Israel has acceded to Hamas' demand for an effective end to the war. The war, which had already largely concluded operationally after maneuvering in Gaza ceased more than six months ago, appears to be formally ending with U.S. assurances provided by both the outgoing and incoming administrations, as well as commitments from Egypt and Qatar.

Under the terms of the agreement, Phase One – spanning about six weeks – will see the release of 33 hostages. A negotiation window will follow this before implementing phase two, likely under a temporary cease-fire. These negotiations carry the risk of collapse, potentially reigniting hostilities sooner than anticipated, with dozens of hostages remaining in captivity.

Defense officials believe that Hamas or other rogue groups in Gaza likely will provide justification for resuming combat operations under any scenario, even if phase two is implemented. The IDF plans to withdraw from key areas, including the Netzarim Corridor, the Philadelphi Corridor bordering Egypt's Sinai Peninsula, and the northern bypass corridor between Gaza City, Jabaliya, Beit Hanoun and Beit Lahia – territory currently under the command of the 162nd Division.

Once the agreement is fully implemented, Israeli forces are expected to remain in a buffer zone extending one to two kilometers on average within Gaza territory. This area, where the IDF has leveled thousands of structures and agricultural fields over the past year, has largely been prepared above ground. Residents of nearby Israeli communities such as Kibbutz Nahal Oz and Moshav Netiv HaAsara now see significantly fewer Palestinian buildings on the horizon than before, particularly in areas like Shijaiyah and Beit Lahia.

The remaining task – detecting and destroying tunnels leading to the subterranean barrier along the border – remains a hidden and critical challenge, primarily in southern Gaza. Engineering units from the 143rd Division are engaged in these operations daily, a mission they will continue long after the agreement is implemented.

Long-term operations to diminish Hamas

Looking ahead, military commanders anticipate years of ground operations in Gaza to scale Hamas back to its original, smaller size – a state comparable to its stature two

decades ago, before the Palestinian Authority lost control of Gaza and prior to Israel's disengagement. Hamas still retains an estimated network of tens of kilometers of tunnels, particularly in central and southern Gaza. These tunnels could be used to restart limited weapons production, conceal thousands of weapons, and hide senior commanders.

Key Hamas figures like northern brigade commander Ezzedine Haddad and Rafah brigade commander Mohammed Shabaneh remain at large, poised to play central roles in rebuilding Hamas if given the opportunity. "You can't dismantle a terror army that's been built over 15 to 20 years in a single year," one experienced brigade commander noted. Hamas has also recruited and armed hundreds of new members, including teenagers, to replenish its ranks.

More than 15 months since the war began, Hamas finds itself at an unprecedented military low due to relentless IDF operations. Thousands of Israeli troops have been wounded in action, and over 400 have lost their lives in the campaign. Hamas's command-and-control capabilities have been severely impaired, its factories for large-scale weapons production destroyed, and many senior leaders eliminated.

Yet Hamas continues to mount guerrilla attacks on Israeli troops in areas like Jabaliya and Beit Hanoun, launch drones sporadically, produce propaganda videos and maintain control over the local population—a critical factor in its survival.

Geographically, Hamas retains two brigades in Nuseirat and al-Bureij in central Gaza, which have been largely untouched – possibly due to the presence of hostages in the area. Additionally, the organization has partially restored military capabilities in Khan Younis, the largest city in Gaza's south, where the IDF has not operated for over six months. Signs of recovery are also evident in Gaza City itself, north of the Netzarim Corridor, with approximately 100,000 residents still living in its partially ruined neighborhoods. Military officials estimate that response times to new hotspots will be swift – just a few hours to locations like the western edge of the Philadelphi Route or the heart of Sabra neighborhood. However, the human and operational cost of clearing Hamas from these areas remains a pressing concern. The ongoing offensive in Jabaliya and Beit Hanoun, which has lasted four months, has already claimed the lives of 60 Israeli soldiers and wounded hundreds, even as brigades like Givati, Nahal, Kfir and 401 Armored achieve significant gains.

The IDF does not plan to mobilize the 30,000 soldiers who participated in last year's peak operations, raising questions about future capacity. In Rafah, Gaza's southernmost city, the Nahal Brigade has already cleared large swathes, demolishing hundreds of buildings while uncovering a maze of tunnels.

While the IDF projects rapid response times to potential threats, the real challenge lies in the time and cost – both human and material – required to fully neutralize Hamas. As Israel moves forward with the agreement, its military leadership braces for a long and arduous road ahead, one defined by complex operations in a volatile and unforgiving environment.

Cease-fire in effect Sunday at 12:15 p.m. - 3 hostages will be returned to Israel

01.16.25 – Th

'Technical details' remain, list of prisoners not finalized: Despite deal, Israeli negotiators stay in Doha

Although a final agreement has already been reached, there are still details that have not yet been finalized; The cabinet will convene only after the negotiating team gives final approval and if all goes well the cease-fire will go into effect on Sunday at 12:15 p.m. - and 3 hostages will be returned to Israel

Itamar Eichner, Daniel Edelson, New York|17:27

Technical details in the agreement on the hostage release deal that is expected to come into effect in the coming days are still unresolved. The Israeli negotiation team, headed by Mossad Chief David Barnea, will remain in Qatar overnight Wednesday to conclude the details on the deal's implementation, including the final list of Palestinian terrorists who will be freed.

More than a year after the previous hostage deal collapsed, Qatari Prime Minister Mohammed al-Thani convened a press conference Wednesday night, in which he officially announced that Israel and Hamas had reached an agreement under which the cease-fire will begin on Sunday at 12:15 p.m.

Only after all the details have been finalized will the head of the National Security Council, Tzachi Hanegbi, summon the members of the Security Cabinet to approve the deal, and a full government meeting is expected to follow. The negotiating team will likely participate remotely from Qatar.

Although both the far-right Religious Zionist and Otzma Yehudit parties have said they would oppose the deal, it is expected to be approved in the government by a large majority. The final names of the terrorists to be freed will be released by the government secretariat on Thursday to allow opponents to appeal to the Supreme Court.

If everything goes as planned, there is an expectation that the implementation of the deal will begin next week. Still, the schedule is dependent on the ability of Hamas to carry out the release of hostages.

According to the details of the deal, a six-week cease-fire will come into effect, during which the IDF will gradually withdraw from the central Gaza Strip, and displaced Palestinians will be allowed to return to the north. During this period, Israel will release 30 terrorists in exchange for each kidnapped civilian, and 50 terrorists for each female soldier released.

The women will initially be released in two rounds, on the first day of the cease-fire, three women will be released, and on the seventh day four women will be released. Israel agreed with Hamas that the living hostages will be released first and only then the dead, out of a desire to release the living hostages as quickly as possible. So far, Hamas has not

provided Israel with the list of the living hostages, and is supposed to provide this list on the seventh day of the cease-fire.

After the women and the two Bibas children are released, adults over the age of 50 are expected to be released, followed by the wounded men, including Yarden Bibas, the father of Kfir and Ariel. Only at the end of the process will the dead hostages be returned to Israel.

For the older hostages, Palestinian prisoners will be released at a ratio of 3:1 serving a life sentence, and another 27 prisoners for each sentenced to different terms. In addition, 50 wounded Hamas members will be allowed to cross daily through the Rafah crossing into Egypt with escorts, and each of them will be required to obtain permission from Israel and Egypt. Wounded civilians also will be allowed to leave.

In the sixth week of the cease-fire, Hamas is scheduled to release long-held hostages Hisham al-Sayed and Abra Mengistu – who will be released under the category of the sick and wounded – and Israel will release 47 prisoners from the Shalit deal in exchange for their release.

In total, 210 Palestinian minors and women will be released for five civilian hostages and the two Bibas children; 150 prisoners serving life sentences and 100 additional prisoners will be released for the five abducted female soldiers; 110 serving life sentences and 100 additional prisoners will be released for the nine sick and wounded hostages; 30 serving life sentences and 270 additional prisoners will be released for the 10 adult hostages; 60 prisoners and 47 released in the Shalit deal who were re-imprisoned will be released for Mengistu and al-Sayed; and 1,000 Palestinians who were detained since October 8 and did not participate in the massacre will be released.

A total of 290 life prisoners and 1,687 other prisoners and detainees will be released, but the final number depends on how many hostages return alive. Initially, Israel resisted releasing prisoners in exchange for dead bodies, but ultimately compromised on a limited release. The murderous terrorists will not be released to the West Bank but will be deported to a third country of their choice – Qatar, Turkey, Algeria or another country. Prisoners who do not have blood on their hands will be able to return to their homes in the West Bank. In addition, Israel is also preparing to return the bodies of Palestinian terrorists to Gaza.

During the first 42 days of the cease-fire, Israel will maintain a 700-meter security zone in the Gaza Strip, and will control the Philadelphi and Netzarim corridors - but there will also be a gradual withdrawal of the IDF from the rest of Gaza areas. As part of the agreement, Gaza residents will be able to return to the northern Gaza Strip, but they will not be allowed to return armed or bring in weapons.

The deal includes security arrangements regarding a mechanism that will inspect vehicles and freight wagons on the Netzarim Corridor, which crosses the Strip at its width. According to the plan, an American company will carry out the inspection. On the seventh day, displaced persons will be allowed to return to the northern Gaza Strip, without weapons and without being searched. In addition, vehicles will be allowed to pass north, which will be inspected by a private company.

As part of the agreement, there will be a significant increase in the amount of humanitarian aid that will be brought into Gaza, to about 600 trucks per day. Israel also agreed to stop intelligence gathering in Gaza during the days of the release of the hostages.

Negotiations on the second phase will begin by the 16th day of the first phase, during which all remaining live hostages, including the soldiers, are expected to be released - at which time a permanent cease-fire also will come into effect and there will be a full withdrawal of IDF forces. In the third phase, all dead hostages will be returned and, according to the agreement, the rehabilitation and rebuilding of the Strip will begin under the supervision of Egypt, Qatar and the UN.

The handshakes between the parties were delayed until the last minute, and even after the announcement that a deal had been reached, the Prime Minister's Office rushed to issue a clarification statement stating that "in light of Prime Minister Netanyahu's firm stance, Hamas backed down on its demand at the last minute to change the deployment of forces on the Philadelphi Corridor. However, there are still "a number of clauses in the hostage-ceasefire deal that have yet to be finally agreed upon," and that "the details will be finalized tonight."

Prime Minister's spokesman Omer Dostri also noted that "the reports of a 'withdrawal from the Philadelphi Corridor' are a complete lie. Prime Minister Netanyahu has not given up a millimeter of Israeli control over the Philadelphi Corridor."

However, according to the disclosed agreement, Israel will gradually reduce its forces on the Philadelphi Corridor during the first phase of the deal - and will complete the withdrawal no later than the 50th day.

'Israel made it difficult, Hamas was the main obstacle'

After an agreement was reached on the details of the hostage deal, U.S. President Joe Biden, who had been involved in the negotiations for the past year, also officially announced that Israel and Hamas had reached an agreement. Other senior American officials who were partners in the efforts also gave briefings and congratulated the sides on reaching the long-awaited goal.

A senior White House official involved in the talks shared behind-the-scenes details. "On May 27, President Biden presented the plan that led to a cease-fire in Gaza and the release in the first phase of women, children, the elderly, the wounded and the sick among the hostages."

In fact, the deal approved Wednesday night is similar to the one Biden presented last summer.

"We had intensive talks about this deal that was approved a few months ago," the official said, "but the talks stalled on August 31, when Hirsh Goldberg-Polin and five other hostages were killed in the tunnel in Rafah."

According to the official, after the murder of the six hostages, the Americans changed their strategy and focused on the northern border in order to "push out" Hezbollah. "Since October, we have been holding talks with Prime Minister Netanyahu and his national security team regarding the effects of the situation in Lebanon on the deal to release the hostages," the senior official said. "During an important visit on November 27, we

reached a cease-fire agreement in Lebanon, which led to more intensive engagement in the arrangement for the release of the hostages in Gaza."

"On December 12, during a visit to Israel, we discussed for hours the acceleration of efforts," the official added. "The changes in the region, including the isolation of Hamas, helped to move forward. By the end of December, Hamas agreed to provide a list of 33 hostages for release, which allowed for progress. From January 5 until today, we have been working on the final details, including cease-fire agreements, force deployment, Hamas conditions, humanitarian aid and lists of Palestinian prisoners to be released."

Steve Witkoff, President-elect Donald Trump's designated Middle East envoy, who arrived in Israel on a surprise visit on Saturday, helped finalize the final details, the official said. "For an entire night until 3 a.m., the negotiating teams, the Americans, the Israelis, the Qataris and the Egyptians, were coordinating to ensure that the agreement could be completed Wednesday."

U.S. State Department spokesman Matthew Miller hinted at another briefing for reporters that the move to the second phase of the agreement is not certain. "To get from the first phase to the second phase, Egypt and Qatar need to push Hamas, and the U.S. needs to push Israel - these are promises that we cannot keep in the five days remaining until the new administration," Miller said.

"Therefore," Miller explained, "it is critical that all parties involved see that the United States is in the room and that when it makes promises, these are long-term promises. The involvement of President-elect Donald Trump's team in the negotiations was necessary to reach a signing. This was an unusual conduct and we greatly appreciate the team's involvement."

Miller also shared the difficulties that preceded reaching an agreement. "There were times when we came to the Israeli government and said, 'You're pushing too hard and we're asking you to back off,'" he said. A day after National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir admitted that Israel had torpedoed deals, Miller said that "there were times when Israel presented new conditions and new proposals that made it difficult to reach an agreement - just like Hamas did."

"That's the nature of negotiations," he said. "But in the last five, six months, it was Hamas that wasn't willing to negotiate - and for a period, after Sinwar's elimination, it couldn't either. We thought we were very close to a deal in July-August, but then we saw that Hamas simply wouldn't budge. Israel was willing to discuss and Hamas wasn't. Hamas was undoubtedly the main obstacle, especially since August."

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, who has frequently criticized Israel since the outbreak of the war, also welcomed the declaration of the cease-fire. "I commend the mediators - Egypt, Qatar and the United States - for their dedicated efforts in formulating the agreement," he said Wednesday evening. "Their uncompromising commitment to finding a diplomatic solution was critical to this achievement. I call on all parties to uphold their commitments and ensure that the agreement is fully implemented."

In his official statement, the UN Secretary-General focused on "alleviating the immense suffering" caused to the Palestinians. "It is essential that the cease-fire removes the significant security and political obstacles that prevent the delivery of aid throughout



Gaza, so that we can significantly increase the urgent humanitarian support that saves lives. The humanitarian situation is at catastrophic levels," he said.

"This agreement is a critical first step, but we must also harness all efforts to advance broader goals, including preserving the unity, contiguity and integrity of the occupied Palestinian territory," Guterres said. "I urge the parties and all relevant partners to seize this opportunity to establish a credible political path for a better future for Palestinians, Israelis and the region."

He said: "Ending the occupation and achieving an agreed-upon two-state solution, in which Israel and Palestine live side-by-side in peace and security, in accordance with international law, relevant UN resolutions and previous agreements, remains an urgent priority. Only through a viable two-state solution can the aspirations of both peoples be realized."

01.16.25 – Th

PM thanks Trump & Biden for ending suffering of hostages and their families

01.16.25 – Th

Netanyahu thanks Trump 'for ending suffering of hostages and their families'

Prime minister thanks incoming US president for his push toward the deal, emphasizing he is 'committed to bringing back all the hostages'; The two agree to meet 'soon' in Washington; Netanyahu also spoke with and thanked Biden

Itamar Eichner|16:27

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu spoke on Wednesday with U.S. President-elect Donald Trump and with President Joe Biden. In a statement released by the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) on Wednesday night, Netanyahu was said to lavish Trump with compliments. According to the statement, Netanyahu "thanked the president-elect for his assistance in advancing the release of hostages and for helping Israel bring an end to the suffering of dozens of hostages and their families."

The statement said that Netanyahu is committed to returning all of the hostages "however he can, and commended the U.S. President-elect for his remarks that the U.S. would work with Israel to ensure that Gaza will never be a haven for terrorism." The statement went on to say that the two men agreed to meet in Washington soon, and ended by saying that Netanyahu also spoke with and thanked Biden for his help in advancing the deal.

Earlier Trump celebrated the agreement in a post on his Truth Social platform. "We have a deal for the hostages in the Middle East. They will be released shortly. Thank you." He said he was pleased that the hostages would soon be returning home. "With this deal in place, my National Security team, through the efforts of Special Envoy to the Middle East, Steve Witkoff, will continue to work closely with Israel and our Allies to make sure Gaza NEVER again becomes a terrorist safe haven. We will continue promoting PEACE THROUGH STRENGTH throughout the region, as we build upon the momentum of this

cease-fire to further expand the Historic Abraham Accords. This is only the beginning of great things to come for America, and indeed, the World!"

Biden also expressed his pleasure at the agreement reached in Qatar in an announcement from the White House. "I laid out the precise contours of this plan on May 31, 2024, after which it was endorsed unanimously by the UN Security Council. It is the result not only of the extreme pressure that Hamas has been under and the changed regional equation after a ceasefire in Lebanon and weakening of Iran — but also of dogged and painstaking American diplomacy. My diplomacy never ceased in their efforts to get this done," he said.

The Security Cabinet is expected to approve the agreement on Thursday despite the objection to the deal by both Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich's Religious Zionism Party and National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir's Otzma Yehudit Party.

01.15.25 – We

Amnesty International Venice presented “Gaza genocide”; backlash changed the title

01.15.25 – We

Amnesty International Venice event to present Gaza 'genocide' report breeds hate and anger

The event's use of the term 'genocide' drew backlash from Venice's Jewish community, leading to venue changes and rising tensions

Giorgia Valente, The Media Line|15:54

Venice has become the center of a heated debate following Amnesty International's recent event aimed at presenting its findings on alleged genocide in Gaza. The controversy erupted over the event's original title, “You Feel Like You Are Subhuman: The Genocide of Israel Against the Palestinian People in Gaza,” which some deemed inflammatory. This sparked venue changes and a broader discussion on freedom of expression versus cultural sensitivity.

Amnesty International had planned the event for January 9, 2025, at the Venetian Athenaeum to present its report on the situation in Gaza over the past 15 months. However, the use of the term “genocide” provoked immediate backlash from the local Jewish community, which argued that it was provocative and trivialized their historical experiences.

“This whole situation reminded me of Germany in 1933. We live in an historical moment in which hatred toward Jews is growing stronger than ever. Not only did Jews face the Shoah [Holocaust] in the past, but worldwide they are still contested,” explained Paolo Navarro Dina, vice president of the Jewish Community of Venice.

“The flyer Amnesty distributed mentioned the word ‘genocide,’ which trivializes our history. So, as the Jewish community, we asked the Venetian Athenaeum to opt for a different term, without opposing the event per se,” he added.

“After nine months of investigation, we concluded that Israel committed three acts of genocide, as defined by the 1948 Convention,” said Riccardo Noury, spokesperson for Amnesty Italy. “This was not a term we used lightly,” he added. The Venetian Athenaeum ultimately withdrew its support for the event, citing concerns over “public order.”

“We criticized the mention of genocide, but we had no intention of censoring or canceling the event. This was the Athenaeum’s decision, not ours, but the way it was handled suggested otherwise,” Navarro Dina explained.

The event was later moved to the University of Ca’ Foscari on the same date, drawing a crowd of about 500 people. However, it was presented under a different title:

“Presentation and Discussion of the Report of Amnesty International Regarding the Israeli Military Campaign in Gaza” – suggesting the university’s intention to use more neutral language.

We criticized the mention of genocide, but we had no intention of censoring or canceling the event

“Without us knowing, the title was changed, but we still achieved our goal of sharing our findings with a larger audience than expected, despite the controversy that initially aimed to prevent the event by shifting the focus from this genocide to antisemitism,” Noury explained.

“It is not a matter of measuring the number of victims; it is about recognizing that a state has committed acts prohibited by international law. It is our job to report it, just as we have in other international cases, such as Rwanda, Bosnia, Cambodia, and the Yazidis,” he added.

Amnesty rejected accusations that its report incited hatred or antisemitism.

“Antisemitism is a violation of human rights. It is unacceptable to accuse an organization like ours, which defends human rights, of being antisemitic,” countered Noury.

Following the controversy, the Jewish community reported receiving hate mail and threats, escalating tensions.

“We are facing hate unfairly and have received several letters. These people are not even anonymous—they write their full names – so we are still checking who they are,”

Navarro Dina said.

Messages ranged from accusations of political manipulation to more serious threats.

“Some letters accused us of controlling political and economic power to silence counter-narratives, while others contained statements like, ‘You will end up in hell and be finally condemned,’” Navarro Dina revealed.

“The overall atmosphere is heavy; we just witnessed the recent events in Bologna. I want to remind everyone that, most of the time, hatred towards Israel hides a far uglier facade,” Navarro Dina concluded.

There’s an epidemic of anger and division today, for sure, and we condemn any form of hate towards anyone

Amnesty distanced itself from these incidents and stressed that addressing uncomfortable truths is essential to protecting human rights.

“There’s an epidemic of anger and division today, for sure, and we condemn any form of hate towards anyone. But equating our work with antisemitism undermines our pursuit of justice,” Noury concluded.

This article is written by Giorgia Valente and reprinted with permission from The Media Line

01.15.25 – We

Trump to sanction ICC officials over arrest warrants for Netanyahu, Gallant

01.15.25 – We

Trump administration plans ICC sanctions over arrest warrants for Netanyahu, Gallant  
Trump administration is preparing sanctions against ICC officials following arrest warrants for prime minister and former defense minister; Measures include freezing assets and travel bans, aiming to pressure the court to withdraw the warrants and halt proceedings

Itamar Eichner|15:23

Israel and the United States are coordinating an extensive sanctions plan targeting judges and officials of the International Criminal Court (ICC) in response to the issuance of arrest warrants against Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and former Defense Minister Yoav Gallant. Sanctions are set to take effect on January 20, President-elect Donald Trump's first day back in office.

The U.S. is reportedly preparing severe measures against ICC Chief Prosecutor Karim Khan, as well as judges and staff involved in the case. These include entry bans to the United States and the freezing of bank accounts, which would also hinder their ability to use credit cards in Europe. According to a senior Israeli official, these actions resemble sanctions previously imposed on violent West Bank settlers, which effectively barred them from using credit cards in Israeli banks due to fears of repercussions from the U.S. Treasury.

In a second phase, additional sanctions are being pushed forward by Republican Senator Lindsey Graham. These measures would prohibit the transfer of U.S. aid to countries that announce they will honor the ICC arrest warrants. While these sanctions are unlikely to affect Western European nations, they could have significant consequences for countries reliant on U.S. assistance.

The overarching goal of the sanctions plan is to exert unprecedented pressure on the ICC and force it to withdraw the arrest warrants. Israel has already filed an appeal with the court, which it hopes will provide the ICC with a face-saving exit.

"We will bring the court to its knees and then negotiate the closure of the case," a senior Israeli source said. "Our appeal will give them a way to climb down from the tree top they ventured to."

In parallel, Israel is pursuing diplomatic efforts to convince the United Nations Security Council to request a suspension of the arrest warrants, citing broader political interests and the promotion of peace.

Senior Israeli officials claim Khan acted improperly in issuing the ICC arrest warrants, alleging the decision was influenced by personal allegations of sexual harassment against him. According to these officials, Khan issued the warrants two days before a planned visit to Israel in an effort to deflect attention from the accusations.

Background on the ICC arrest warrants

In November, the ICC rejected appeals submitted by Israel and issued arrest warrants for Netanyahu and Gallant. The court also issued an arrest warrant for Mohammed Deif, the Hamas military commander who has reportedly already been killed, a claim that remains unconfirmed by Hamas. The court accuses Netanyahu and Gallant of criminal responsibility for the following offenses:

As co-perpetrators of the war crime of starvation as a method of warfare.

Crimes against humanity, including murder, persecution, and other inhumane acts.

As civilian superiors, for the war crime of intentionally directing attacks against civilian populations.

Foreign minister responds

Foreign Minister Gideon Sa'ar addressed the arrest warrants during a diplomatic visit to Italy, emphasizing Israel is not a signatory to the Rome Statute and is therefore not under the jurisdiction of the ICC. Sa'ar described the court's actions as violating fundamental legal principles of jurisdiction and complementarity, accusing the ICC of undermining Israel's right to self-defense.

During his meetings, Sa'ar highlighted the recent appointment of Nawaf Salam, the former president of the International Court of Justice (ICJ), as Lebanon's prime minister. Sa'ar noted Salam had previously referred to Israel as an "enemy" and had presided over a case brought against Israel by South Africa alleging genocide.

"What kind of justice can Israel expect from these judicial bodies under such circumstances?" Sa'ar asked. "Israel is committed to international law, but this is a mockery and politicization of international judicial institutions."

Italy's foreign minister and justice minister assured Sa'ar that the Italian government has received legal advice confirming immunity for Israeli leaders, including Netanyahu, during visits to Italy. They further explained that their position on immunity is grounded in the Vienna Convention.

This situation underscores the intensifying geopolitical tensions between Israel, the United States and international judicial institutions, as well as the broader implications for global diplomatic and legal norms.

## Gazans celebrate cease-fire deal, Hamas terrorists join crowd

01.15.25 – We

Gazans celebrate cease-fire deal, Hamas terrorists join crowd

'We are here and will remain here,' armed Hamas member says; 'We will rebuild and Gaza will be more beautiful than ever,' says one resident of the Strip  
Lior Ben Ari, Einav Halabi|14:46

Gazans on Wednesday evening celebrated the news that a cease-fire agreement has been struck that will not only bring about the release of hostages but an end to the fighting that they hope will be permanent and bring an end to the war after much of the Gaza Strip has been destroyed and most of its residents displaced.

The first phase of the deal will see an increase in humanitarian aid and the return of many from the northern areas of the Strip to their homes.

Hamas claimed victory in a statement and said the cease-fire deal is "a turning point in the struggle on the way to the ultimate goal of liberation."

Some of the Hamas supporters chanted "We are Mohammed Deif's people," referring to the slain head of the Hamas military wing, killed in an Israeli strike last August.

In Khan Younis, Hamas terrorists joined the celebrations with their guns raised. "We are around and will remain around," one said. Others raised the Palestinian flag and one woman vowed that Gaza would be rebuilt. "It will be more beautiful than ever, we will rebuild and rehabilitate. That is our achievement," she said.

Hamas's communications office came out with a statement calling on people to avoid trouble until the cease-fire is in effect, perhaps hoping to avoid a mass return of displaced residents to the north where many of their homes were destroyed.

There were celebrations in the West Bank city of Ramallah and on the Temple Mount in Jerusalem. Celebrations also took place in Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon and in Dahieh, the Hezbollah stronghold in Beirut, where shots were fired into the air.

01.15.25 – We

33 hostages, at least 3 each week over 6 weeks, 30 prisoners exchange for each

01.15.25 – We

33 hostages released in 6 weeks, women and children first: These are the details of the deal

At least 3 hostages will be released each week during the 42-day cease-fire as the IDF gradually withdraws from central Gaza and displaced persons return to the north; For each kidnapped civilian, 30 terrorists will be released, and for each female soldier 50; Negotiations on the second phase of the deal will begin by the 16th day

After long and arduous negotiations, an agreement was reached between Israel and Hamas Wednesday evening on a deal in which 33 hostages, both living and dead, will be returned to Israel from Hamas captivity in the Gaza Strip. The list of hostages to be released includes all women still in captivity, civilians and soldiers, all children (Ariel and Kfir Bibas) and all men over the age of 50 who are still in captivity.

As part of the agreement, a six-week cease-fire will come into effect, during which the IDF will gradually withdraw from the central Gaza Strip, and displaced Palestinians will be allowed to return to the north. During this period, Israel will release 30 terrorists in exchange for each kidnapped civilian, and 50 terrorists for each female soldier released.

First, the women and children will be released, followed by men over the age of 50. The release of those kidnapped by Hamas will be spread out over 42 days, six weeks, with at least three hostages being released each week.

As part of the agreement, by the end of the first phase, Israel will release from prison all female terrorists held since October 7, 2023, as well as male terrorists under the age of 19 who were arrested since the outbreak of the war. In total, between 990 and 1,650 terrorists are expected to be released, with the final number depending on the number of live hostages who return as part of the deal.

Negotiations on the second phase of the agreement, guaranteed by the U.S., Qatar and Egypt, will begin by the 16th day of the first phase. The second phase is expected to include the release of all remaining hostages, including soldiers, and to ensure a permanent ceasefire in the Gaza Strip and a full IDF withdrawal from it. The third phase is expected to include the return of all remaining hostages and the beginning of the reconstruction of Gaza under the supervision of Egypt, Qatar and the UN.

After final handshakes and after the last-minute crises were resolved, an Israeli and an American senior official announced Wednesday evening: "The crisis has been resolved - there is an agreement." The Egyptian channel Al-Qahera Al-Ekhbariya also reported that an agreement had been reached "following the efforts of the mediators, after hours of hard work."

In order to approve the deal, the political-security cabinet will convene Thursday morning at 11:00, and immediately afterward a government meeting will be held, at the end of which the list of prisoners who will be released as part of the agreement will be published. The IDF is preparing to return the hostages, and the name given to the operation is "Wings of Freedom."

Approval of the deal requires a simple majority so, despite the opposition of Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich, who maintains a certain ambiguity, and National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir, it is expected to be approved. In light of the developments, Foreign Minister Gideon Sa'ar cut short his state visit to Italy and is returning to Israel.

After the agreement is approved, the public will be given time to petition the High Court of Justice against the deal and the list of terrorists who are expected to be released. The Israeli negotiating delegation, led by Mossad head Dedi Barnea, is expected to remain in Doha Wednesday night to complete the talks on implementing the agreement, and to finalize the list of prisoners who will be released as part of the deal, including terrorist murderers. Now, a series of technical details remain to be finalized, and only upon the delegation's return to Israel will it be possible to convene the cabinet, so that a postponement during the government meeting is possible. Although, according to various reports and according to the details of the agreement that have been revealed, there will be a complete withdrawal of IDF forces from the Gaza Strip, the Prime Minister's Office said in a statement that: "In light of Prime Minister Netanyahu's firm stance, Hamas backed down on its demand at the last minute to change the deployment of forces on the Philadelphi Corridor. However, there are still a number of clauses in the hostage-ceasefire deal that have yet to be finally agreed upon," and "the details will be finalized tonight."

The prime minister's spokesman, Omer Dostri, also noted that "the reports of a 'withdrawal from the Philadelphi Corridor' are a complete lie. Prime Minister Netanyahu has not given up a millimeter of Israeli control over the Philadelphi Corridor." US President-elect Donald Trump, who said in recent weeks that if a deal is not reached before his inauguration "there will be all hell to pay," was quick to offer his congratulations on the agreement.

"We have a deal for the hostages in the Middle East. They will be released shortly. Thank you," he posted on his Truth Social platform. Trump then published another post, in which he promised to work together with Israel and U.S. allies to ensure that Gaza "never becomes a safe haven for terrorism."

01.15.25 – We

Trump pushed hostage deal: ensures Gaza never becomes a terrorist safe haven

01.15.25 – We

Trump 'thrilled' hostage deal done: 'Will make sure Gaza never becomes a terrorist safe haven'

US president-elect says his administration will 'negotiate deals to ensure the safety of all Americans, and our Allies', and will build upon cease-fire to further expand Abraham Accords

ynet correspondents|11:57

President-elect Donald Trump, considered the main engine behind the cease-fire and hostage release agreement reached on Wednesday in Qatar, celebrated what he considered his diplomatic achievement in a post on his Truth Social platform. "We have a deal for the hostages in the Middle East. They will be released shortly. Thank you."



Trump said the agreement could only have been reached because of his election as president. "It signaled to the entire World that my Administration would seek Peace and negotiate deals to ensure the safety of all Americans, and our Allies. I am thrilled American and Israeli hostages will be returning home to be reunited with their families and loved ones," he said.

"With this deal in place, my National Security team, through the efforts of Special Envoy to the Middle East, Steve Witkoff, will continue to work closely with Israel and our Allies to make sure Gaza NEVER again becomes a terrorist safe haven. We will continue promoting PEACE THROUGH STRENGTH throughout the region, as we build upon the momentum of this ceasefire to further expand the Historic Abraham Accords. This is only the beginning of great things to come for America, and indeed, the World!"

Trump's envoy to the talks Steve Witkoff joined the Biden team during negotiations after reportedly pressuring Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to accept the deal in his meeting in Jerusalem last Saturday.

The president-elect made his position clear that he wants the war to end before he takes office and warned of "all hell to pay" if Hamas does not agree to the terms of the deal.

01.15.25 – We

Russia sponsored wave of package detonations at airports in Europe

01.15.25 – We

Putin, 'acts of air terror' and the secret message from the White House: 'Stop'  
Six months after packages burst into flames at airports and warehouses in Poland, Germany and England, the Polish prime minister accuses Russia of plotting 'acts of air terror' around the world

News Agencies | 11:15

Russia planned "acts of air terror" against Poland and other countries, Polish Prime Minister Donald Tusk said on Wednesday after meeting Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky in Warsaw.

The Polish premier's statement came two days after the New York Times reported that the U.S. last year had sent an urgent warning to Moscow after American intelligence agencies said a Russian military unit was preparing to send explosive packages on cargo planes to the U.S.

The message to the Russians was that if there is a mass casualty disaster in the air or on the ground, the U.S. will consider Russia as an accessory to terror.  
Security officials have said that parcels which exploded at logistics depots in Europe were part of a test run for a Russian plot to trigger explosions on cargo flights to the United States. The explosions occurred in depots in Britain, Germany and Poland in July.

Russia has denied involvement in the incidents and Tusk did not mention them specifically.

"I will not go into details, I can only confirm the validity of fears that Russia was planning acts of air terror, not only against Poland, but against airlines around the world," Tusk told a news conference. He did not say what acts he was referring to or elaborate on the contents of the information.

The Russian embassy in Warsaw and the Russian foreign ministry did not reply to requests for comment on Tusk's statement.

The Kremlin has dismissed previous Western claims that Russia sponsored acts of sabotage and attacks in Europe.

The pro-Western Polish government under Tusk has been a staunch supporter of Ukraine in its war against Russia and has accused Moscow of promoting a hybrid war against Warsaw and others as revenge for their support of Kyiv. Poland claims that Russia and its ally Belarus are working to intensify the migrant crisis on the EU's eastern borders hoping to spread division in the union.

According to the New York Times, the White House's warning did reach Putin, and administration officials say it has had its effect, with the wave of package detonations in Europe currently halted. However, it is unclear whether Putin has ordered a halt to the operation and for how long. Officials also told the newspaper that Russia may be using the time to build better explosive devices that will be easier to evade detection during testing.

01.15.25 – We

Erdogan demands Israeli withdrawal from Syria, warns of unfavorable outcomes

01.15.25 – We

Erdogan demands Israeli withdrawal from Syria, warns of 'unfavorable outcomes' Turkish president says Israel's 'aggressive actions' must end immediately, calls Gaza cease-fire 'opportunity' for lasting peace and stability across the region' Yoav Zitun, news agencies|08:46

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan on Wednesday demanded that Israel cease its "aggressive actions" toward neighboring Syria, and withdraw its forces or it will cause "unfavorable outcomes for everyone."

"The aggressive actions of the forces attacking Syrian territory, Israel, in particular, must come to an end as soon as possible. Otherwise, it will cause unfavorable outcomes for everyone," Erdogan said in his address during a group meeting of his Justice and Development Party.

Senior Israeli officials stated last week that Israel will need to maintain a 15-kilometer "security buffer" inside Syrian territory, where the IDF will ensure a presence to prevent

forces loyal to the new regime from launching rockets toward the Golan Heights. Additionally, Israel plans to establish a 60-kilometer "zone of influence" within Syria, allowing for intelligence control to monitor and mitigate emerging threats in the area. The Foreign Ministry said it rejects Erdogan's threats and said in a statement that it would advise the Turkish president to avoid making such threats and that Israel would continue to protect its borders.

Erdogan also addressed the ongoing negotiations for a hostage release deal and a cease-fire, stating, "With the achievement of a cease-fire in Gaza, where genocide has been ongoing for 15 months, a significant opportunity will arise for lasting peace and stability across the region. We are closely monitoring the cease-fire talks between Israel and Hamas and hope to receive positive news soon."

The Turkish president also stated that Ankara had the power and ability to "crush" all terrorists in Syria, including Islamic State and Kurdish militants while urging all countries to "take their hands off" Syria.

Ankara has said the new Syrian administration must be given an opportunity to address the YPG presence but also threatened to mount a new cross-border operation against the militia based in northeast Syria if its demands are not met.

"Regarding fabricated excuses like Islamic State, these have no convincing side anymore," Erdogan said, referring to the U.S. position that the YPG was a key partner against Islamic State in Syria and that it plays a vital role guarding prison camps where the Islamist militants are kept.

"If there is really a fear of the Islamic State threat in Syria and the region, the biggest power that has the will and power to resolve this issue is Turkey," he said.

"Everyone should take their hands off Syria and we, along with our Syrian siblings, will crush the heads of Islamic State, the YPG, and other terrorist organizations in a short time."

01.15.25 – We

West Bank man arrested hanging signs inciting violence against IDF troops

01.15.25 – We

West Bank man arrested for hanging for signs inciting violence against IDF troops  
Geva Binyamin resident and pro-Palestinian activist, 21, arrested for incitement after hanging anti-IDF and anti-Israel signs, including calls for violence; police discover further incendiary materials on his digital devices; charges being prepared  
Elisha Ben Kimon|07:45

A 21-year-old resident of Geva Binyamin in the West Bank was arrested on charges of severe incitement against the State of Israel, IDF soldiers and security forces.

The suspect is accused of posting inflammatory signs in the settlement with messages such as "IDF = Terrorists" and "Death to Zionists!"

The incident began earlier this month when residents discovered numerous signs across the settlement. Police identified the suspect as a local affiliated with pro-Palestinian groups.

Video footage obtained by authorities allegedly shows the suspect walking through the settlement and hanging the signs. A search of his digital devices revealed extensive inciteful materials, including calls to harm Israeli forces and the state. Among the discovered content were slogans like "Burn the Zionists" and "A good IDF soldier is a dead IDF soldier."

A prosecutor's statement was filed against the suspect on Tuesday. Authorities intend to press charges and request he be remanded to custody until the end of legal proceedings. Superintendent Gil Limoy, commander of the Binyamin police station, said, "We will continue to use all available means to prevent such acts of incitement."

01.15.25 – We

PA prisoner caught on body camera, smuggling notes in mouth ahead of release

01.15.25 – We

Palestinian prisoner caught smuggling notes in mouth ahead of release | watch  
Guard's suspicion leads to search, revealing Arabic notes, allegedly written by cellmates for external parties, hidden in prisoner's mouth; incident captured on guard's body camera

Liran Tamari|05:36

A Palestinian prisoner set to be released was caught attempting to smuggle handwritten notes hidden in his mouth, the Israel Prison Service (IPS) said on Wednesday.

The notes, allegedly written by fellow inmates, are believed to contain messages intended for outside parties.

Body camera footage: Prison guard catches Palestinian inmate smuggling notes hidden in mouth ahead of release

A prison guard noticed the prisoner acting suspiciously, prompting a search that uncovered the concealed papers. Body camera footage recorded during the incident shows the guard observing the prisoner removing the notes, which were written in Arabic, from his mouth.

The discovery comes as the IPS pilots a body camera program, led by Commissioner Kobi Yaakobi, aimed at increasing transparency and accountability. The initiative,

launched in recent weeks, equips prison guards with body cameras to document their activities in various facilities.

Since the start of the war, the IPS has heightened efforts to prevent smuggling attempts. In recent months, authorities reported intercepting more than 17 attorneys attempting to deliver messages to security prisoners they represent during legal proceedings.

01.15.25 – We

Hamas accused of stalling hostage deal, PA shift blame to Israel

01.15.25 – We

Hamas accused of stalling hostage deal, Palestinians shift blame to Israel

Hamas leader Mohammed Sinwar approves proposed hostage deal in principle, Wall Street Journal reports; Palestinian source accuses Israel of withholding key details, including withdrawal maps

Alexandra Lukash, Einav Halabi, Itamar Eicher, Lior Ben Ari, Moran Azulay|05:18

Arab media reported Wednesday morning that Hamas has accused Israel of introducing new conditions that complicate finalizing a deal to release hostages held in Gaza.

Israeli officials swiftly denied the claims, with a senior Israeli source calling them "Hamas lies aimed at evading responsibility for the deal."

According to a report in The Wall Street Journal, citing Arab sources, Mohammed Sinwar, the brother and apparent successor of slain Hamas leader Yahya Sinwar, has agreed in principle to the terms of the proposed hostage-prisoner exchange deal. This agreement reportedly came just hours after Hamas publicly announced for the first time that the deal was in its "final stages."

Despite Sinwar's reported approval, a Palestinian source familiar with the negotiations told Lebanon's Hezbollah-affiliated Al Mayadeen network that Israeli actions are disrupting progress on a cease-fire agreement. The source claimed Israel has not provided a military withdrawal map for Gaza, nor details on the management of the Rafah border crossing and the entry of aid trucks.

This is how Israel has prepared for return of hostages from Gaza, prisoners exchange "Israel has also failed to outline a prisoner swap mechanism or clarify how the wounded will be evacuated for treatment," the source said. "While there is general Israeli consent, these critical details are delaying the agreement and the start of a cease-fire."

Sky News Arabic, citing unnamed sources, reported that new Israeli conditions could derail the negotiations, including a demand to maintain a 700-meter military presence inside Rafah and insistence on veto power over the list of Palestinian prisoners to be released.

Negotiators from both sides remain engaged in talks in Doha, Qatar. On Tuesday, a senior Hamas official told Reuters that the group has yet to provide its response to mediators, claiming Israel has not submitted maps outlining the withdrawal of its forces from Gaza. Israeli officials have denied this claim.

Separately, CNN reported Wednesday that the release of Palestinian prisoners will occur in six stages. The first five stages are expected to include the release of 100 to 120 Palestinian detainees in exchange for three Israeli hostages per stage.

The sixth stage will reportedly be the largest, involving the release of more than three Israeli hostages. Palestinian Prisoner Authority spokesman Taher Shariteh told CNN that this final group of prisoners will include individuals who were released as part of the 2011 deal for the release of IDF soldier Gilad Shalit but were later rearrested by Israel. "Some of them are serving life sentences," Shariteh said.

Arab newspapers highlighted the ongoing negotiations for a Gaza cease-fire, with varied takes on the status of the discussions. The Hezbollah-affiliated Lebanese daily Al-Akhbar described the deal as "delayed but not collapsing." Qatar's pro-Hamas newspaper The New Arab reported that negotiations are "focused on implementation mechanisms." London-based Al-Quds Al-Arabi claimed the cease-fire agreement is "in its final stage," adding that "the Israeli military is preparing to withdraw from the Rafah crossing." Saudi daily Asharq Al-Awsat reported: "The Gaza cease-fire is nearing completion, awaiting official announcement."

The Palestinian Health Ministry has reportedly begun preparations to receive prisoners expected to be freed under the proposed exchange deal. Hospitals and their directors have been instructed to prepare facilities accordingly.

A letter issued by the Palestinian Authority read: "Ahead of the prisoner exchange and the return of our freed detainees from Israeli prisons, immediate efforts are underway to prepare and equip internal medicine and surgical clinics to provide the necessary medical care for our brothers."

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu told members of the Hope Forum representing families of hostages: "I am prepared for a prolonged cease-fire if it ensures the return of the hostages. It's a matter of days or hours. We await Hamas' response, after which implementation can begin immediately."

Netanyahu added: "Hamas has not yet responded. Everything being reported now is speculation." He also commented that when U.S. President-elect Donald Trump assumes office, "the rules of the game will fundamentally change. Every cease-fire violation will face a harsh and unprecedented response."

As negotiations continued in Doha overnight, Israeli airstrikes targeted dozens of Hamas and Palestinian Islamic Jihad sites across Gaza. Among the targets were senior operatives and terrorist concentrations in Khan Younis and Deir al-Balah. The IDF said that approximately 50 terrorist sites were struck over the past 24 hours.

Hamas acknowledged for the first time that significant progress had been made in the negotiations, with the group declaring that "the freedom of our heroic prisoners is near." Hamas also called on Palestinians to escalate confrontations with Israeli forces "in response to the increasing crimes against our people, holy sites and prisoners."

A Hamas source told CNN that the group is "very close to an agreement" with Israel, while another told Reuters that progress had been made on key issues, though gaps remain.

01.15.25 – We

Israeli guards to film prisoners during hostage releases to prevent false claims

01.15.25 – We

To prevent false claims, Israeli guards to film prisoners during hostage deal releases  
In first, Israel Prison Service to equip guards with body cameras to record prisoners' physical and medical condition prior to their release  
Liran Tamari, Netael Bandel|04:48

In preparation for the release of Palestinian security prisoners as part of the emerging hostage deal with Hamas, the Israel Prison Service will equip guards with body cameras to ensure transparency and prevent false claims regarding the detainees' physical condition.

This move is part of an innovative pilot program, guided by IPS Commissioner Kobi Yaakobi, to document prisoners' health status before their release and maintain organizational accountability. The cameras will record every stage of the release process, providing clear and accurate documentation of prisoners' physical condition in real time.

IPS head of security and operations Avichai Ben Hamo emphasized that the program is a vital step toward increasing transparency with the public and external parties while ensuring the security and order of the prison staff. "We want to ensure the release process is carried out professionally and accurately, and to prevent any challenges to the integrity of the process," Ben Hamo said.

Meanwhile, the government informed the Supreme Court that 3,464 detainees from the Gaza Strip are currently held in Israeli prisons, and 151 detainees have been released for various reasons. This update came following a petition filed by the Public Committee Against Torture in Israel.

According to CNN, the release of Palestinian prisoners will occur in six phases. The first five phases will involve the release of 100 to 120 prisoners per phase, in exchange for three hostages each time. The sixth phase, the largest, will include the release of prisoners involved in the 2011 deal for the release of IDF soldier Gilad Shalit. These individuals, some of whom were re-arrested by Israel after their release, are serving life sentences.

01.15.25 – We

Saudi normalization a huge priority to Trump & future of Israel

01.15.25 – We

Saudi-Israeli normalization a 'huge priority,' says Trump envoy  
Incoming National Security Advisor Mike Waltz identifies normalization between Jerusalem and Riyadh as key objective that will change the region; Waltz outlines vision for demilitarized Gaza and clarifies initial hostage deal does not mark end of war  
Nadav Eyal|03:24

Mike Waltz, the incoming national security advisor for the Trump administration, has declared that achieving a peace agreement between Israel and Saudi Arabia is a “huge priority” for the incoming administration. Waltz emphasized the need to “eliminate these terrorist organizations,” secure the release of hostages, and make progress toward Riyadh.

“Let’s call it what it is: the next phase of the Abraham Accords,” he said in an interview on the popular American podcast Call Me Back. Waltz described the potential Israel-Saudi Arabia normalization as “a tremendous historic region-changing agreement.”

Waltz also suggested that Iran played a key role in igniting the recent war through its proxy, Hamas, to derail progress. “This is why I firmly believe that Iran lit the fuse—Hamas—to blow everything up,” Waltz said, referencing the escalation before October 7. “The sides were very close, and that’s the goal: get our people out, eliminate these terrorist organizations, and start focusing on economic and political solutions.”

Speaking to podcast host Dan Senor, author of Start-Up Nation and a prominent American businessman, Waltz made it clear that “all options are on the table” when it comes to Iran and its nuclear program. He reiterated President Trump’s firm stance against allowing Tehran to possess nuclear weapons, stating, “President Trump will not tolerate Iran holding nuclear arms.”

Waltz, widely regarded as an experienced and serious figure in the new administration and a strong supporter of Israel, warned of the dire consequences of a nuclear-armed Iran. “If you think the region is unstable, violent, and at war now, imagine it under a nuclear umbrella controlled by Iran,” he said. He highlighted Iran’s proxies, from the Houthis and Hezbollah to Hamas and militias in Syria and Iraq, and noted Iran’s repeated threats to annihilate Israel. “We must take this very seriously,” he added. “Every American should understand that any kind of nuclear confrontation in the region would be catastrophic for the entire world.”

Addressing the future of Gaza after the hostage negotiations, Waltz said the territory must be completely demilitarized, and Hamas must have no role in its governance. When asked about the fate of hostages not included in the initial deal, Waltz expressed his determination: “These poor individuals—Israelis, Americans, and citizens of various other nations—are in tunnels under the worst imaginable conditions. They are being used as human shields and subjected to horrific abuse. We will do everything we can to bring them all home, alive or deceased, to ensure they receive a proper burial.”

When Senor asked if the hostage deal signaled the end of the war, Waltz dismissed the notion. “Hamas may hope so, but we’ve made it clear: Gaza must be fully demilitarized,



Hamas must be dismantled so it cannot regroup, and Israel has every right to defend itself. Those goals remain unchanged.”

Waltz added that the majority of Israelis support the hostage deal and credited Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's leadership for advancing it. Reflecting on past obstacles, Waltz said Hamas previously believed it would receive support from Hezbollah in Lebanon. “One day, the full story will be told about what I consider one of the most extraordinary covert operations in modern history,” he said, referring to Israel's actions that weakened Hezbollah's capabilities and leadership.

Discussing the broader regional implications, Waltz highlighted how dismantling Hamas and weakening Iranian influence could open the door for Lebanon to break free from Tehran's grip and even destabilize Bashar al-Assad's regime in Syria. “This cascade of positive effects could lead to the most promising situation the region has seen in decades,” he said.

Waltz criticized the Biden administration's handling of the situation and suggested it emboldened Hamas. He pointed to protests on American college campuses supporting Hamas and U.S. policy decisions that he described as undermining Israel. “Every time Hamas saw news of these anti-Israel demonstrations or statements from Washington that criticized Israel, they believed sacrificing their own people to turn global opinion against Israel was worth it,” he said. Waltz also noted Vice President Kamala Harris's boycott of Netanyahu's speech to Congress and other perceived slights as factors that played into Hamas's hands.

Finally, Waltz underscored the Trump administration's commitment to ensuring Hamas and similar groups have no future role in Gaza. “Hamas, ISIS, and al-Qaeda have no place in governance. We must eradicate this cancer, not just for Israel's sake but for the Palestinian people too. We will never achieve a stable future or a truly peaceful region until this threat is removed.”

01.15.25 – We

Military jeep hit explosive device in West Bank, wounding three Israeli soldiers

01.15.25 – We

Two Israeli soldiers seriously wounded by explosive in West Bank

Hours after Israeli strike killed six Palestinians in Jenin, IDF military jeep hits explosive device in neighboring Kabatiya; 2 soldiers from Kfir and Menashe Brigades severely hurt, reservist sustains minor injuries

Elisha Ben Kimon, Yoav Zitun|02:44

Two Israeli soldiers were seriously wounded overnight when their military jeep hit an explosive device in the Palestinian West Bank town of Kabatiya, the IDF said Wednesday.

A reservist soldier from the Kfir Brigade sustained minor injuries. The injured were evacuated to a hospital for treatment, and their families were notified.

Hours earlier, an Israeli Air Force strike in Jenin killed six Palestinians, according to the Palestinian Health Ministry. The operation, carried out jointly by the IDF and the Shin Bet, also left several others injured.

Anwar Rajab, spokesperson for the Palestinian security forces, condemned the airstrike, calling it a "premeditated intervention designed to undermine security and thwart efforts to restore stability." He accused Israel of intentionally disrupting national initiatives aimed at protecting Palestinians.

Last month, the Palestinian security forces launched a crackdown on members of the Jenin Battalion, a local armed group affiliated with Palestinian Islamic Jihad. More than 280 terrorists were arrested on charges including shooting at Palestinian Authority forces, illegal arms possession and collaborating with hostile foreign entities.

01.15.25 – We

Iran official alleges Israel sabotaged sourced nuclear equipment with explosives

01.15.25 – We

Iranian official alleges Israel sabotaged nuclear equipment with explosives

Vice President Mohammad Javad Zarif claims explosives found in centrifuge platforms bought for Tehran's nuclear program; President Massoud Pezeshkian warns Iran will react to any attack on its nuclear facilities; 'We do not fear war'

Itamar Eichner|02:12

Mohammad Javad Zarif, Iran's vice president for strategic affairs and former foreign minister, has accused Israel of embedding explosives in centrifuge components acquired for Tehran's nuclear program in what he described as an undisclosed attempt by Israel to sabotage Iran's nuclear infrastructure.

In a statement reported by the opposition-linked Persian-language media outlet Iran International, Zarif said, "Our colleagues procured a centrifuge platform for the Atomic Energy Organization, only to discover that explosives had been implanted within it." Zarif did not specify when the alleged incident occurred.

The claim follows a series of reported acts of sabotage targeting Iran's nuclear facilities, including a 2021 explosion at the Natanz centrifuge plant, which Tehran labeled as "nuclear terrorism." While Iran has not fully detailed the incident, Israel has not confirmed or denied involvement.

Zarif highlighted the security vulnerabilities created by international sanctions on Iran, which he said forced the country to rely on intermediaries for acquiring sensitive equipment. "Instead of sourcing equipment directly from manufacturers, sanctions compel us to work through multiple intermediaries," Zarif explained. "If Israel infiltrates even one intermediary, they can plant anything, as they did in this case."

In response to the incident, Iran's Revolutionary Guard reportedly confiscated communication devices and conducted extensive security checks to prevent recurrence. Iran's Civil Aviation Authority also banned electronic devices, including cellphones, on commercial flights.

Zarif compared the situation to a Mossad operation in Lebanon last September, where 12 Hezbollah operatives were killed and thousands injured after pagers rigged with explosives by Mossad detonated across the country. The following day, walkie-talkies used by the terror group also exploded, resulting in 20 more fatalities and 450 injuries. A Mossad operative speaking to CBS's 60 Minutes revealed details of the operation. "[T]hose people without hands and eyes... are walking proof of our superiority all around the Middle East. 'We want them to feel vulnerable,'" he said. The operative hinted that Israel has "moved on to the next thing" in its intelligence efforts.

The report also highlighted the U.S. response to Iran's ballistic missile strikes on Israel in October. The Biden administration imposed additional sanctions on six entities involved in Iranian oil trade and six Iranian vessels.

U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken said at the time, "These measures aim to disrupt revenue streams that the Iranian regime uses to fund its nuclear program, develop missiles, support terrorist proxies and perpetuate conflict across the Middle East."

Pezeshkian: Attack on nuclear sites will be to the detriment of all actors

Iranian President Masoud Pezshkian said in an interview with NBC on Tuesday that while Iran does not seek war, it will respond decisively to any attacks on its nuclear facilities, particularly under the incoming administration of U.S. President-elect Donald Trump.

"[N]aturally enough, we will react to any action. We do not fear war, but we do not seek it," he said, adding: "I solemnly hope that this will not transpire because it will be to the detriment of all the actors, not only and merely us."

He dismissed allegations that Iran is building nuclear weapons, claiming such accusations are being used as pretexts for aggression.

Pezshkian also rejected claims that Iran's influence in the region has weakened following setbacks to its "axis of resistance" allies. "[C]omparing to last year inside the country, we're more coherent. We're more robust. We have better participation. We have a more solid security in the country," he said.

On efforts to secure peace, Pezeshkian added, "We do whatever we can in order for peace to prevail in the region."

01.15.25 – We

Hostage deal Phase II explained: What's next and why the silence?

01.15.25 – We

Hostage deal Phase II explained: What's next and why the silence?

Concerns mount for families of 65 hostages excluded from Phase I of the deal; their fate hinges on Israel and Hamas navigating significant obstacles to finalize agreements that will shape Gaza's post-war future, a complex process fraught with challenges  
Itamar Eichner, Roy Rubinstein, Einav Halabi, Lior Ben Ari, Yoav Zitun|00:28

What Israel vigorously denied just a week ago is no longer possible to deny: If there are no last-minute surprises, then Israel and Hamas are closer than ever to another hostage deal - which will include a list of 33 living and dead Israeli hostages in its first phase, and only later, apparently, all of the hostages.

This leaves the families of the 65 hostages who were left out of Phase I, which was defined as a "humanitarian exchange" - and from which hostage Youssef Ziyadne, whose body was returned to Israel in an IDF operation, was certainly removed.

Amid hopes for the return of 33 hostages in Phase I, families have valid concerns that Phase II may not be implemented. With over a year passing between previous deals and negotiations like those for Gilad Shalit taking more than five years, fears of delays are justified.

And while some talk unrealistically about releasing the hostages without releasing terrorists from prison, in practice this is clearly not the case - and when you add to this the heavy prices that Phase II entails for Israel, a very large diplomatic maneuvering space is needed for it to ultimately be implemented.

On the surface, and although much is still hidden from view regarding the details of the outline, it is already clear that throughout Phase I, the IDF will remain in the buffer zone in the Gaza Strip, will hold positions on the Philadelphia Corridor, and will evacuate the Netzarim Corridor only while activating a screening mechanism for Gazans who wish to return to the northern Gaza Strip. Alongside this, it is clear that the phase also includes comprehensive and extensive humanitarian aid.

However, Phase II, which includes the end of the war, effectively constitutes the beginning of "the day after" in the Gaza Strip - and therefore the list of demands that Hamas presented in the past regarding it has repeatedly crossed all of Israel's red lines. The terrorist organization's main demand for the release of the 65 Israeli and foreign hostages, which are its last bargaining chip, is to end the war. This is a complete end, a "sustainable peace" without reservations, within the framework of which Israel will fully withdraw from the Gaza Strip and allow billions of dollars from other countries to pour into its reconstruction.

In addition, Hamas is expected to demand the release of a larger number of prisoners for each soldier not included in the Phase I outline - while it also defines the young civilian men as "soldiers". The terrorist organization, which wants to present some achievement for the murderous surprise attack it carried out and which also brought disaster to Gaza, is expected to demand that Israel also release more "heavyweight" prisoners in Phase II. These include, for example, Palestinian leaders such as Marwan Barghouti or Hassan Salameh - a friend of Mohammed Sinwar and a senior member of Hamas' military wing, who is serving 46 life sentences.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, for his part, has repeatedly reiterated in recent months that he will not agree to an end to the war without achieving all of its goals, which include the return of all the hostages - but also the collapse of Hamas' rule.

Defense Minister Israel Katz even demanded that the IDF present him with a "plan for defeating Hamas" if the hostages are not released, and claimed that any talk of "the day after" is irrelevant now, since no other force will replace Hamas as long as the terrorist organization maintains its military strength.

However, the IDF, on orders from the political echelon, refrains from operating in areas in the Gaza Strip where hostages are believed to be present, and it is unclear how the terrorist organization can be eliminated without presenting alternatives that will rule the Gaza Strip the day after. According to Yaron Blum, who was the country's coordinator of prisoners and missing persons between 2017 and 2022, one of the main problems with the talks is Israel's avoidance of discussing "the day after."

Another challenge expected to surface during Phase II, and possibly even during Phase I, is Hamas' use of cynical tactics in negotiations. As seen in the past deal, the group may introduce "scapegoats" during implementation, forcing Israeli decision-makers into difficult dilemmas and potentially undermining trust. Israel has prepared for this by retaining significant leverage in Phase I, including control of the buffer zone in Gaza and the Philadelphi Corridor.

However, these levers will diminish during Phase II. To ensure the release of all hostages, it is crucial that Hamas has something to lose, such as tying Gaza's full rehabilitation to the completion of the process. A third phase guaranteeing this linkage has already been proposed as a solution.

Blum highlights another potential lever: While Hamas' internal leadership focuses on surviving and maintaining control in Gaza, its external leadership seeks to preserve its presence in Qatar and Turkey. If the U.S. applies pressure on these countries to expel Hamas operatives, it could destabilize the organization's external operations. This, in turn, might force Hamas' internal leadership to accept an agreement, even if it significantly weakens its position in Gaza.

The obstacles in the way and the open questions

One of the main difficulties the mediators encountered was the goal declared by each side - which means that the outline for ending the war must allow both Israel and Hamas to declare "victory." In other words, if the unexpected does not happen, and Hamas does not back down from its demand to end the war, the question arises of what guarantees Israel will receive that the terrorist organization will indeed not take an active part in governing Gaza. In addition, Israel's security demands must also be met: From the government's perspective, the war must end with no more force in the Gaza Strip that poses a threat to it.

Opponents of this approach, including within the defense establishment itself, argue that those who were abandoned should first be returned to the country - and that the super-strategic goals should not be attempted at their expense. The IDF claims that they will know how to deal well with a complete withdrawal. Blum described the concept well: "The Gaza Strip is not going anywhere, and it will be possible to return to fighting.

Hamas will give us the circumstances to do so." So far, the prime minister and many of his ministers have not agreed to this.

In any case, even assuming that the parties agree to go to phase two, which, as stated, includes a return to sustainable calm and a cessation of military operations, the question arises as to what will happen when the participants in the massacre begin to move in the Strip - and Israel will have intelligence on their locations? It could be the Gaza Brigade Commander, Izz ad-Din Haddad or Rafah Brigade Commander Mohammed Shabana, or even Mohammed Sinwar, who replaced his brother Yahya as the leader of Hamas in Gaza. It is clear to every Israeli that these people are mortal, but Hamas is expected to demand that Israel not be able to harm its people.

Another question is how Israel will prevent Hamas from regaining power, and how extensive the mandate it will receive for this will be. In Lebanon, for example, the IDF still attacks Hezbollah targets from time to time on various grounds. It is unclear to what extent Hamas will agree to such Israeli involvement after the end of the war, or whether Israel will act in parallel with the process of releasing the hostages in a way that could lead to its arrest.

Post-war Gaza and Saudi Arabia

In an attempt to overcome this, the mediators are trying to present an alternative to Hamas rule "the day after." But while Hamas and Palestinian Islamic Jihad have ostensibly agreed to the establishment of a committee of Gazan technocrats to run the enclave, under the control of the Palestinian Authority, it is precisely Chairman Mahmoud Abbas who refuses. Fatah says that they will not cooperate with such a committee, since they claim it is Hamas' way of returning to power - by placing figures identified with it in key positions.

In addition, and since Hamas' military power has not been completely eliminated, and the terrorist organization is not expected to agree to disarm, it could pose enormous difficulties for any government that takes its place.

All of this leads to the obvious conclusion that in order to embark on Phase Two and the "day after," Israel needs to be granted a certain degree of security freedom in the Gaza Strip, something Hamas has so far refused. It may allow a committee not on its behalf to run Gaza, and relinquish its position as the dominant organization, but as mentioned, this will not completely prevent its strengthening, nor will it allow Israel the security calm it expects.

But despite all this, the issue of the "day after" in the Gaza Strip has another axis: Saudi Arabia is not expected to normalize its relations with Israel as long as the war continues. It is also expected to demand a "path" to a Palestinian state, and an Israeli withdrawal from the Gaza Strip - along with agreements regarding the Palestinian Authority's rule there - could serve as an anchor for it. In addition, if Israel agrees to a Saudi and Emirati presence in the Gaza Strip, these countries could help enforce the ceasefire outline and also prevent the rise of Hamas.

Last week, the United Arab Emirates had reportedly agreed to participate in the management of Gaza temporarily, along with the U.S. and other countries, and to take care of matters of governance, security, and reconstruction of the destruction - and also to send forces at the invitation of the Palestinian Authority. However, in a letter recently

sent by coalition members to Netanyahu, they demanded that Israel not rely on any foreign entity - and not allow another force to replace the IDF in Gaza.

All of the problems mentioned here have been addressed in recent weeks by Strategic Affairs Minister Ron Dermer who is trying to reach an understanding with the Trump administration regarding what will happen if various scenarios materialize.

Israel officials say that while the Biden administration did not provide Israel with full backing, and more than once limited it in armaments, with Trump things are expected to be easier; the assessment is that if the new U.S. president sees that Hamas is not behaving properly and is violating the agreement, then the IDF will have the green light to "enter into it," but here too these are only estimates, and right-wing figures recently protested the "pressure" that Trump is reportedly exerting on Israel to reach an agreement.

So what do brokers do?

Arab mediators and media outlets emphasize Phase I in their references to the deal, and for good reason. The U.S., Egypt, and Qatar believe that the first phase is the hardest "opening blow," which will lead to a dynamic that will knock down the obstacles on the way to a final end to the war. Therefore, they prefer to "get the parties pregnant" - and discuss the most complex issues during a lull in the war, during which hostages will be released from time to time.

Blum supports this approach and says that despite all the problems, "we should not talk about Phase II, but rather motivate the other side to agree to Phase I. This will create a relationship of trust between the murderous terrorist organization and Israel, which must release all 98 hostages - four of whom have been there for about 11 years." He explains that in the first phase, there are international guarantees, and estimates that "the parties will begin to talk at a low intensity, out of a desire not to blow up the talks."

At the same time, Egypt is trying to accelerate the agreements between Fatah and Hamas, in order to present a suitable alternative government that can rehabilitate the Gaza Strip without the funds flowing en masse into the production of weapons.

According to a report in Qatari newspaper The New Arab in November, Cairo is actually working against Hamas on two parallel axes: the first is the axis of negotiations, and the second is an axis that focuses on intra-Palestinian reconciliation talks, believing that the success of its efforts in Gaza depends on achieving an intra-Palestinian agreement and establishing a committee to govern Gaza.

In addition, sources involved in the negotiations believe that if Donald Trump accepts the Gaza Strip without war, he will not allow Israel to easily renew it. In light of his aggressive rhetoric in recent days, it does not seem that the president-elect will easily give up on the release of the remaining 65 hostages - especially since continuing the war would jeopardize normalization with Saudi Arabia, which is out of the question for him. However, there is a major caveat: this is a president whose steps are almost impossible to predict, and certainly not to rely on. It is also unclear what Trump's people promised Netanyahu, and whether the prime minister agreed to a "small deal" because he believes the Republican president will achieve much more for him later.

Returning to uncertainty

"There have never been negotiations like this, in any respect," says attorney Uri Slonim, who was the advisor on captives and missing persons to eight defense ministers in the

past, and even managed the negotiations for the release of the missing navigator Ron Arad.

According to him, the fact that the government is linking the release of the hostages to the dismantling of Hamas is also unprecedented, and therefore it is very difficult to estimate what will happen in the second phase.

"There are so many additional components to these negotiations, such as the unique circumstances in which they were conducted during fighting or the scope of the prisoners. War is a dynamic thing, and things can change on the ground in a second."

Blum, meanwhile, suggests that the country do everything it can to free the hostages and not blow up the agreements. "We've created a situation where the Iranians are not in the region, and they will have a problem transferring funds to Hamas," he said. "The isolation of the terrorist organization helps us, and there's also the mediators' fear of Trump and our desire to start off on the right foot with him."

Therefore, he concludes: "If they do sign Phase I, I will be optimistic, because the momentum will be in our favor." In any case, the IDF is preparing for all possibilities - a full or partial withdrawal - and the possibility of staying and resuming fighting after Phase I.

01.15.25 – We

Phases, numbers & conditions | emerging deal as negotiations continue

01.15.25 – We

The phases, the numbers and the conditions | This is the emerging deal as negotiations continue into the night

Some 33 hostages, including the two Bibas children, are expected to be released in the first phase of the cease-fire deal, which will last 42 days - while Israel will release about 1,300 terrorists; The IDF is expected to remain on the Philadelphi Corridor and withdraw in phases to a buffer zone; In addition, the IDF is expected to leave the Netzarim Corridor and displaced persons will be able to return to the northern Gaza Strip  
Itamar Eichner|17:18

Amid the exchange of accusations between Israel and Hamas regarding the delays in the emerging hostage deal, feverish talks to advance the agreement continue Tuesday night. In an effort to reach the finish line, the negotiations are expected to extend well into the night. The emerging outline consists of several stages, and includes a cease-fire, the release of hostages in phases, and also changes in the deployment of IDF forces in the Gaza Strip.

The negotiations, which have been going on for many weeks, are being conducted under complete secrecy, among other things to prevent political pressure; but in recent days, apparently due to the narrowing of the gaps between the parties, many reports have begun to surface regarding their details.



According to Israeli estimates, most of the hostages on the list are alive - but there is no complete certainty about this. Israel has effectively given up its demand to receive a list of live hostages - and continues to move forward with a deal without it.

In the first phase of the deal, the women and the Bibas children are expected to be released. After that, female soldiers will be released, then adults over the age of 50, and those who have been defined as wounded and sick. The release is supposed to last throughout the entire first phase - over 42 days. On the 16th day of the first phase, discussions will begin on implementing the second phase of the deal.

The agreement is divided into three phases, and on Monday night political sources said it may be reduced to two. During the second phase, the rest of the live hostages are supposed to be released from captivity, possibly along with the dead. After the first phase, 65 hostages are still expected to remain in Hamas captivity in the Gaza Strip. Among the hostages are 36 who are defined as dead, 7 foreigners, and 22 Israeli hostages who are defined as alive.

After the announcement of agreement, the deal will be submitted for approval to the Political-Security Cabinet and the government. After that, the government secretariat will publish the list of Palestinian prisoners who will be released, and the public will be given time to submit petitions against the releases to the High Court. The law states that the public will be given at least 48 hours before the implementation. The deal is expected to have majority approval in the government.

In the first phase of the agreement, approximately 1,300 terrorists are expected to be released. However, since Israel does not know which of the hostages released in the first phase is alive, it is not certain that all 1,300 terrorists will be released, and the numbers could change depending on the fate of the hostages released in the first phase. Israel is demanding that terrorists with blood on their hands be exiled and not allowed to return to the West Bank, meaning that they will be exiled to the Gaza Strip, Qatar or Turkey. In the first stage, the Nukhba terrorists who were captured in Gaza will not be released. According to a Saudi report, which has not been verified by any other source, Hamas also demanded the release of the body of the terrorist organization's leader, Yahya Sinwar. A political source responded that: "That won't happen, period."

In terms of the IDF's presence on the ground, the forces are expected to remain on the Philadelphi Corridor in the first phase, and withdraw in phases to a buffer zone to ensure that Hamas implements the deal. The IDF is supposed to leave the area of the Netzarim Corridor, which effectively separates the northern Gaza Strip from the south, and this will allow displaced Gaza residents to return to the northern Gaza Strip after undergoing security checks - the nature of which was not specified.

The families of the hostages received an update from the Hostages Directorate Tuesday evening, which stated that, throughout the last few hours, consultations, situation assessments and integrative staff work required by the state for the negotiations have continued at the Prime Minister's Office in Jerusalem. Meanwhile, a situation assessment was held by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and his team with Defense Minister Israel Katz, the heads of the defense establishment, and the negotiating team in Doha.

"The negotiations are intensive, discussing details that require a conclusion, and are continuing and will continue tonight," the Prime Minister's Office said. Cabinet Secretary Yossi Fox claimed Tuesday evening that the current deal "is the same deal as May 27."

"I was there in all the forums that discussed the deal," he said. "The current deal was rejected by Hamas for six months and even now it has not yet been approved by them. During all this time, if a positive answer had come from Hamas, it would have had a majority in the cabinet and the government. The Prime Minister did not change his position one millimeter. The only factor that thwarted the deal - Hamas."

Fear of hostage families: The second phase will not materialize

In the shadow of the expectation for the return of 33 hostages in the first phase, families of hostages who are not included in the list fear that the second phase will not be implemented. On the surface, and although much remains to be seen regarding the details of the outline, it is already clear that throughout the first phase the IDF will remain in the buffer zone in the Gaza Strip, will hold positions on the Philadelphi Corridor and will evacuate the Netzarim Corridor, only while implementing a screening mechanism for Gazans who wish to return to the northern Gaza Strip. Alongside this, it is clear that the phase also includes comprehensive and extensive humanitarian assistance.

However, the second phase, which includes the end of the war, effectively marks the beginning of the "day after" in the Gaza Strip - and therefore the list of demands that Hamas has presented in the past regarding it has repeatedly crossed all of Israel's red lines. The terrorist organization's main demand, in order to agree to the release of the 65 Israeli and foreign hostages, which are its last bargaining chip, is to end the war. This is a complete end, a "sustainable peace" without reservations, within the framework of which Israel will fully withdraw from the Gaza Strip and allow billions of dollars from other countries to be poured into its reconstruction.

In addition, Hamas is expected to demand the release of a larger number of prisoners for each soldier not included in the outline in the first phase - while it also defines the young men as "soldiers." The terrorist organization, which wants to present some kind of achievement for the murderous surprise attack it carried out and which also brought disaster to the Gaza Strip, is also expected to demand that Israel release more "heavyweight" prisoners in the second phase, including, for example, Palestinian leaders such as Marwan Barghouti, or Hassan Salameh - a friend of Muhammad Sinwar and a senior member of Hamas' military wing, who is serving 46 life sentences.

To this must be added another problem of the second phase, which will probably emerge in the first phase: The terrorist organization is conducting the negotiations in a cynical and cruel manner and, as was the case in the previous deal, it is expected to try to introduce "scapegoats" during the implementation of the agreement. These could present decision-makers in Israel with unbearable dilemmas, and create a dynamic of distrust that will blow up the talks.

Israel prepared for this in advance, and therefore during the first phase it will retain significant leverage over Hamas - such as remaining in the buffer zone in the Gaza Strip and in Philadelphi, but in the second phase these levers will slowly fade, and in order for all the hostages to be released during this process it is necessary to ensure that Hamas

has something to lose. Such a situation can be created, for example, through the third phase, which has already been discussed – and which guarantees the full rehabilitation of the Gaza Strip only after the release of the last hostage.

One of the main difficulties the mediators encountered is the goal declared by each side - which means that the outline for ending the war must allow both Israel and Hamas to declare "victory." In other words, if the unexpected does not happen, and Hamas does not back down from its demand to end the war, the question arises of what guarantees Israel will receive that the terrorist organization will indeed not take an active part in governing Gaza. In addition, Israel's security demands must also be met. From the government's perspective, the war must end with no fighting force in the Gaza Strip that poses a threat. Yael Ciechanover participated in the preparation of this report

01.14.25 – Tu

IDF launches airstrike on Jenin in West Bank, supporting PA security forces

01.14.25 – Tu

IDF launches airstrike on Jenin in West Bank

An Israeli Air Force aircraft attacked the terrorist stronghold, a month after Palestinian security forces launched an operation against Islamic Jihad there.

Yoav Zitun, Einav Halabi | 15:04

In a joint operation, an Israeli Air Force aircraft attacked the Palestinian city of Jenin in the West Bank on Tuesday night, the IDF and Shin Bet spokespeople announced. According to the Palestinian Ministry of Health, five people were killed and two were injured in the attack.

In December, Palestinian Authority security forces launched an operation against members of the Jenin Brigade, affiliated with Islamic Jihad. The operation was somewhat successful, and its members arrested more than 280 terrorists accused of shooting at Palestinian forces, possessing and trafficking weapons, and colluding with hostile foreign elements who financed them.

This week, Palestinian Authority security forces spokesman Anwar Rajab announced at a special press conference held in the Jenin municipality, the arrest of "outlaws" affiliated with the Jenin Brigade, including suspects who received funds from Iran. However, the security forces are having difficulty gaining the trust of the residents of Jenin and the nearby refugee camp, who have complained about the conditions and the "siege," as they put it, imposed by the PA security forces.

At the same time, Israel did not shower much praise on the activities of the security forces, and an Israeli security source told Reuters news agency that "they have a great desire to carry out security operations - but their capabilities are poor."

01.14.25 – Tu

Supreme Court rejects appeal to terror compensation law; PA must pay victims

01.14.25 – Tu

Supreme Court rejects Palestinian Authority appeal to overturn terror compensation law  
Court ruled that PA directly finances terrorism through payments to terrorists and their families and, therefore, overturns claim the law intends to bring about the PA's economic collapse

Lital Dobrovitsky|09:35

After the Palestinian Authority petitioned the Supreme Court last year and requested to overturn a law which allows victims of terrorism to demand compensation from the entity that finances it, Supreme Court Justice and Acting President Isaac Amit rejected the PA's petition on Monday.

Amit ruled that "we will begin and say what is absent from the petition but deserves to be said: The Palestinian Authority pays terrorists and members of their families significant amounts of money and benefits, in close connection with the criminal acts of terrorism they committed." Amit also ruled that "even if the law is based on a political motive, this does not lead to its repeal." Justice Khaled Kabub and Justice Yael Wilner also joined Amit in the decision.

In May, the Palestinian Authority petitioned the Supreme Court to strike down the Compensation for Terror Victims Law (Exemplary Damages), enacted in 2024 by the Knesset.

The law establishes entitlement to compensation in tort claims filed against a perpetrator of a terrorist act, a person determined to be liable for an act of terrorism, or an entity that supports the perpetrator. The law states that if the act of terrorism caused the death of a person, his heirs will be entitled to compensation. It was also determined that the compensation will be paid in addition to any other compensation awarded in a tort claim filed due to the same act, and that the damages will not be deducted from any amount paid by the state or one of its institutions to the injured party or his next of kin.

According to the Palestinian Authority, the laws should be scrapped due to their "inappropriate purpose and the disproportionate harm to the Palestinian Authority and the Palestinian residents," in violation of Israel's obligations under international law. It was claimed that another hidden purpose is to bring the Palestinian Authority to economic collapse "and to undermine its sovereignty in order to complete the annexation of the West Bank to Israeli territory."

According to the PA, there are approximately 180 claims pending against it for compensation for acts of terrorism. The PA further argued that the Knesset does not have the authority to enact a law intended to apply extraterritorially to the assets of another sovereign, and that the laws violate basic legal rules and change the law of torts.

Amit rejected the PA's petition and cited in the ruling a quote from his ruling in an earlier case, where he noted that "the PA's compensation policy is disgusting. It is intolerable. The heart shrinks and rejects it. The eye feels its sting strongly. The metaphorical sting of the eye joins the pain and anguish of the heart and soul of the families of the victims of terrorist attacks and we cannot list them because they are many."

The ruling shows that the Palestinian Authority's payments to terrorists and members of their families amount to hundreds of millions of shekels each year. "The reason why the law applies to the Palestinian Authority and defines it as a 'terrorist rewarder' lies in its own actions and its policy of paying salaries and benefits to terrorists and members of terrorist families," Amit stated.

"In enacting the laws before us, the legislator sought to deter those involved in committing terrorist acts and those who approve of these acts, and to establish arrangements that benefit their victims. It would have been better if the need for their enactment had not arisen in the first place, but unfortunately this is not the case. For a number of reasons, we found that there is no constitutional basis for interfering with the law challenged in the petition, even though they deviate from the normal tort laws," he added.

Amit further ruled that the PA "claims a violation of its rights, but the alleged violation stems from its actions and its choice to pay money and benefits to murderers stained with the blood of innocent Israelis. The Palestinian Authority has the option of choosing a different path and to cease its policy that rewards and encourages carrying out terrorist acts."

Compensation does not depend on disability

The law stipulates that the heirs of a person killed as a result of an act of terrorism will be entitled to 10 million shekels, while a person injured by an act of terrorism and permanently disabled will be entitled to 5 million shekels. This means that the punitive compensation that can be awarded for a single event will reach tens of millions of shekels. The PA pointed out that there are approximately 180 lawsuits pending against it, in which hundreds of injured parties are suing, so that the amount of liability that could be imposed on it could reach billions of shekels.

Imposing these amounts on the Palestinian Authority carries with it political and security implications. It is not without reason that different positions were heard during the legislative process regarding certain aspects of the law. Compensation also established at a uniform level of 5 million shekels, regardless of the degree of disability, contradicts the basic principles of tort law, but in the constitutional context this is not a reason to repeal this part of the law.

Attorney Dr. Asaf Posner, who represented the families of the victims in the proceedings demanding compensation, noted that "the Supreme Court's decision should put an end to the claims of the Palestinian Authority, which is trying to evade providing compensation for criminal acts of terrorism. The plaintiffs say they hope that the state will quickly transfer funds to the victims who have already succeeded in their claims. We hope there will be no obstacles for the transfer of the funds approved by the claims, the Knesset, and now the Supreme Court."

Attorney. Ravid Sharon, who represents victims of terrorism, stated that "the fact that the state is investing efforts in economic warfare on terrorism is bearing fruit. As someone who represents clients who were targeted by terrorists and their aides, including the Palestinian Authority, I see how economic warfare is beneficial in reducing the encouragement of terrorism."

01.14.25 – Tu

ICC prosecutor tells Judges to reject Israeli appeal on Gaza war probe

01.14.25 – Tu

ICC prosecutor tells court to reject Israeli appeal on Gaza war probe

After Israel suggests conflict of interest by Karim Khan, the ICC prosecutor responds to the Israeli objections to the investigation into the 13-month war in Gaza, advising the judges to reject the claims

AP|09:07

The International Criminal Court's chief prosecutor has told judges that Israeli objections to the investigation into the 13-month war in Gaza should be rejected.

Karim Khan submitted his formal response late Monday to an appeal by Israel over The Hague-based court's jurisdiction after judges issued arrest warrants last year for Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, his former defense minister, and Hamas' military chief, accusing them of crimes against humanity in connection with the war in Gaza.

The embattled Israeli leader, who is also facing corruption charges in his home country, called the arrest warrant "a black day in the history of nations" and vowed to fight the allegations.

Individuals cannot contest an arrest warrant directly, but the state of Israel can object to the entire investigation. Israel argued in a December filing that it could look into allegations against its leaders on its own and that continuing to investigate Israelis was a violation of state sovereignty.

The ICC was established in 2002 as the permanent court of last resort to prosecute individuals responsible for the world's most heinous atrocities: war crimes, crimes against humanity, genocide and crimes of aggression.

The court's 125 member states include Palestine, Ukraine, Canada and every country in the European Union, but dozens of countries don't accept the court's jurisdiction, including Israel, the United States, Russia, and China.

In Khan's combined 55-page response, he says the Rome Statute, the treaty that established the ICC, allowed it to prosecute crimes that take place in the territory of member states, regardless of where the perpetrators hail from.

The judges are expected to render a decision in the coming months.

01.14.25 – Tu

Katz introduces Haredi law drafting 4,800 first year, 5,700 in second year

01.14.25 – Tu

Katz introduces Haredi draft law waiving Haredi service for most until 2032

Security minister briefs Knesset committee without IDF representatives, shows plan to draft 50% of the ultra-Orthodox men eligible for service after seven years; mother of fallen soldier in protest march calling for equal draft for all  
Sivan Hilaie, Yoav Zitun|06:29

The Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee, chaired by MK Yuli Edelstein, convened with Defense Minister Israel Katz on Tuesday to be briefed on the proposed draft exemption law for the ultra-Orthodox sector.

After nearly six months of closed-door negotiations among coalition leaders, Katz didn't introduce a draft of law as promised but presented "principles to achieve the goal of significantly increasing the number of yeshiva students serving in the military, while regulating the status of those engaged in full-time Torah study."

Katz, who attended the meeting without IDF representatives, said he came to present principles for "advancing a framework to integrate tens of thousands of ultra-Orthodox individuals into meaningful service in the IDF, while ensuring conditions that respect their lifestyle. This aims to alleviate the burden on reservists and active-duty soldiers." In addition to integrating the ultra-Orthodox, Katz said that he would not promote a law with the principle of "preserving the Jewish Torah world," which he views as "a central foundation of our existence as a people and as a Jewish state in the Land of Israel."

Katz outlined a main goal of drafting 50% of 19-year-olds from the ultra-Orthodox community, with a gradual timeline for achieving this. According to the IDF's projections, 4,800 ultra-Orthodox men would be drafted in the first year, increasing to 5,700 in the second year, with incremental increases each year thereafter.

However, the IDF has previously said that it would have no limitation on absorbing additional soldiers starting in 2026. Despite this position, when asked when the draft rate for ultra-Orthodox youth would reach 50%, Katz responded it would only occur in the seventh year, which means that most ultra-Orthodox men of draft age would be exempt from military service until 2032 at the least.

Katz also said that to ensure compliance with the goals, "unlike previous arrangements, this law proposes economic sanctions for failing to meet the annual targets." He said sanctions would apply to all yeshivas for students eligible for military service. "Those not studying would be carefully scrutinized and sanctioned — not just the yeshivas, as was not the case previously."

Katz's proposal suggest that only partial and economic sanctions would be imposed. "If we fail to meet the targets, we'll introduce a new law to impose all necessary sanctions." Meanwhile sources in the ultra-Orthodox parties said they would not support a bill that included sanctions imposed on those who do not enlist.

Amid ultra-Orthodox protests against the bill, senior rabbis have voiced strong opposition to IDF enlistment, including a former chief rabbi who urged followers to discard draft orders. Addressing this opposition, Katz said, "Is integrating the ultra-Orthodox into security and the economy necessary? Absolutely. Is it possible? Only by consent."

Two hours before the committee convened, Laly Dery, the mother of Sgt. First Class (res.) Saadia Yaakov Dery, who was killed on June 20 last year in Gaza led a protest march from the military cemetery in Jerusalem to the Knesset, in protest of Kat's proposed bill.

The late Saadia, a former yeshiva student, was called up for reserve duty during the war in Gaza. Since he was killed his mother has been advocating for equal service for all. "When I innocently asked how it was possible that Saadia fell in Jabaliya after it had been cleared of terrorists and we paid a heavy price in lives lost during operations in the area, I was told it was due to a manpower shortage in the military," Deri told Ynet ahead of the march.

01.14.25 – Tu

Warning: Iranians bait Israeli civilians abroad, to kidnap them

01.14.25 – Tu

Warning: Iranians bait Israeli civilians abroad, to kidnap them

The National Security Council reveals Iranian officials reach out to Israeli, hoping to lure him to Dubai and abduct him; following investigation, NSC concludes Iran plans to harm Israelis abroad

Itamar Eichner|06:15

The National Security Council warned Israelis on Tuesday that hostile actors were pretending to be various organizations, and luring Israelis to travel to foreign countries where they would be harmed or abducted.

Following an Iranian attempt to lure an Israeli businessman to the United Arab Emirates, the National Security Council has released a warning to the public that Tehran was increasing its efforts to harm to Israeli citizens abroad.

Intelligence sources in the National Security Council discovered that Iranian officials contacted an Israeli businessman on Telegram, posing as the Persian department of the Saudi television network Al-Arabiya, to lure him to meet with them in Dubai. In addition, it was discovered that the same officials sent Israeli links and malicious files to gain access to his phone, without his knowledge.



The businessman reported the suspicious incident to the National Security Council, and the organization conducted an investigation that revealed that terrorist elements were behind the attempt. The National Security Council noted that "this is another manifestation of the continuing threat of Iranian terrorism against Israelis in Israel and around the world."

"The incident highlights the potential risk in contacting unknown entities that make unusual offers online. Particularly when the request is accompanied by requests for personal details, information about movements abroad and/or sending files, including sending links and emails," the National Security Council said.

The council explained that to prevent and reduce the risks, "the Israeli public must maintain privacy on social networks and avoid sharing details such as phone numbers, real-time location and future plans." The organization also noted that providing these details will help terrorist elements gather important information about the potential targets, improve the nature of the offer, and ensure the success of their mission to harm Israelis.

The National Security Council asked the public to report any suspicious behavior by unknown parties from abroad, especially when traveling outside the country. If any concern arises that you have been exposed to a threat from terrorist elements, it is recommended to inform the local security services of the country in which you are staying, and then the National Security Council's travel warning center.

01.14.25 – Tu

Ben-Gvir & Smotrich announced they would vote against the hostage deal

01.14.25 – Tu

'I forced Netanyahu to reject earlier deals,' Ben-Gvir says

National Security Minister says he no longer has the deciding votes to compel the prime minister to reject a hostage release deal as he had done before, calls on Smotrich to join his resignation; Netanyahu previously rejected claims of political considerations; Blinken agains says Hamas rejected deals

Moran Azulay|03:35

National Security Council Itamar Ben-Gvir said on Tuesday that he had prevented Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu from accepting previous attempts at securing a hostage release deal but was currently outnumbered in the coalition. He called on Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich to join him in threatening resignation from the coalition to block the prime minister's intention to accept a deal now.

"In the past year, through our political strength, we succeeded in preventing such a deal from being made, time and again," he said.

Since Foreign Minister Gideon Saar and his New Hope faction joined the coalition, Ben-Gvir's Otzman Yehudit Party had lost its leverage to force his view on the government. Netanyahu had previously rejected claims that he had refused proposals for a deal that would have seen hostages released, out of political considerations and fears that his government would be toppled and directed blame for the failure of negotiations, on Hamas.

U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken in an interview to the New York Times earlier this week again said Hamas had rejected proposals to end the war and return the Israeli hostages. "What we've seen time and again is Hamas not concluding a deal that it should have concluded," he said pushing back against the allegation that Netanyahu had been responsible for the negotiation's failures.

"The pending deal is terrible, I know its details well," Ben-Gvir said in a long post on X. "It includes the release of hundreds of murderous terrorists from prison, the return of Gazans to the northern part of the Strip, the withdrawal of the IDF from the Netzarim Corridor and the renewed threat to the residents of the Gaza border area. In fact it wipes out the achievements gained in blood of our fighters thus far, in Gaza," he said.

This is not a difficult choice, the deal does not bring about the release of all of the hostages and condemns those who are not named, to death. It is a conscious choice at the cost of the lives of many Israelis who will unfortunately pay the price. We've seen the fruits of such deals in the past and have learned, the hard way, that there is no meaning to the promises that things will later work out."

His post came 24 hours after Smotrich announced that he would vote against the deal but would not resign with his party from the ruling coalition.

Opposition Yair Lapid said Ben-Gvir unflinchingly revealed that Netanyahu had foiled chances of hostages being freed from political reasons.

01.14.25 – Tu

Hamas list of hardened prisoners must be released when a deal is agreed

01.14.25 – Tu

Hardened terrorists that Hamas demands in exchange of hostages

Terror group names some of the most notorious Palestinian terrorists serving sentences in Israel that must be released when a deal is agreed

Einav Halabi02:19

As part of the ongoing negotiations for a hostage deal, Hamas has submitted a list of Palestinian prisoners it demands to have released from Israeli prisons. At this stage, it's unclear who will be released under the pending agreement, but Hamas is demanding the release of senior terrorists serving life sentences.

According to an unverified Saudi report, Hamas also demanded the inclusion of the body of its assassinated leader, Yahya Sinwar, in the deal. However, an Israeli source said that "this won't happen."

While the terror group has requested a significant number of prisoners with blood on their hands who were sentenced to life imprisonment for murderous attacks, these are some of the most notorious prisoners Hamas is asking to be released:

Abdullah Barghouti: A Hamas terrorist who was one of the commanders of the organization's military wing in the West Bank. Barghouti is currently serving 67 life sentences, an unprecedented punishment in Israel. Hamas failed to secure his release in the Gilad Shalit release deal in 2011.

Marwan Barghouti: Served as the Fatah movement's secretary-general in the West Bank and was arrested on April 15, 2002. Barghouti orchestrated terrorist attacks in which five Israelis were killed and many others injured. In 2004, he was sentenced to five consecutive life terms and an additional 40 years in prison.

Ahmed Saadat: secretary-general of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) and the planner of the assassination of Minister Rehavam Ze'evi in 2001. Saadat is considered a popular and significant figure in Palestinian society. Israel refused to release him in the Shalit deal.

Ibrahim Hamed: Hamed was the "mastermind" behind 90% of suicide bombing attacks during the Second Intifada between 2000 and 2005. He served as the commander of the Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades in the West Bank at the time. In his role, he planned and organized numerous attacks against Israelis, including severe suicide bombings. He has been wanted by Israeli security forces since 1998.

Abbas al-Sayyed: The principal planner of the 2002 Passover massacre in Netanya. He was sentenced to 35 life terms for the murder of Israelis. Al-Sayyid was Hamas's leader in Tulkarm at the outbreak of the Second Intifada.

Hamas' list also includes five of the six prisoners who escaped from Gilboa Prison. The sixth prisoner is Zakaria Zubeidi.

01.14.25 – Tu

IDF intercept Yemen missile early on Tuesday, launched by Yemen Houthi rebels

01.14.25 – Tu

Sirens across central Israel after a missile fired by Houthis in Yemen

Ben Gurion Airport suspends takeoff and landing while flights made to turn away from Israeli airspace and await further word; IDF says attempts made to intercept missile

ynet|19:27

Sirens sounded after a projectile was launched in Yemen, the IDF said early on Tuesday hours after a missile launched by the Houthi rebels was intercepted.

The Ben Gurion International airport suspended flights for a short while and El Al flights from Zurich and Larnaca were made to turn away from the Israeli coast and wait for further word before being allowed to land.

01.13.25 – Mo

Agreement may be Tuesday; most of 33 hostages on Hamas list are alive

01.13.25 – Mo

Most of 33 hostages on Hamas list are alive, Israeli officials estimate  
Number of Palestinian prisoners to be freed depends on confirmed number of living hostages, with Hamas' Nukhba terrorists excluded; convicted murderers will be exiled;  
Israel plans to hold Philadelphi Corridor during first 42-day phase of deal  
Daniel Edelson, New York, Itamar Eichner, Yoav Zitun|14:08

Israeli officials acknowledged Monday night that they remain uncertain about the precise number of Hamas prisoners, out of an expected 1,300, to be released in a looming hostage deal.

Israel has effectively withdrawn its demand for a list of living captives from Hamas, which has yet to provide such documentation. The initial release of 33 hostages includes women, children, elderly individuals over 50 and the injured or ill, none of whom have been declared deceased. However, officials caution that some may not be alive, leaving the criteria for the initial release phase unresolved.

Israeli estimates suggest that most of the 33 captives, including female soldiers, civilians and children, are likely alive. The agreement outlines a phased release schedule over 42 days, beginning with women and children, followed by female soldiers.

Although the deal is structured in three stages, Israeli officials believe it may be condensed into two. The first phase includes a 42-day cease-fire, with discussions on subsequent phases expected to begin on the 16th day.

Israel aims to finalize and announce the agreement as early as Tuesday. Preparations are underway in the Prime Minister's Office for expedited approval. Once the deal is ratified by the Cabinet and the government, the list of prisoners to be released will be published, allowing the public less than 48 hours to submit appeals to the Supreme Court. Officials hope to implement the agreement this week, ahead of U.S. President-elect Donald Trump's inauguration on January 20.

Diplomatic sources expressed cautious optimism, describing the negotiations as "at a very advanced stage." However, a senior official warned that "we are not yet at the final closure phase. We hope there will be agreement on the deal's components, but this does not depend on us."

A source familiar with the talks told Reuters that the agreement is "closer than ever." Negotiators are set to hold another round of talks Tuesday morning to finalize details. Expected participants include Trump envoy Steve Witkoff, Biden envoy Brett McGurk and Qatari Prime Minister Mohammed Al-Thani.

Hamas commandos will remain behind bars; murderers will be exiled

The senior Israeli official said that members of Hamas' elite Nukhba forces captured in Gaza will not be released in the initial stages of the deal. Convicted murderers who are freed as part of the agreement will not return to the West Bank but will instead be exiled to Gaza or abroad, with Qatar and Turkey emerging as potential destinations, according to reports in Arab media.

Diplomatic sources said that "significant assets," including geographic leverage and prisoners, will be reserved for subsequent negotiations until all hostages—alive and deceased—are returned. They noted that while a similar number of prisoner releases was discussed in May, Hamas at the time had proposed returning only a small number of living hostages. "Recently, Hamas has shown movement," the officials added. Despite Arab media reports suggesting otherwise, Hamas has yet to provide a definitive response to the draft proposal presented to both sides. "We will update the public periodically in the next 24 hours," officials said.

"Progress has been made on the overall agreement formula in coordination with mediators and both U.S. administrations—outgoing and incoming. The Middle East has undergone significant changes in recent months, including the weakening of the Shiite axis and Hamas' diminished capabilities. These shifts, along with Trump's incoming presidency, have created optimal conditions for a deal. The timing is highly sensitive." The senior official revealed that the U.S. presented a proposal in April, to which Hamas did not respond. On May 5, 2024, Hamas submitted its counterproposal, claiming it did not hold 33 hostages. It took until June 11 for Hamas to respond to an Israeli proposal following President Joe Biden's speech on May 27. The response included 29 amendments, signaling an unwillingness to finalize a deal.

"At that time, Hamas refused to engage in negotiations," the official said. "The shift began after we eliminated Yahya Sinwar and severely damaged the Shiite axis and Hamas' broader strategy to ignite the Middle East."

Ynet military analyst Ron Ben-Yishai noted that the Prime Minister's Office is promoting a narrative that the current deal mirrors an agreement Hamas rejected and derailed between May and July 2024. According to the narrative, Hamas was now forced into acceptance due to military pressure, the disintegration of its resistance alliance, and its lost hope that the Biden administration would compel Israel into a cease-fire.

"The agreement is reasonable," Ben-Yishai said, "but Gal Hirsch, Israel's hostage coordinator, emphasized that it could not have been achieved earlier."

Gradual withdrawal

Israel will maintain a buffer zone within Gaza during a potential cease-fire as part of the emerging agreement, Israeli officials said. However, the specific depth of the buffer zone within Gaza remains undisclosed.

While Israeli forces will not withdraw from the Philadelphi Corridor near the border with Egypt, they will permit displaced Gazans to return to northern Gaza, effectively ceding control of the former Netzarim area.

The return of displaced persons will be conducted under security arrangements and inspections designed to prevent the movement of weapons and armed terrorists into northern Gaza, officials said. "At the end of the deal, the IDF will remain deployed in the buffer zone," a senior Israeli official said, adding that Israel's withdrawal from Gaza would be "gradual, not immediate, to ensure Hamas fulfills its commitments." Separately, Israel is preparing adjustments to its humanitarian aid policy for Gaza, irrespective of the deal. "We are working on a solution to remove humanitarian aid from Hamas' control," the senior official said. "This is a critical component of Hamas' governance capabilities, and we're engaged in a long-term campaign. Solutions will take time."

U.S. National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan expressed cautious optimism on the negotiations. "We believe we are close to finalizing the deal," Sullivan said. "Whether it will close remains to be seen in the coming days and weeks, but I believe we're close. Gaps are narrowing, and issues are being resolved one by one. This is due to several factors: Israel has achieved its objectives in Gaza, and Hamas has suffered catastrophic losses. While nothing is guaranteed, I believe there's a good chance we'll reach the finish line."

The Israeli government is expected to approve the deal, despite opposition from the far-right Religious Zionist and Otzma Yehudit parties. Both parties have expressed intent to vote against the agreement but have not issued ultimatums or threatened to leave the coalition.

All Likud ministers and ultra-Orthodox party members are anticipated to support the deal, forming a likely majority of 28 ministers in favor versus six opposing votes from the dissenting parties.

Netanyahu is holding security consultations with defense officials to finalize details of the agreement and determine the timing for presenting it to the government for approval. Cabinet Secretary Yossi Fuchs is engaging with political figures to garner support for the deal. Netanyahu's aides believe the political hurdles can be surmounted.

01.13.25 – Mo

Hamas engaging in guerrilla warfare, using rubble for hidden explosives

01.13.25 – Mo

IDF deploys 162nd Division to Beit Hanoun amid Gaza offensive

Decision follows intense combat in northern Gaza, where IDF forces managed to overrun one of Hamas' remaining battalions early in the war

Yossi Yehoshua|13:14

Following the intensified fighting in Gaza's Beit Hanoun, which resulted in the death of 10 Israeli soldiers, the IDF has decided to transfer responsibility for the area from the

143rd “Gaza” Division to the 162nd Division, currently engaged in operations in the neighboring town of Jabaliya.

Senior military officials acknowledged errors in the initial division of sectors within the Gaza Strip, where the division was tasked with handling Beit Hanoun alongside the buffer zone along the border, Rafah and the Philadelphi Corridor. The 162nd Division will receive reinforcements to concentrate efforts against Hamas' Beit Hanoun Battalion.

The battalion, previously regarded as one of the weaker units within the terror organization, was easily overrun by the 162nd Division at the start of the war and later by the 252nd Reserve Division.

However, the battalion's operatives have since adapted, now engaging in guerrilla warfare that has claimed the lives of 10 IDF soldiers since the 143rd Division launched a brigade-level operation to clear the town in the past two weeks.

This comes while the IDF is stretched thin, operating simultaneously in Lebanon, Syria, the West Bank, the Jordanian border and Gaza. All fronts are active, with forces operating beyond the border fences in Lebanon, Syria and Gaza.

The military urgently requires additional standing forces and is currently calling up approximately 70,000 more reservists, though this remains insufficient given the extensive challenges.

Over the weekend, the IDF reported four Nahal Brigade soldiers were killed by a powerful explosive device while traveling along a road in Beit Hanoun that was supposed to be fully cleared and secured.

According to an initial investigation, a Hamas terrorist cell took advantage of stormy weather last week to plant an explosive alongside a military logistics route in Beit Hanoun. Such routes are typically secured early in large-scale operations, serving as logistical pathways once cleared of enemy presence and under constant security. Although the route was deemed secure, the terrorists managed to emerge unnoticed—possibly from a previously undiscovered tunnel—plant the device and remotely detonate it. A day earlier, eight soldiers were injured in various degrees in an explosion in Jabaliya. Troops in Beit Hanoun have uncovered over 30 explosive devices over the last two weeks. However, when devices go undetected, as in recent incidents, the toll has been devastating. The explosive detonated on Saturday was standard-issue and linked to Hamas.

In another severe incident last week, where three soldiers were killed in another blast, the explosive is believed to have contained unexploded IDF ordnance found by terrorists, a recurring concern.

The remaining terrorists are also turning the rubble of destroyed buildings to their advantage. Exploiting the extensive destruction and the assumption by forces that bombed or demolished buildings are free of enemy presence, they use the ruins as cover to advance and launch attacks.

Forces in Beit Hanoun are now required to learn from each incident, advancing more cautiously and meticulously searching for signs of hidden explosives during their offensives.

01.13.25 – Mo

Annual 2024 report: 1,866 terror acts, 134 killed, 16,300 rockets, 399 drones

01.13.25 – Mo

Israel releases 2024 terrorism report: 1,866 terror acts, 134 killed

Annual report reveals 16,300 rockets fired at Israel, causing 55 deaths and 699 injuries; 399 hostile aircraft incursions and 132 shooting attacks documented

Itamar Eichner|12:59

The National Information Directorate in the Prime Minister's Office published its 2024 summary report on terrorism Monday, detailing a year of significant violence that left 134 people dead and 1,277 injured.

The report documented attacks originating from seven fronts: Iran, Lebanon, Syria, Gaza, Iraq, Yemen and the West Bank.

The report found that 41 fatalities resulted from shooting attacks, including 13 hostages murdered in Hamas captivity. Nine individuals were killed in stabbing incidents, and six in vehicle-ramming attacks.

The year saw 132 shooting attacks, leaving 108 injured, including 23 with severe injuries. In 41 stabbing attacks, 28 were wounded, while 26 vehicle-ramming incidents caused 86 injuries.

The year marked a surge in rocket fire, with approximately 15,400 rockets fired from Lebanon and 700 from Gaza, leading to 55 deaths and 699 injuries.

October was the deadliest month, with over 6,900 rockets launched during intense fighting with Hezbollah.

According to the report, there were 399 hostile aircraft incursions, 1,246 stone-throwing incidents, 89 bomb placements and 140 firebombings. Over 610 fires caused by rockets and drones scorched over 92,000 acres, including 55,000 acres in northern Israel.

The deadliest month was October, which saw 37 fatalities and 294 injuries, followed by July with 22 deaths and 96 injuries; and August with 20 deaths and 71 injuries.

Compiled with data from the IDF, Shin Bet, Israel Police and other agencies, the report consolidates information on attacks within Israel's borders. Unlike the Shin Bet's report, which includes thwarted attacks, this report focuses solely on executed attacks. It is distributed to Israeli public diplomacy bodies for international advocacy and legitimacy-building efforts.



01.13.25 – Mo

Hind Rajab Foundation (HRF) filed ICC arrest of top Israel general in Italy

01.13.25 – Mo

Anti-Israel group seeks arrest of top Israeli general in Italy

Hind Rajab Foundation files ICC arrest request for Major General Ghassan Alian for alleged weaponization of famine in Gaza

Ynet|11:31

The Hind Rajab Foundation (HRF), known for its legal campaigns against IDF soldiers abroad, has filed an arrest request in Italy against IDF Major General Ghassan Alian, Israel's Coordinator of Government Activities in the Territories (COGAT).

The foundation alleges Alian is in Italy "secretly" and claims this marks the first time it has targeted an Israeli general of his rank with such legal action.

Dyab Abou Jahjah, founder and leader of HRF, revealed on the television program Democracy Now that the organization has filed a case in the International Criminal Court (ICC) against Alian.

"We have filed a case against him at the ICC, asking for any existing arrest warrant to be activated or for a new one to be issued," Abou Jahjah said. "We also informed Italian authorities, urging them to fulfill their obligations under their own statute since they have jurisdiction and Alian does not possess immunity."

The HRF has accused Alian of overseeing policies they describe as war crimes and crimes against humanity, including the blockade of Gaza and targeting civilian infrastructure. The organization claims these actions amount to genocide, citing a total embargo on essential goods and alleged destruction of hospitals and other civilian facilities.

In a post on X (formerly Twitter), the HRF wrote, "Major General Ghassan Alian, head of COGAT, is currently in Rome. Alian oversaw the total blockade of Gaza, weaponizing famine and targeting civilian infrastructure in acts amounting to genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity."

The group further accused Alian of "publicly dehumanizing Palestinians as 'human animals,' reflecting the intent behind his policies." The HRF stated that Italy, as a signatory to the ICC's Rome Statute, is obligated to act immediately to detain Alian.

"With no immunity under international law, Italy must take swift action," the group said, adding that the ICC has issued arrest warrants in the past for similar allegations against Israeli officials.

01.13.25 – Mo

IAF intercept a missile from Yemen to Jordan Valley, Samaria, no injuries or damage

01.13.25 – Mo

Air Force intercepts missile from Yemen following alarms in Jordan Valley, Samaria Shelter-in-place alerts issued for dozens of localities; no immediate reports of casualties or damage

Ynetnews|10:43

The Israeli Air Force intercepted a missile launched from Yemen before it entered Israeli airspace, the IDF confirmed Monday.

The interception followed air raid sirens in the Jordan Valley and Samaria regions, alerting residents to the potential threat. No injuries or damage were reported, and the IDF is continuing to monitor developments.

01.13.25 – Mo

Key issues for 33 hostages; north Gaza, Egypt Corridor, hard-prisoners

01.13.25 – Mo

'Our prisoners' freedom is near,' Hamas says; members of coalition oppose deal  
Terror group confirms for first time progress made in hostage deal talks; first phase would see release of 33 hostages for six-week Gaza cease-fire and 1,000 Palestinian prisoners; Lapid offers PM safety net against opposition in government  
Einav Halabi, Moran Azulay, Sivan Hilaie|07:32

Hamas confirmed on Monday that there was significant progress in negotiations with Israel. "The freedom of our heroic prisoners is near." The terror group also called on Palestinians to escalate confrontations with Israel, citing "increasing crimes against our people, our holy sites, and our prisoners," a spokesperson for the military wing of the terror group said.

After reports that a deal was nearing completion, members of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's coalition voiced their opposition to any deal that would include the withdrawal of troops from Gaza and the release of hardened terrorists from Israeli jails.

In a letter to Netanyahu, coalition lawmakers and parents from the right-wing group of families of hostages said they had serious concerns over Israel's security in case a deal is agreed. They demanded that IDF troops remain in Gaza including in Rafah and the Netzarim Corridor, displaced Gazans not be allowed to return to the northern parts of the Strip and that all hostages be returned in one phase.

Earlier Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich said in a post on X that the pending agreement would be catastrophic for Israel's national security. "We will not be part of a capitulation deal that would include the release of arch-terrorists, stop the war and dissolve its achievement won in blood, while sacrificing the lives of many hostages," he said in his

post. "This is the time to continue in full force, conquer and purify the entire Strip and finally take control of the humanitarian aid from Hamas and open the gates of hell until Hamas is defeated and all the hostages returned."

Support for a deal came from Agudath Israel, a constituent faction of the ultra-Orthodox United Torah Judaism party in Netanyahu's coalition. They called on the prime minister to disregard political considerations and agree to a cease-fire deal. "It is an undisputed moral and national duty to return the hostages home," they said.

Opposition leader Yair Lapid said he would provide Netanyahu with a safety net of support needed to agree to the deal. Lapid said he was told by a Qatari official that Hamas was keen on an agreement. "I told Netanyahu my offer of votes holds and he does not need Ben-Gvir and Smotrich to agree to it."

According to reports, the proposed deal's first phase would see the release of 33 hostages in exchange for a six-week cease-fire in Gaza and the release of some 1,000 Palestinian prisoners. This group reportedly includes 48 individuals re-arrested after being released in the 2011 Shalit deal, 90 women, 150 to 200 prisoners serving life sentences, about 350 minors under 19 and around 560 elderly and ill detainees.

Additional terms of the first phase reportedly under discussion include:

Providing Israel with a list of living hostages.

Relocating Israeli forces outside populated areas in Gaza.

Allowing displaced Palestinians to return to northern Gaza, subject to third-party vehicle inspections.

Reopening the Rafah crossing for humanitarian aid and permitting the exit of patients for medical treatment.

The deal's second phase would commence a week after the first phase is implemented, with the release of remaining hostages in exchange for a negotiated number of Palestinian prisoners and a second six-week cease-fire. Negotiators would also address broader arrangements aimed at ending the war and facilitating an Israeli withdrawal from Gaza.

If an agreement is reached on the second phase, the third phase will focus on rebuilding Gaza and establishing its governance framework.

Sources close to the negotiations emphasized the complexity of the process, noting that talks encompass all 98 hostages held by Hamas and other factions. "The first phase is naturally the focus as it sets everything in motion," one source said. "Efforts are being made to maximize the number of hostages released alive."

Key issues still under discussion include the situation in northern Gaza, the Philadelphi Corridor, and the security perimeter. Decisions about the fate of high-profile prisoners—whether they will return home or be exiled to a third country—also remain unresolved. "The hostages' condition is a critical factor," one insider explained. "Achieving a deal hinges on resolving these outstanding issues."

01.13.25 – Mo

Emerging deal; 42 days IDF stay on Egypt border, 33 released for 100s of prisoners

01.13.25 – Mo

33 hostages to be released in 1st stage of emerging hostage deal

Source tells Arutz Sheva IDF to remain in the Philadelphi Corridor during 1st stage of 42-day ceasefire, not withdraw until all hostages are released, and hundreds of terrorists will be released in exchange for the hostages.

Yoni Kempinski Jan 13, 2025, 8:16 PM (GMT+2)

A political source detailed the details of the hostage deal that is taking shape in a conversation with Arutz Sheva this evening (Monday) and explained where the talks with Hamas stand.

He noted that "there is progress in all components of the agreement formula, advanced stages of negotiations," but emphasized that "there are still no final agreements."

According to the current outline, while the first phase of the deal is being implemented, discussions will begin on the release of the remaining hostages and bodies held by Hamas. The ceasefire is currently set to last 42 days.

The details indicate that the first phase of the deal will include the release of 33 hostages under the "humanitarian" category, including all the captive female soldiers, women, and men over the age of 50. In addition, men who are extremely ill may be released as well even if they are under the age of 50.

At the same time, Israel will release hundreds of terrorists, some with blood on their hands. For each female soldier freed by Hamas, 50 terrorists will be released, including 30 serving life sentences for their crimes. A political source clarified that terrorists with blood will not be deported to Judea and Samaria. In addition, terrorists who participated in the October 7 massacre will not be among those released.

It also appears that under the emerging deal, the IDF will not withdraw from the Gaza Strip until all the hostages are released and that there will be a buffer zone, a perimeter, created inside Gaza. In the first phase of the deal, Israel will continue to remain on the Philadelphi Corridor. On the other hand, there will be security arrangements for the passage of civilians to return to northern Gaza.

In addition, the second phase of the deal will begin on the 16th day of the ceasefire, when the parties will begin discussing the possibility of a permanent ceasefire and the release of additional hostages. The discussions are also expected to focus on long-term issues of the reconstruction of the Gaza Strip and the possibility of a change of government in the Strip.

The source explained that for months Hamas refused to compromise, but has begun to show a level of flexibility more recently. "The change began to take place on July 3rd

when Hamas began to back down from its demands - and from the moment Sinwar was eliminated and we began to attack the Shi'ite axis."

01.13.25 – Mo

Knesset to approve 1 billion shekels for massacre victims, but it's not enough

01.13.25 – Mo

Knesset to approve 1 billion shekels for massacre victims, but it's not enough

Some families will still fall through the cracks: Mother of Nova survivor says she is supporting her son who cannot hold a job but is not due to receive any government assistance; Head of NGO assisting families: 'It is a moral duty,' to provide adequate funds  
Sivan Hilaie|02:14

The Knesset Labor and Welfare Committee is expected on Monday to approve 1 billion shekel to fund assistance to victims of the Oct. 7 Hamas massacre. The final agreement offers a one-time sum ranging from 7,180 shekels to 28,720 shekels, based on certain criteria and a refund of rehabilitation costs totaling up to 30,000 shekels.

Members of family of survivors who were witness to the events, most residents of the city of Ofakim, and adults whose parents were killed in the massacre could fall through the cracks and receive very little or no compensation.

The existing law does not recognize family members who were witness to the massacre by phone or text or those who were already recognized as victims of terror attacks. The funds allotted to cover the needs of those impacted by the massacre are insufficient to cover the costs of medical and emotional rehabilitation and care.

Osnat Hasson, the mother of Nova survivor Elad who represented the parents of survivors of the festival, said she is not eligible for government funds despite the support she has been giving her son. "I cannot work full time, and most of the parents of survivors are in the same position," she said. "My son now depends on me and cannot hold down a job." She said the government should take responsibility and recognize her family and others like it as victims and provide a respectable and adequate response.

Efrat Eton, who heads the "Secure Heart" non-profit, has been providing emotional support for Nova survivors and their families. She said the government has caused fights among families that were impacted instead of learning the different needs and providing appropriate responses. "It is wrong that some survivors who want to rehabilitate would be given disability compensation while others who witnessed their loved ones' trauma and have been providing them with support, are ignored," she said. "This is a moral duty and in the national interest."

Residents of Ofakim, living in the quarter that was overrun by the terrorists on Oct. 7 were allotted only a few thousand shekels.

01.13.25 – Mo

24 dead since Tuesday: Wildfires continue to rage through Los Angeles

01.13.25 – Mo

24 dead and rising: Wildfires continue to rage through Los Angeles

More than 12,000 buildings have been destroyed and the fire has spread across about 160 square kilometers; (61 sq mi) About 150,000 remain evacuated from their homes, and the outlook for the future is worrying: Strong winds will resume this week, making firefighting operations more difficult

News Agencies|00:08

The death toll from the massive wildfires raging in and around Los Angeles has risen to 24, with at least 16 others still missing. According to the Los Angeles County Coroner's Office, eight people were killed in the devastated Pacific Palisades neighborhood and 16 in the Eaton neighborhood. Authorities expect the death toll to rise as the search continues.

Officials said they expected that figure to increase as teams with cadaver dogs conduct systematic grid searches in leveled neighborhoods. Authorities have established a center where people can report the missing.

The fires, which spread over more than 160 square kilometers, have destroyed more than 12,000 structures, including homes and apartments, and have also damaged vehicles. The disaster affects a region of about 13 million residents, with about 150,000 still under evacuation orders. Officials said last night that most evacuation orders will not be lifted until high wind warnings are removed. In addition to the evacuees, tens of thousands of California residents are experiencing power outages due to the fire.

The National Weather Service issued red flag warnings for severe fire conditions through Wednesday, with sustained winds of 50 mph (80 kph) and gusts in the mountains reaching 70 mph (113 kph). The most dangerous day will be Tuesday, said weather service meteorologist Rich Thompson.

Fire fighting crews from California and nine other states are part of the ongoing response that includes nearly 1,400 fire engines, 84 aircraft and more than 14,000 personnel, including newly arrived firefighters from Mexico.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky proposed sending firefighters to Los Angeles on Sunday night, instructing the country's interior minister to "prepare for the possible participation of Ukrainian rescuers in the fight against the fires in California." In a video posted by Zelensky, he said that "the situation there is extremely difficult, and Ukrainians can help Americans save lives." He later added that "150 firefighters are already ready." The fire broke out nearly a week ago on Tuesday, and despite relatively calm winds that have allowed firefighters to begin to gain control of the fires in recent days, the outlook for the future is worrying and predicts a resumption of strong winds during the week, in an area that has not seen rain in more than eight months.

According to estimates, the fires in Los Angeles are already among the most expensive in U.S. history, and the investment bank J.P. Morgan estimates the economic damage at about \$50 billion. AccuWeather, a private company that provides data on the weather and its impact, predicts that the economic damage could reach \$135-\$150 billion.

The investigation into the incident revealed serious failures in emergency infrastructure. California Governor Gavin Newsom ordered an independent investigation to understand why a 10-million-gallon water reservoir was shut down and many fire hydrants were not working. "This is very disturbing," he said. "We need answers to ensure that this never happens again and that all resources are available to us to fight these catastrophic fires." Los Angeles Fire Chief Christine Crowley sharply criticized the city's leadership, alleging a lack of funding for the firefighting system. "When a firefighter goes to a hydrant, we expect there to be water there," she said.

The flames consumed schools, churches, a synagogue, libraries, bars, restaurants, banks and historic sites, as well as Will Rogers' Western Farmhouse and another historic mansion built in 1887. The Walt Disney Company announced a \$15 million donation to recovery and relief efforts.

California fire officials say the cause of the fires remains unclear and that an active investigation is underway, but U.S. media reported last week that arson investigators are involved in the investigation of the fire in the Palisades neighborhood, which was the first in a wave of fires and caused enormous destruction. It is already being described as one of the largest natural disasters in Los Angeles history.

The pictures from Los Angeles speak for themselves. Where the homes of celebrities and movie stars once stood, what is now mostly visible are ruined buildings, burned trees jutting out from the rubble, and isolated mansions left exposed on all sides. The Pacific Palisades neighborhood has been used extensively for filming movies and television shows. The neighborhood, which was established about 100 years ago as a religious commune, quickly became highly sought-after due to its beauty and proximity to nature - a long stretch of coastline, rugged cliffs and green valleys - as well as to the city center. The average price of a house there was \$4.6 million. Among the buildings demolished in the upscale neighborhood were the homes of celebrities such as Billy Crystal, Jeff Bridges and Paris Hilton. Palisades High School, which appeared in films such as "Carrie" and "Friday the 13th," was completely destroyed. The Real Inn Malibu seafood restaurant, a favorite of Jerry Seinfeld and Cindy Crawford, also was destroyed.

01.12.25 – Su

Israeli Druze leader travels to US to rally support for Syrian Druze protection

01.12.25 – Su

Israeli Druze leader travels to US to rally support for Syrian Druze protection

Amid fears of civil war in Syria and the rise of HTS chief Ahmad al-Sharaa, the Druze community resists disarmament and demands international intervention to address rights violations and ensure stability in southern Syria amid growing tensions  
Einav Halabi | 13:15

Amid fears of a civil war in Syria following the fall of Assad's regime and the rise of jihadist rebel leader Ahmad al-Sharaa, minority communities, particularly the Druze, are increasingly concerned about their safety and future in the country.

The Druze fear persecution if they do not comply with al-Sharaa's new mandates, which include revising Syria's school curriculum to emphasize Islamic teachings and Quranic studies, even for non-Muslims. Furthermore, the new leadership in Syria has refused to appoint a Druze governor in Sweida, the largest Druze-majority region in the Middle East, located in southwestern Syria. Instead, Ahmad Ouda, who is held responsible for the deaths of over 200 Druze during 2017 clashes—primarily in the village of Hader—has been appointed to oversee Druze areas.

In light of these developments, Druze residents in Sweida have refused to disarm and surrender their weapons to al-Sharaa's forces, which are essentially a rebranded version of the Jabhat al-Nusra terrorist organization, which has a history of carrying out attacks in Druze areas. The Druze have also blocked the entry of new regime police forces into their regions until their rights and status are secured.

Before ascending to power, al-Sharaa made public statements against the Druze, declaring, "They are Muslims who have lost their way and must be brought back to the right path." Such remarks have alarmed the Druze minority, who remain deeply skeptical of the new Syrian leader's assurances.

Sheikh Mowafaq Tarif, the spiritual leader of the Druze community in Israel, is actively working to protect the Druze in Syria and ensure their safety amid growing instability. Sheikh Tarif has traveled to the United States, where he has met with senior international leaders, including UN Secretary-General António Guterres, to discuss the plight of the Druze in Syria and Lebanon due to the current volatile situation.

During his visit to Washington and New York, Sheikh Tarif held meetings with U.S. senators, congress members, senior officials from both the outgoing and incoming U.S. administrations, Israeli Ambassador to the U.S. Mike Herzog and Israeli Ambassador to the UN Danny Danon. He also addressed a prominent think tank focused on Middle Eastern issues.

Following their meeting, Ambassador Danon said: "I thank Sheikh Tarif for his significant visit to the U.S. The Druze community is an inseparable part of Israeli society. We are doing everything in our power to assist them and ensure their safety both in Israel and abroad. We will continue to work on the international stage to guarantee their well-being."

Sheikh Tarif emphasized the need for international awareness and intervention, saying, "The uncertainty in southern Syria necessitates international involvement and monitoring."



Stability in Syria cannot be achieved without ensuring the stability and historical rights of Druze communities.”

During the meetings, Sheikh Tarif also raised the issue of Israeli captives held in Gaza, urging greater involvement from the UN. Secretary-General Guterres reaffirmed his commitment, emphasizing that the hostages should be released unconditionally as a top humanitarian priority. He noted that he carries a token from the captives’ families as a constant reminder of the issue.

01.12.25 – Su

Israel strikes Lebanon smuggling targets near Syrian border, presented by monitors

01.12.25 – Su

Watch: Israel strikes 'targets posing threat to Israeli home front' deep within Lebanon  
IDF says threat eliminated after being presented to monitoring mechanism of cease-fire understandings between Israel and Lebanon

Lior Ben Ari|17:08

Israel struck multiple locations across southern and eastern Lebanon, including areas far away from the border, the IDF reported Sunday night.

"Prior to the strike, the threat posed by the targets to the Israeli home front and IDF troops was presented to the monitoring mechanism of the cease-fire understandings between Israel and Lebanon, and the threats were not addressed.," the statement read.

The IDF added that the targets included a rocket launch site, a military installation and transit routes along the Syria-Lebanon border used for smuggling weapons to the Hezbollah terror organization.

According to Hezbollah-affiliated Lebanese newspaper Al-Akhbar, strikes targeted the southern Lebanon village of Houmine El Faouqa, approximately 18 kilometers (11 miles) from the Israeli border town of Metula.

Later, additional strikes were reported near the village of Janta in the Bekaa Valley, close to the Syrian border, around 80 kilometers (50 miles) from Metula.

01.12.25 – Su

Biden urges PM for cease-fire before he leaves White House

01.12.25 – Su

Biden calls for immediate cease-fire in call with Netanyahu, White House says  
Eight days before leaving office, US president urges PM to secure hostage deal before Trump’s inauguration; Netanyahu updates Biden on Israel’s Doha delegation, as VP-elect JD Vance projects progress soon

Reuters|13:02

U.S. President Joe Biden spoke on Sunday with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, the White House said, as U.S. officials race to reach a Gaza hostage and cease-fire deal before Biden leaves office on Jan. 20.

Biden and Netanyahu discussed efforts underway to reach a deal to halt the fighting in the Palestinian enclave and free the remaining hostages there, the White House said in a statement after the two leaders spoke by telephone.

Biden "stressed the immediate need for a cease-fire in Gaza and return of the hostages with a surge in humanitarian aid enabled by a stoppage in the fighting under the deal," it said.

Netanyahu updated Biden on progress in the talks and on the mandate he has given his top-level security delegation now in Doha in order to advance a hostage deal, Netanyahu said in a statement.

The two leaders also discussed "the fundamentally changed regional circumstances following the cease-fire deal in Lebanon, the fall of the Assad regime in Syria, and the weakening of Iran's power in the region," the White House said.

Biden's national security adviser Jake Sullivan told CNN's State of the Union earlier on Sunday that the parties were "very, very close" to reaching a deal, but still had to get it across the finish line.

He said Biden was getting daily updates on the talks in Doha, where Israeli and Palestinian officials have said since Thursday that some progress has been made in the indirect talks between Israel and Hamas.

"We are still determined to use every day we have in office to get this done," Sullivan said, "and we are not, by any stretch of imagination, setting this aside."

He said there was still a chance to reach an agreement before Biden leaves office, but that it was also possible "Hamas, in particular, remains intransigent."

During their call, Netanyahu also thanked Biden for his lifelong support of Israel and "the extraordinary support from the United States for Israel's security and national defense," the White House said.

Israel launched its assault in Gaza after Hamas fighters stormed across its borders in October 2023, killing 1,200 people and taking more than 250 hostages, according to Israeli tallies.

U.S. Vice President-elect JD Vance told Fox News Sunday in an interview taped on Saturday that he expects a deal for the release of U.S. hostages in the Middle East to be announced in the final days of the Biden administration, maybe in the last day or two. U.S. President-elect Donald Trump, a staunch supporter of Israel, has strongly backed Netanyahu's goal of destroying Hamas. He has promised to bring peace to the Middle East, but has not said how he would accomplish that.

01.12.25 – Su

PA official claims over 3,000 prisoners to be released for 25 hostages in first phase

01.12.25 – Su

Palestinian senior official claims more than 3,000 terrorists to be released in deal

The man responsible for the Palestinian prisoners issue makes a rare statement: All children and women in Israeli prisons will be released, along with dozens of terrorists from the Shalit deal

Shilo Freid, Yael Ciechanover, Alexandra Lukash, Einav Halabi|06:18

Qadura Fares, head of the Palestinian Prisoners Affairs Committee who is responsible for the terrorists held in Israeli prisons, made a rare statement on Sunday amid reported progress in the hostage negotiations.

According to him, in the first phase of the deal, 25 hostages will be released in exchange for the release of 48 terrorists who were released in the Shalit deal and have since been re-imprisoned; about 200 terrorists who were sentenced to life imprisonment; as well as about 1,000 other prisoners - including all the children, women and sick people held in Israeli prisons.

In an interview with the Palestinian news agency Ma'an, Fares claimed that estimates indicate that the actual number of Palestinian prisoners to be released will be much higher, more than 3,000. Israel insisted on including additional Israeli hostages on the list, including wounded soldiers. However, Israel would have to release more terrorists serving life sentences for hostages who do not meet the "humanitarian" category.

On Saturday, a senior political source told Ynet ahead of the senior delegation's departure for Qatar that the discussions are about the release of 33 hostages, according to the list of 34 that was revealed last week - which no longer includes Youssef Ziyadne, whose body and the body of his son were recovered from a tunnel in Gaza.

"We are discussing a list of 33 hostages, all of whom need to return both alive and dead. This is the first stage of the deal," he said. According to him, "The negotiations are about everyone, the living and the dead, and deal with the transition from one stage to the next and how we discuss the second stage, with the understanding that 98 hostages need to be brought home. Today, too, there was a discussion on the key points because this is one of the components of the deal."

While Israel claims that discussions are ongoing on the issue of prisoners to be released, Fares noted that all terrorists who are to be released, except for those sentenced to life, are supposed to return to their homes, whether in Israeli territory, Gaza or the West Bank. The terrorists serving life sentences will probably be deported to Qatar, Egypt or Turkey. On Saturday, in a conference call with the envoys of outgoing President Joe Biden and President-elect Donald Trump, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu decided to send a senior delegation to Qatar. The delegation will include Mossad chief David Barnea, Shin

Bet chief Ronen Bar, Maj. Gen. (res.) Nitzan Alon and the prime minister's political advisor Ofir Falk.

In the meantime, cabinet members are almost completely excluded from the talks on the deal. On Sunday, after U.S. President-elect Trump conveyed a message through his envoy to the Middle East that he wants to see a deal formed by January 20, the date of his inauguration, Minister of National Missions Orit Strook said in an interview: "Trump does not want a terrible deal like the one that is on the table to be under his name. Many soldiers will pay with their lives and what we see now is nothing, all the effort to clean up the Gaza Strip will go to waste. Such a deal is a clear victory and a reward for terrorism."

Yehuda Cohen, the father of kidnapped soldier Nimrod Cohen, said that "Strook's words are shameful, atrocious words. Instead of speaking on behalf of Trump as if he were your friend in the Religious Zionist Party, and instead of continuing to rant about continuing a futile fight at the expense of the lives of IDF soldiers and the suffering of the hostages, including my son, let the minister with the unnecessary office take stock of all the horrific events that have occurred since October 7, 2023 and resign and stand trial".

Sharon Sharabi, brother of hostages Eli Sharabi and the late Yossi Sharabi, told Ynet on Sunday that "these upheavals that we have been experiencing for 15 months cannot be explained in words. What is happening in Doha right now is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to return the hostages, both alive and dead. It is time to make courageous decisions to return as many of our people as possible from there. If we wait a little longer, we will have no one to bring back."

According to him, the families of the hostages are meeting with parties involved in the negotiations. "Everything that is happening right now, and this uncertainty, does not foreshadow the return of the hostages home. Both Israel and Hamas have learned from each other."

"Both sides understood that a prolonged cease-fire is crucial, but this deal will also return the values of the State of Israel and the hostages home. I have had enough disappointments. Ultimately, after 15 months, this is a colossal failure. We should have paid the price long ago. Perhaps the geopolitical changes are affecting Hamas," he added.

01.12.25 – Su

Pro-PA critics claim Hamas rapes did not happen; victims died or have no evidence

01.12.25 – Su

Pro-Palestinian online campaign claims Hamas rapes did not happen

Prosecutor purposely misquoted in propaganda effort says Hamas terrorists and Gazans who invaded Israel on Oct. 7 raped young women and murdered them, sometimes the during the act; says any distortion of this fact is a lie

Ilana Curie|04:32

Palestinian propagandists distorted the words of an Israeli prosecutor, who was until recently a member of the team prosecuting Hamas sexual crimes on October 7, to claim there had been no rapes during the massacre.

Moran Gez said in an interview with Ynet's sister publication Yedioth Ahronoth that it was hard to prosecute the rapes and sexual assault committed by the terrorists because many of the victims of the atrocities did not survive and therefore could not come forward.

"Unfortunately, we have no victims. They were either murdered or some of those who were raped chose not to come forward to share what had happened," she said. She said women's groups also had few recorded testimonies although they were approached by parents asking what they can do when their daughter was a victim of those crimes.

Although there is evidence of rapes and sexual assaults, the difficulty in trial is attributing the atrocity to a particular perpetrator. "I would lower expectations," Gez said. "I know there is a desire in the public and I understand the need when dealing with such heinous crimes, but most of the cases may not meet the standards of the courts for convictions.

Soon after the interview was published, posts appeared on social media claiming the accusations of rape were a "mistake," or a "joke." A journalist who has hundreds of thousands of followers led a campaign of denial of the rape accusations, using the interview and the fact that no charges were filed, as "evidence" that no such crimes were committed.

Gez said she was astounded at the post. "Hamas terrorists raped young Israelis and murdered them, even while the rape was still going on," she said. "Amid such trauma, women who were raped by the terrorists and residents of Gaza who followed them across the border, could not muster the courage to report the ordeal. Any other interpretation of my words is nothing more than cheap propaganda that ignores the fact that Hamas terrorists committed war crimes. The only appropriate punishment for them, in my view, is death."

The former prosecutor said that pro-Palestinian groups have distorted her comments and have taken them out of context. "Hamas operatives and others who took part in the October 7 massacre committed war crimes that include all kinds of sexual offenses, most of which resulted in the murder of their victims."

01.12.25 – Su

IDF intensifies West Bank operations; tactic plans to seize camp areas

01.12.25 – Su

IDF intensifies West Bank operations despite decreasing number of terror attacks

The hunt for the terrorists from the attack in the village of Al-Funduk continues throughout the weekend; Despite decrease in number of attacks, the IDF intends to increase its activity its intensity

Elisha Ben Kimon|04:28

After the deadly attack last week, in which three people were murdered, the situation assessment in the West Bank has not changed but is definitely at an important milestone. The IDF Central Command is continuing the hunt for the terrorists who carried out the attack, with the understanding being that they came from the northern West Bank.

On Friday, the IDF operated with special units in the heart of the Kabatiya camp. Eight wanted individuals were arrested, and the homes of the three terrorists who carried out the attack in the Al-Funduk were mapped. The terrorists' time is limited, and the circle around them is tightening. At the same time, and despite the decrease in the number of attacks, the Central Command agrees that the scope of operations must be increased even further, with an emphasis on the northern area of the West Bank.

The Head of Central Command, Major General Avi Bluth, is allowing brigades to operate relatively freely in the West Bank with offensive operations. Security sources explained that a certain change had occurred following the IDF attacks in the Jordan Valley area. The IDF has attacked the area with special forces and the Air Force in operations that lasted for days.

The security establishment notes the change that has occurred in the region, similar to the Nablus area, which also underwent a change after the counter-terrorism operation. However, at the same time, the same sources explain that the work is far from over and there are still terrorist infrastructures that are being attempted to be established in those areas.

In the days following the terror attack, questions were raised about the security coordination that the IDF maintains with the Palestinian Authority's security mechanisms. Although the PA security personnel operate in the West Bank, some voices in the government call for the dissolution of the PA.

Despite the "lone wolf" terrorism Israel experiences by Palestinian civilians who occasionally take a knife or an axe and set out to carry out a terror attack, the security establishment notes that the Palestinian people have not joined the war through an intifada similar to previous operations.

The Palestinian restraint must be taken into account despite calls to wipe out Jenin as was heard by Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich. Despite the general decrease in numbers of cases, daily terrorism actions such as throwing Molotov cocktails still takes place in the West Bank.

And yet, the West Bank is a deceptive region. Bluth, who also visited the families of Master Sgt. Elad Yaakov Winkelstein, Rachel Cohen and Aliza Reiss over the weekend, who were murdered in the horrific attack, agrees that offensive activity should be increased in the coming weeks.

Security sources explain that the IDF should not act based on intelligence and in a targeted manner, but rather seize an area like the Nur a-Shams refugee camp or the Jenin camp, surround it, conduct house-to-house searches and confiscate weapons.

Several months ago, the Central Command carried out such activities, which began with a massive counter-terrorism operation in Jenin. Although the forces relied on intelligence, the IDF raided locations without indications and found weapon caches in civilian areas. In the coming months, the Central Command must increase its activity in the heart of the refugee camps, make use of diverse attack patterns, and increase the pressure on the terrorist battalions in the northern West Bank.

01.11.25 – Sa

Mossad, Shin Bet & US hope to secure hostage deal in Qatar

01.11.25 – Sa

U.S. officials signal hope to secure hostage deal in Qatar

Netanyahu approves senior Israeli delegation to leave for Doha talks with Hamas after discussion with American envoys; Israel's Security Cabinet members excluded from negotiations

Itamar Eichner, Roni Green Shaulov, Yael Ciechanover|15:43

Officials in U.S. President Joe Biden's administration on Saturday expressed slightly less skepticism about the ongoing negotiations for a hostage deal with Hamas compared to their previous remarks in recent days.

They noted progress in the talks, attributing the shift to the arrival of Biden's Middle East envoy, Brett McGurk, in Qatar. The current goal is to finalize a deal before U.S. President-elect Donald Trump's inauguration on January 20.

Trump's incoming Mid-east envoy Steve Witkoff, who made an unexpected visit to Israel after staying in Doha, conveyed the same message regarding the expected timeline for the hostage deal. The aligned statements from both the Biden and Trump administrations clarify to Hamas that there is no difference in the American position.

Last week, members of Biden's team had expressed skepticism about the possibility of reaching a deal soon. This, however, appears to have changed, as Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu instructed Mossad Director David Barnea, Shin Bet Chief Ronen Bar, Maj. Gen. (res) Nitzan Alon and Diplomatic Adviser Ophir Falk to travel to Doha "to advance negotiations for the release of the hostages."

The decision, following multiple delays of the Israeli delegation's departure to Qatar, was made during a conference call between Netanyahu, Witkoff and McGurk. After a brief stay in Israel and a meeting with Netanyahu, Witkoff returned to Doha, where the senior Israeli delegation is also expected to arrive.

“This time, there’s optimism and it feels closer than ever,” a senior Israeli official said, but added, “We’ve been at this point in the past.” Meanwhile, members of the Security Cabinet have reported being entirely excluded from the negotiations for the hostage deal.

The Hostages and Missing Persons Families Forum welcomed the decision to send a delegation to Qatar and urged decision-makers, “You mustn’t miss this opportunity.” The group appealed to the delegation members, adding, “Act resolutely and return home with the long-awaited news: an agreement that guarantees the return of all the hostages — those alive and the deceased to be recovered for proper burial in their homeland.”

01.11.25 – Sa

West Bank mosques used as training centers & sniper base to attack IDF soldiers

01.11.25 – Sa

Terrorists use West Bank mosques to attack soldiers, IDF reports

Troops operating in Jabaliya and Tulkarm encounter terrorists exploiting mosques for cover, weapons storage and mounting attacks against forces

Ynet|12:44

The IDF Spokesperson’s Unit reported on Saturday that forces operating within the West Bank’s Jabaliya and Tulkarm encountered terrorists making use of several mosques and other civilian buildings in the area to mount attacks against troops, risking civilian lives in the process.

“Terrorist activity in Judea and Samaria persistently takes place within civilian infrastructures, including mosques, hospitals, medical centers and educational institutions,” the IDF said in a statement.

According to the military, three main mosques were identified as being used by terrorists in Jabaliya and Tulkarm: Jabriyat Mosque and Khalid Ibn al-Walid Mosque in Jenin, and the Abu Bakr al-Siddiq Mosque in Tulkarm.

“During counterterrorism activity conducted in the area of Jenin on 19.11.2024, terrorists opened fire at IDF soldiers from inside and near the Jabriyat Mosque, using it for cover,” the IDF reported.

“The following morning, soldiers returned to the mosque to search it and found a shooting range on the lower floor of the mosque, a training area and shooting positions overlooking the forces and the area adjacent to the mosque. Dozens of bullet shells were located next to every window, left from the gunfire carried out the night before.”

“During the same operational activity, an IAF aircraft identified a large number of armed terrorists firing at IDF soldiers using the Khalid Ibn al-Walid Mosque as cover.”



The military added that during operations in Tulkarm, “an IAF aircraft identified terrorists throwing explosive devices at IDF soldiers from the roof of the Abu Bakr al-Siddiq Mosque.”

The IDF added that troops operating in the West Bank since the start of the war in Gaza have eliminated at least 165 terrorists in approximately 110 airstrikes. “These strikes are conducted with precision to avoid harming uninvolved civilians and in accordance with international law,” the IDF added.

01.11.25 – Sa

Hind Rajab Foundation barred from Denmark pro-Palestine conference

01.11.25 – Sa

Hind Rajab Foundation member barred from pro-Palestine conference  
European Palestinian Network disinvites HRF representative from conference after other participants refuse to take part in joint panel due to group's affiliation with Hamas and Hezbollah

Itamar Eichner|06:29

The European Palestinian Network (EPN) on Friday canceled the participation of the Hind Rajab Foundation (HRF) representative at its first joint conference in Denmark, following Israeli pressure and the refusal of other participants to share a panel with Haroon Raza, a Netherlands-based lawyer representing HRF.

According to the organizers, the conference aims to gather experts, organizations, influential personalities and individuals from across Europe “to share and broaden our knowledge and to strengthen European civil, intellectual and professional unity around freedom, rights and justice for Palestine.”

The European Palestinian Network Conference, taking place in Denmark, had invited the #HindRajabFoundation to participate in one of its panels today. Mr. Haroon Raza traveled to Copenhagen to represent the HRF,... [pic.twitter.com/DVUPHNqNPw](https://pic.twitter.com/DVUPHNqNPw)

HRF, known for filing legal complaints against IDF soldiers for alleged war crimes, said that Raza had already traveled to Copenhagen for the conference. In a post on X, HRF blamed Israel for spreading “lies” and claimed the decision to exclude its representative was based on false information.

“Information disseminated in the Israeli press falsely linked us to resistance movements in Lebanon and Palestine. Some invitees refused to share a panel with the HRF. As a result, the organizers decided to cancel Mr. Raza,” the post read.

The foundation expressed regret over the incident, saying, “The Hind Rajab Foundation is an independent organization, legally recognized under Belgian law. While our officials and volunteers are entitled to their personal views, our sole mission remains the pursuit of

justice and accountability for victims and perpetrators of this ongoing genocide." HRF added that it would decline future invitations to similar events or conferences.

Earlier, Ynet reported that HRF had lodged war crimes complaints against an IDF soldier visiting Sweden, and had taken similar actions in Denmark, Finland and Norway in an effort to prevent the soldier from leaving before legal proceedings could begin. The Diaspora Affairs Ministry recently published a report identifying the HRF founders as Dyab Abou Jahjah and Karim Hassoun, both Lebanese natives currently residing in Belgium.

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Ynet-News, January 10, 2025 – Friday 10<sup>th</sup> Month-Day 05

01.10.25 – Fr- - - News – Friday

Prosecutors still handle countless terrorists cases without individual evidence

01.10.25 – Fr- - - News – Friday

High alert for Houthi retaliation after IDF strike on Yemen

01.10.25 – Fr- - - News – Friday

IDF Deputy Chief of Staff requests to end his tenure next month as planned

01.10.25 – Fr- - - News – Friday

Saturday, October 26 tunnel clearing, caused an earthquake warning in Israel

01.10.25 – Fr- - - News – Friday

Middle Eastern coalition advantages needed to eradicate Houthis

01.10.25 – Fr- - - News – Friday

Lebanon elected Joseph Aoun as president; vows army's full control of border

01.10.25 – Fr- - - News – Friday

Reservists appeal for review to missed opportunities warning of Hamas

01.10.25 – Fr- - - News – Friday

Katz shifts IDF to complete defeat of Hamas when Trump takes office

01.10.25 – Fr- - - News – Friday

Israel rallies global support to secure release of researcher kidnapped in Iraq

01.10.25 – Fr- - - News   Placed in January 10 spot – Friday

IDF, US & British forces struck Yemen as Houthis held weekly rally for Gaza

01.09.25 – Th- - - News – Thursday

Israel plans to set zone of control in Syria amid new regime worries

01.09.25 – Th- - - News – Thursday

US House await Senate to sanction ICC over Netanyahu arrest warrant

01.09.25 – Th- - - News – Thursday

Complaint in Sweden attempts to persecute IDF soldiers around the world

01.09.25 – Th- - - News – Thursday

US lacks progress in hostage deal; Trump envoy arrives in Doha tomorrow

01.09.25 – Th- - - News Placed in January 09 spot – Thursday

Over the course of the war; 40 missiles, 320 drones fired at Israel from Yemen

01.09.25 – Th- - - News – Thursday

Singapore arrests 3 locals radicalized online to join Hamas & Iran against Israel

01.09.25 – Th- - - News – Thursday

Northern Israel man indicted in explosive vest bomb plot inspired by Gaza war

01.09.25 – Th- - - News – Thursday

Polish president calls to shield Netanyahu from arrest ahead of Auschwitz memorial

01.09.25 – Th- - - News – Thursday

IDF to recognize and support lone reservists with expanded benefits

01.08.25 – We- - - News – Wednesday

Israel's underground prison reopened to detain Hamas, Hezbollah terrorists

01.08.25 – We- - - News Placed in January 08 spot – Wednesday

IDF will now conceal the identities of all troops, amid global legal threats

01.08.25 – We- - - News – Wednesday

Judge calls out unequal police treatment of Orthodox Haredi protests

01.08.25 – We- - - News – Wednesday

No IDF withdraw without Lebanon action against Hezbollah, per agreement

01.08.25 – We- - - News – Wednesday

Amnesty International suspends Israel branch; failed to integrate PA leaders

01.08.25 – We- - - News – Wednesday

Trump shares video of Obama CIA to remove Assad from Syria

01.08.25 – We- - - News – Wednesday

UNRWA evidence grows as ties to Hamas & other terror groups exposed

01.08.25 – We- - - News – Wednesday

IDF scrambles to combat flood of weapons into the West Bank

01.08.25 – We- - - News – Wednesday

Hamas chaos in Syria, expands around the world for Jewish targets

01.07.25 – Tu- - - News – Tuesday

Trump envoy heads to Qatar as hostage deal nears, reaching for progress

01.07.25 – Tu- - - News – Tuesday

Foreign minister Gideon Sa'ar visits UAE to stabilize & support post-war Gaza

01.07.25 – Tu- - - News – Tuesday

Israel's UN ambassador expects fight against Houthis & for hostages must be taken

01.07.25 – Tu- - - News – Tuesday

IDF & PA security focus on West Bank terrorists; Smotrich moves defense to offense

01.07.25 – Tu- - - News – Tuesday

Hostage families in purgatory between hope and despair as negotiations drag along

01.07.25 – Tu- - - News – Tuesday

Elbit Systems will create raw materials & munitions to end IDF import delays

01.07.25 – Tu- - - News – Tuesday

IDF interrogate Hamas hospital worker on missiles, grenades & arms distribution

01.07.25 – Tu- - - News Placed in January 07 spot – Tuesday

Victim's family wins court order to seize PA funds; \$2.6 million per victim

01.07.25 – Tu- - - News – Tuesday

Venezuela claims attempted coup; arrested 125 alleged mercenaries in a CIA plot

01.06.25 – Mo- - - News – Monday Q1 Moon 5:57pm

Israel claims bias from new UN Middle East envoy due to close ties with PA

01.06.25 – Mo- - - News – Monday Q1 Moon 5:57pm

Two weeks before inauguration, Trump warns Gaza over hostages, takes jab at Biden

01.06.25 – Mo- - - News – Monday Q1 Moon 5:57pm

IDF wary of retreat amid Lebanese army stalled action in southern Lebanon

01.06.25 – Mo- - - News – Monday Q1 Moon 5:57pm

Minute-by-minute: Chilling details of West Bank drive-by attack

01.06.25 – Mo- - - News – Monday Q1 Moon 5:57pm

Hamas list of 34 hostages that may be released; 66 hostages not on the list

01.06.25 – Mo- - - News Placed in January 06 spot – Monday Q1 Moon 5:57pm  
3 dead, 6 hurt in West Bank drive by shooting attack at bus & cars

01.06.25 – Mo- - - News – Monday Q1 Moon 5:57pm  
10 women, 11 elderly and 2 small boys on list for humanitarian hostage release

01.05.25 – Su- - - News Placed in January 05 spot – Sunday  
PA Hind Rajab Foundation in Belgium, files arrest warrants on IDF soldiers abroad

01.05.25 – Su- - - News – Sunday  
 Hamas names 34 hostages, Israel denies getting a list; heavy secrecy in initial phase

01.05.25 – Su- - - News – Sunday  
A guide for IDF soldiers: How to act if arrested abroad & what to check before travel

01.05.25 – Su- - - News – Sunday  
UNRWA denies news reports, it will stop operating in Gaza and West Bank

01.05.25 – Su- - - News – Sunday  
IDF troops emerge from a disguised 'ambulance' in Nablus, weapons ready

01.05.25 – Su- - - News – Sunday  
Mossad chief in Qatar Monday as hostage release talks reach critical stage

01.05.25 – Su- - - News – Sunday  
Brazil, Chile, Cyprus, Slovenia & Netherlands, investigate Israeli soldiers for war crimes

01.05.25 – Su- - - News – Sunday  
IDF downs Yemeni missile before reaching Israel, alarm triggers in northern town

01.04.25 – Sa- - - News – Saturday  
US & Israel pessimistic on ongoing Qatar hostage deal

01.04.25 – Sa- - - News – Saturday  
US in Beirut Monday support Lebanon's presidential election & cease-fire agreement

01.04.25 – Sa- - - News Placed in January 04 spot – Saturday  
Israel to Gaza drug-smuggling via UAV Bedouin drones daily

01.04.25 – Sa- - - News – Saturday  
 Hamas releases video showing sign of life from hostage Liri Albag

01.04.25 – Sa- - - News – Saturday  
Biden's last hoorah: \$8 billion limited weapons package to Israel is in the works