

Gaza Ceasefire Talks Stall as Divisions Persist Between Israel and Hamas

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Efforts to broker a ceasefire between Israel and Hamas have once again ended in frustration. The latest round of indirect negotiations, held in Doha, Qatar, wrapped up without any breakthrough after nearly three and a half hours of discussions.

Mediators from Qatar and Egypt worked hard to shuttle messages and proposals back and forth between the delegations, who met in separate buildings. However, according to Palestinian officials involved in the talks, the core disagreements remain unchanged.

Hamas insists on a full end to hostilities and a withdrawal of Israeli troops from Gaza as part of any truce. Israeli leaders have repeatedly refused these terms, maintaining that Hamas

must first be dismantled as a military threat. As Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu left for Washington to meet with United States President Donald Trump, he emphasized that Israel's goals have not shifted: securing the release of all hostages, eliminating Hamas's capabilities, and ensuring Gaza can no longer threaten Israel.

Despite the deadlock, talks are set to continue on Monday, with mediators planning further one-on-one meetings to try to narrow the gaps. The urgency is high. The humanitarian toll inside Gaza is worsening as Israeli military operations intensify. Over the past day alone, Israeli forces reported striking 130 Hamas targets and killing several militants. Hospital officials in Gaza said more than 30 civilians were killed on Sunday, adding to a death toll that has climbed above 57,000 since the conflict erupted after the October 2023 attacks.

Back in Israel, the public debate is growing louder. Many families of hostages still held in Gaza took to the streets again over the weekend, demanding that the government make a deal to bring their loved ones home. For them, any compromise is worth ending the ordeal. Yet within Netanyahu's cabinet, powerful hardliners such as National Security Minister Itamar Ben Gvir and Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich remain firmly opposed to halting the offensive until Hamas is fully defeated.

As the negotiations move forward, the question is whether the United States can help bridge the divide. President Trump is expected to press Netanyahu to consider a truce, but it remains unclear if either side is prepared to soften their demands.

For now, both the people of Gaza and Israeli families of hostages are left waiting, hoping this moment of momentum is not just another false dawn.

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