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Hamas Says Israel Responded Negatively to Latest Hostage Deal Proposal

Israeli media says Israeli officials don't think a deal will happen

A Hamas official [said on Wednesday](#) that Israel responded negatively to the Palestinian group's latest proposal for a hostage deal and ceasefire.

Indirect negotiations have been taking place in Qatar, and [according to a report from Axios](#), the deal that's on the table would involve a six-week ceasefire, although there are major sticking points.

“On Tuesday evening, our brothers, the mediators, informed us of the occupation's position on the proposal ... it is a negative response in general and does not respond to the demands... In fact, it retracts the approvals it previously provided to the mediators,” said Osama Hamdan, a Hamas official based in Beirut.

Hamdan blamed the impasse on Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who is under pressure from hardline members of his government not to reach a deal. According to Israel's Channel 13, Israeli Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich and National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir [have threatened to quit the government](#) if a deal involves Israel releasing Palestinian prisoners who are serving long sentences.

The *Axios* report said that a US framework for a deal involved Israel releasing 400 Palestinians, including 15 who are serving life sentences, in exchange for the release of 40 Israeli hostages. Last Thursday, Hamas proposed Israel release 950 prisoners, including 150 who are serving life sentences.

Hamas is also reportedly asking Israel to withdraw troops from a corridor that the Israeli military created to split Gaza in two so displaced Palestinians could return to the

north. *Axios* described the demand as one of the two “widest gaps” between the two sides, the other being Hamas’s insistence that the next phase of the deal includes a permanent ceasefire. Netanyahu has repeatedly vowed that any truce will only be temporary.

The Times of Israel [reported](#) that Mossad Director David Barnea returned from Qatar on Tuesday night and briefed the war cabinet on the hostage deal talks. The report said Israeli officials were pessimistic about the prospects of the deal and that they believe Hamas leader Yahya Sinwar thinks he has the upper hand in negotiations at the moment.

The lack of a ceasefire deal means many more Palestinians will die as the Israeli bombing campaign and starvation siege continues. According to Gaza’s Health Ministry, nearly 32,000 Palestinians have been killed in the Israeli slaughter, and about 70% of the casualties are women and children.

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