



The Sabra Report

Gaza War on Hold for Another 24 Hours

Tovah Lazaroff, Jerusalem Post, November 29th 2023

Recap:

73 Israeli hostages have returned home. Israel believes 159 more are still held 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, on October 7th.
- ✦ Last Friday's deal sought to secure the release of all 98 women and children held hostage in Gaza in exchange for the release of 3 Palestinian prisoners for every Israeli freed, a temporary ceasefire and shipments of humanitarian aid into Gaza. 210 Palestinian prisoners have so far been released from Israeli prison and 200 trucks of humanitarian aid have entered the strip since the deal was brokered [1].
- ✦ Israel and Hamas agreed to an additional 24-hour ceasefire in exchange for another ten hostages. The 24-hour extension was less than what mediators hoped to secure as Hamas appeared to be scrambling to locate remaining women and children held in Gaza [2].
- ✦ While most of the returned hostages appeared to be physically stable, many lost up to 15% of their body weight during captivity. Hostages reported being forced at gunpoint to watch raw footage of the October 7th massacres, being beaten by civilians in the streets, being held in solidarity confinement, sleeping on plastic chairs for weeks [3] and not being allowed showers during their captivity [4].
- ✦ The 300 Palestinian prisoners eligible for release are mostly affiliated with Palestinian terror groups [5]. Almost all are from the West Bank and East Jerusalem; just five are registered as residents of Gaza. While none are convicted of murder, many of the criminals were caught in the act of, or planning to commit, terror attacks against Israelis.
- ✦ The current pause in fighting is pre-approved by the Israeli cabinet for up to 10 days [6]. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu faces pressure internationally, and domestically from the families of hostages, to prolong the pauses but also faces resistance from his governing coalition who oppose any new deals with Hamas. Netanyahu vowed that "there is no situation in which we do not go back to fighting until the end [7]."

Conversation Points:

- ✦ What must the government weigh when deciding whether to extend the ceasefire?
- ✦ How could Hamas use the hostage exchange to gain advantages in the West Bank, where Fatah, its rival, is widely disliked?
- ✦ What are the ramifications of releasing Palestinian prisoners into the West Bank and East Jerusalem?

Notes:

1. [Israel and Hamas extend ceasefire to keep trading hostages for prisoners](#), Financial Times, November 30th, 2023.
2. Ibid.
3. [Stories of torture, torment revealed by Israeli children kidnapped by Hamas terrorists](#), Fox News, November 29, 2023
4. [Freed Israeli hostage describes deteriorating conditions while being held by Hamas](#), AP News, November 28th, 2023.
5. [Who are the Palestinians in Israel's prisons?](#), Economist, November 30th, 2023
6. [After last-minute deal, Israel confirms Gaza truce with Hamas to extend at least 1 day](#), Times of Israel, November 30th, 2023.
7. [Israel and Hamas extend ceasefire to keep trading hostages for prisoners](#), Financial Times, November 30th, 2023.

DON'T MISS AN ISSUE!
SUBSCRIBE TO OUR NEWSLETTER AT
www.sabrareport.com