



Ministers to meet after Hamas responds positively to truce plan

Plan would free 10 living hostages, leaving others captive; PM due to meet Trump in D.C.

Jonathan Lis
and Liza Rozovsky

Israel continues to review Hamas' notes on the latest cease-fire and hostage proposal, an Israeli source told Haaretz Saturday, ahead of a scheduled meeting of the inner cabinet after press time on Saturday night.

The security cabinet was set to discuss the emerging deal with Hamas and the future of the war in Gaza.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is expected to fly to Washington, ahead of his meeting with U.S. President Donald Trump on Monday.

Trump is trying to push Israel and Hamas to renew indirect negotiations via proximity talks, in which the delegations stay in adjacent complexes and conduct indirect and rapid contacts to reach understandings.

On Friday evening, Hamas announced it had submitted a positive response to the Gaza cease-fire proposal and is ready to begin negotiations on its implementation. According to a report by Qatar's Al-Araby, Hamas agreed to all key elements but requested slight changes to the wording of the document.

The draft presented to Hamas includes the release of 10 living hostages, in exchange for a 60-day cease-fire and the release of Palestinian prisoners.

Eight living hostages will be freed on the first day of the cease-fire and two more on the 50th day. The bodies of five hostages will be returned on the seventh day,



Protesters including family members of hostages calling for a deal to free them all, in Tel Aviv on Saturday evening.

Tomer Appelbaum

another five on the 30th day and the final eight bodies on the 60th day.

The document says that on the 10th day of the cease-fire, Hamas will provide full information regarding all

remaining hostages in Gaza, including proof of life, a medical report or confirmation of death. In return, Israel will provide complete information on Palestinian prisoners detained in Gaza since Octo-

ber 7 and the number of deceased Gazans whose bodies are being held in Israel.

The agreement also states that Hamas is committed to ensuring the health, welfare, and safety of the hostages

during the cease-fire.

Fifty hostages are being held in the Gaza Strip, with 28 announced dead.

A foreign source told Haaretz that he believes Hamas's response includes

a request to revise three clauses in the draft agreement. These clauses relate to the guarantees for continuing negotiations to end

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The same deal gov't blew up in March

Hamas' response to the new American proposal for a hostage deal is a bit more than "yes, but," as it has been depicted in Israeli media. The terror organization is still trying to extract some final benefits from the deal, but according to a number of indicators in recent days, this time it's apparently going to happen. The U.S. is hoping to impose an interim agreement on the two sides, and U.S. President Donald Trump is bent on turning it into a complete deal that would belatedly end the war in the Gaza Strip.

If Trump gets his wish, he may already declare this during Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's visit to

Washington, which begins on Sunday. It is difficult to draw a definite conclusion about this solely from Netanyahu's declarations and moves. On one hand, Israeli diplomatic sources (or what remains of these, after the firing of the spokesman de jour) are for the first time in months exhibiting some optimism, in their briefings, on the chances of reaching an agreement with Hamas. Netanyahu's visit to Kibbutz Nir Oz – a visit that seemed forced, short on empathy and clearly lacking any belated apologies, let alone an acceptance of responsibility – does indicate a preparation

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Chaim Levinson

PM has to sell a cease-fire to his base

While the U.S. president announced personally that Hamas had responded in the affirmative and it was possible to move toward closing a hostage deal (a message also voiced by Qatar and the other mediators), over the weekend Israel continued to chill the enthusiasm. A senior Israeli source told Haaretz, "It will take time. There are many disputed details. It's not so simple."

Hamas is demanding a larger withdrawal than Israel is willing to give. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu wants to stay on the Morag axis to "protect" Gazans in the southern

Strip. Another dispute: Will the current aid distribution hubs continue operation alongside distribution by the United Nations? An additional Hamas demand, directed mainly at the United States, is for a kind of "automatic extension" of the negotiations even beyond the 60 days. Hamas proposed a formulation meant to limit Israel's ability to continue fighting amid any kind of talks.

A source in a Persian Gulf state told Haaretz that "everything could be closed in a day." Teams are scheduled

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Hundreds of W. Bank village residents forced out by new settler outpost

Hagar Shezaf

Hundreds of residents of the Bedouin village of Mu'arrajat, near Jericho in the West Bank, were forcibly displaced from their homes on Friday in one of the largest expulsions in the territory since the start of the war in Gaza. The displacement followed the establishment of an Israeli

settler outpost inside the village on Wednesday.

According to local residents, the community had been subjected to settler harassment, violence and theft for years. The final decision to leave came Thursday night, after settlers vandalized a family's home and stole around 60 sheep.

Village residents said about 50 families once lived

there, but many had gradually left over the past two years as settler violence intensified.

The Israeli military said it had removed the settlers who set up the illegal outpost earlier this week. However, on Thursday the settlers relocated the outpost – which includes a makeshift seating area and livestock pens – closer to

the village's school, after forcing out the Palestinian family that had lived in the nearby home.

According to the Palestinian residents, a group of settlers arrived Thursday night and told them they had 48 hours to leave. On Friday morning, as villag-

ers were packing up their belongings, Israeli soldiers arrived in a military jeep, spoke with the settlers and took no action as the settlers disrupted the Palestinians' efforts to leave.

"Our lives here are over. The settlers came right up to our house and threat-

ened us," said Yosef Malihaat, 35, a father of two. "It's incredibly painful to leave this land – we were born here. There's no law in Israel today, and that's why they send these people here – they're criminals. It's all intentional. I've never seen anything like it in my life."

Two soldiers killed in Gaza combat **News Page 2**

'We're not the same people anymore':

Soldiers reveal what months of fighting in Gaza has done to them



Arnon Erlich

Staff Sgt. Niv Radia, was killed along with six other soldiers by an improvised bomb in southern Gaza.

Speaking on Israel's most-watched news channel, Radia's mother, Alexandra, managed to shock many – perhaps even shake the foundations of public discourse. It was a rare moment in which the wall the army has tried to build between the public and the daily toll on combat soldiers began to crack.

The voices of reservists are often heard. They speak out about the impact on their businesses, their families, and the inequality they feel compared to segments of the population that don't serve. But the voices of conscripts, those doing the daily fighting for nearly 21 months now, remain largely unheard and unknown to the Israeli public.

Even when journalists are embedded with IDF combat units, what they see isn't the day-to-day reality – it's a carefully orchestrated performance. Soldiers interviewed are handpicked by commanders and IDF

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Tom Levinson

She stands before the cameras. Her eyes are red, her voice cracked. The tears flow freely, but she doesn't try to wipe them away or stop them. The anchor asks her to talk about him. He's used to asking such questions. She's not used to an-

swering them. Still, she emphasizes that she wasn't surprised. "Since October 7, we've been living in fear. Every knock on the door, every phone call," she says.

And then she decides to break the script. Instead of talking about what a wonderful person he was, instead of saying there was no one else

like him, she chooses to say something else entirely.

"From the moment he finished high school, he's been fighting, nonstop. He was already exhausted. They're all exhausted. Mentally, they're completely drained," she says. "This has to stop."

That moment came last week, a day after her son,

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Aiming to dodge trial, PM pressed IDF intel to raise threat outlook

Gidi Weitz

Ahead of his testimony in his corruption trial, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu urged Military Intelligence to raise its assessment of the threat level against him and, through allies, put pressure on the security agencies in an effort to delay his court appearance, sources told Haaretz.

Also during that period last fall, Justice Minister Yariv Levin applied pressure on the Shin Bet security service in an attempt to prevent the prime minister from testifying.

This happened as President Isaac Herzog urged the attorney general to postpone the testimony and ease the pressure on Netanyahu. When it was decided that the prime minister would testify in an underground courtroom at the Tel Aviv District Court, he warned defense officials about a potential missile strike that could bring down the building and kill everyone inside.

This pressure in the run-up to Netanyahu's testimony, which began on December 10, is believed to be part of a broader strategy that climaxed last week when U.S. President Donald Trump demanded that the trial be canceled. Trump implied that

U.S. military aid could be at risk, and added in a post that Netanyahu "is right now in the process of negotiating a Deal with Hamas, which will include getting the Hostages back."

Critics say that delays in the trial are designed to get the proceedings suspended, as are efforts to remove

and breach of trust in the so-called lavish-gifts case and in two cases where he is suspected of providing regulatory favors in return for positive news coverage.

Fateful drone strike

At 6:20 A.M. on October 19, three Hezbollah drones



Netanyahu, center, in court in December alongside attorney Amit Hadad.

Haim Goldberg/Flash90

Attorney General Gali Baharav-Miara and appoint a Netanyahu loyalist in her place.

For its part, Netanyahu's office denied that the prime minister sought to exaggerate any threat, including any threat underground at the Tel Aviv District Court.

Netanyahu is on trial on suspicion of bribery, fraud

entered Israeli airspace, one of them striking the bedroom window of Netanyahu's private residence in Caesarea 50 kilometers (31 miles) up the coast from Tel Aviv. The house was empty at the time.

Security around the prime minister was immediately

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