



The Sabra Report

Israel and Hamas Agree to Hostage Deal

CNN, November 22nd, 2023

Recap:

Israel and Hamas have reached a deal for a four-day pause in fighting in exchange for the release of 50 women and children held hostage in Gaza.

The Context:

- ✦ Israel entered Gaza to destroy Hamas after the terror group massacred over 1,200 people in Southern Israel and kidnapped 240 others, including children and the elderly. The war has displaced over 250,000 Israelis from communities near Gaza and along Israel's northern border with Lebanon. According to Hamas, 14,500 people have died in Gaza since the start of the war [1] but Hamas's figures are unverifiable. Over 1.5 million Gazans are displaced.
- ✦ While Israel has made significant progress in dismantling Hamas's infrastructure in Northern Gaza, mounting pressure from families of the hostages forced the Israeli government's hand to strike a deal, which also comes amid growing international pressure for more humanitarian support for Gaza. Hamas committed to release 50 hostages over four days [2] and 150 Palestinian will be released from Israeli prisons. Most are male teenagers aged 16 to 18. The total number of Palestinians in Israeli prisons is 8,300 [3].
- ✦ The pause is set to begin Friday morning with the first hostages to be released Friday afternoon. Mossad Director David Barnea will receive a daily list with civilian hostage names to be released the following day. Israel will then prepare its own list of security prisoners for release [4]. Hostages will be brought by the Red Cross to the border where they will be met by specially trained Israeli soldiers. Upon verification, hostages will be reunited with their families.
- ✦ The deal also allows entry to hundreds of trucks carrying aid relief, medical supplies, and fuel into Gaza. Israel has been reluctant to allow fuel into Gaza, citing concerns Hamas will use it to power its operations. Israel agreed to not gather overhead drone intelligence for six hours every day during the truce, enabling Hamas to gather women and children hostages from different locations across Gaza [5].
- ✦ Both sides stress the war is not over. Israel said it "will continue the war in order to return home all of the hostages, complete the elimination of Hamas and ensure that there will be no new threat to the State of Israel from Gaza." Hamas cautioned "our hands will remain on the trigger [6]."

Conversation Points:

- ✦ Was there any alternative for Israel other than accepting this deal?
- ✦ What are the pitfalls of negotiating with terrorists?
- ✦ What is the probability that the aid entering Gaza will be diverted to Hamas?
- ✦ What is Israel's path forward with Hamas's army largely intact and embedded within 2 million Palestinians in Southern Gaza?

Notes:

1. [Israel-Hamas war live: Palestinians buried in mass grave as truce nears](#), Al Jazeera, November 22nd, 2023.
2. [Release of 50 abducted women, children to begin 10 a.m. Thursday - Israeli official](#), TAL SCHNEIDER and CARRIE KELLER-LYNN, Times of Israel, November 22nd, 2023.
3. [Israel-Hamas deal will go into effect when the first Israeli hostages are released](#), Scott Neuman, Daniel Estrin, Ruth Sherlock, Rachel Treisman, NPR, November 22nd, 2023.
4. [Mossad head receives list of released hostages in trip to Qatar](#), JERUSALEM POST STAFF, NOVEMBER 22, 2023
5. [Release of 50 abducted women, children to begin 10 a.m. Thursday - Israeli official](#), TAL SCHNEIDER and CARRIE KELLER-LYNN, Times of Israel, November 22nd, 2023.
6. [Israel-Hamas deal will go into effect when the first Israeli hostages are released](#), Scott Neuman, Daniel Estrin, Ruth Sherlock, Rachel Treisman, NPR, November 22nd, 2023.

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