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## London March to Demand Release of Hostages Held by Hamas

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At 3 p.m. today, demonstrators will gather in Central London to call for the release of hostages still held by Hamas, the Palestinian militant group responsible for the 7 October 2023 attack on Israel. That assault resulted in the abduction of 251 individuals, sparking an ongoing hostage crisis that has drawn global attention and condemnation.

The march, supported by members of the British Jewish community and other concerned citizens, comes nearly two years into a tense and complex standoff. The crisis has been marked by intermittent negotiations, including a major policy shift in September 2024 when Hamas threatened to kill hostages if rescue operations were attempted.

Some progress has been made in securing releases through negotiated agreements. A ceasefire deal in late 2023 led to the return of 105 hostages in exchange for 150 Palestinian prisoners. In January 2025, a further agreement secured the release of 33 hostages, underscoring the ongoing use of prisoner exchanges as a diplomatic tool in the conflict.

Organisers say today's event is not only about pressuring Hamas to release the remaining captives, but also about raising public awareness of the human cost of the crisis. The Board of Deputies of British Jews, an organisation founded in 1760 and recognised as a long-standing representative body of the Jewish community in the United Kingdom, has played a significant role in mobilising support.

The continued detention of hostages remains a highly sensitive issue within the wider context of the Gaza conflict. The 2023 attacks reignited hostilities between Israel and Hamas, resulting in thousands of casualties and deepening political divides across the Middle East. For families of those still missing, each day without progress prolongs the uncertainty and pain.

Public demonstrations such as today's march serve as visible reminders of the urgency to resolve the crisis. Participants include a broad spectrum of the public, from faith leaders to human rights advocates, who argue that sustained international pressure is necessary to ensure the safe return of the remaining hostages.

While the conflict itself remains far from resolution, the ongoing campaign to secure the release of hostages highlights one area where humanitarian priorities unite people across political and cultural lines. As marchers take to the streets of London this afternoon, their message is clear: every effort must be made to bring the captives home.