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Netanyahu Mulls Gaza Annexation if Hamas Rejects Ceasefire, as U.S. Signals Support for Alternative Measures

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Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is reportedly considering the annexation of parts of Gaza if Hamas continues to block a ceasefire agreement, according to sources close to the discussions. The proposal emerges as the United States begins pivoting away from stalled negotiations and signals its support for stronger, unilateral action by Israel in the face of persistent security threats.

A senior source familiar with the matter told *ABC News*, “Prime Minister Netanyahu is considering a plan to annex territories in Gaza if Hamas doesn’t agree to a ceasefire plan. This is one of several options currently under review.” The development follows the

recent withdrawal of the U.S. negotiating team from ceasefire talks in Doha, Qatar, citing a lack of good faith from Hamas leadership.

Steve Witkoff, President Donald Trump's Special Envoy to the Middle East, announced the move in a statement on X (formerly Twitter) on 24 July. He wrote, "While the mediators have made a great effort, Hamas does not appear to be coordinated or acting in good faith. We will now consider alternative options to bring the hostages home and try to create a more stable environment for the people of Gaza."

Netanyahu later aligned with Witkoff's remarks, saying, "Special Envoy to the Middle East Steve Witkoff got it right. Hamas is the obstacle to a hostage release deal. Together with our U.S. allies, we are now considering alternative options to bring our hostages home, end Hamas's terror rule, and secure lasting peace for Israel and our region."

In response, Hamas accused both Israel and the U.S. of abandoning progress made in recent talks. The group claimed it had agreed to key mediator proposals on issues such as prisoner releases, military withdrawal, and aid entry, only to be met with sudden disengagement. "We clearly state – there is no point in continuing negotiations under the siege, extermination, and starvation of our children, women, and people in the Gaza Strip," the statement read.

Amid ongoing conflict, annexation discussions introduce further complexity to an already volatile situation. While controversial in some diplomatic circles, Israeli consideration of territorial control reflects broader dissatisfaction with repetitive negotiation failures and Hamas's refusal to disarm or release hostages. It also mirrors growing domestic calls for a more assertive response to terrorist threats and instability on the country's southern border.

The U.S. position, under Witkoff's direction, marks a shift toward pragmatic engagement, reminiscent of previous efforts under the Abraham Accords. Rather than enabling indefinite delays through ineffective dialogue, the focus now appears to be on results – rescuing hostages, dismantling terrorist infrastructure, and restoring security through tangible actions.

Though critics may accuse both governments of escalating tensions, the facts on the ground remain unchanged – Hamas has persistently blocked peace initiatives while maintaining its grip on Gaza's civilian population. Israel's government, by contrast, faces increasing pressure to deliver a solution that safeguards its citizens and prevents future attacks.

Whether annexation moves forward will depend on the coming weeks. But one thing is clear – Israel, with firm backing from its closest ally, is no longer content to wait for Hamas to act in good faith. The era of passive diplomacy is giving way to a new phase grounded in security, sovereignty, and strategic clarity.