

GNITN - Special Edition

Israel At War – Day 468

Another Weak Deal

Hamas Changes Deal

As we are learning from a [report](#) from the *Jewish News Syndicate* Hamas is already changing the deal tentatively agreed to:

Hamas has reneged on parts of the ceasefire agreement announced on Wednesday in an effort to extort last-minute concessions, the Israeli Prime Minister's Office said on Thursday.

This will delay the Israeli vote on the deal:

"The Israeli Cabinet will not convene until the mediators notify Israel that Hamas has accepted all elements of the agreement," according to the PMO.

An Israel spokesperson mentioned that hostage families were informed about the delay: *Government spokesman David Mencer told reporters on Thursday afternoon that hostage families were informed that Hamas "added further demands that contradict the agreement with the mediators."*

Mencer added that they are still working things out:

"As of this time, the details of the agreement have not yet been finalized, and the negotiation team is continuing its efforts to reach a solution," said Mencer in his remarks. "The Israeli negotiating team is still in Doha as befits Israel's willingness to finalize the hostage release agreement."

He affirmed that they do want a deal:

He added, "To be clear, the government wants to finalize an agreement, and we hope that the details will be finalized. If this agreement to release our hostages is finalized, it will demonstrate Israel's strength, Israel's humanity and Israel's unwavering commitment to its citizens."

Of course Hamas says they are committed to a deal:

Hamas Political Bureau member Ezzat al-Rishq was quoted by Channel 12 News, responding to the statement from the PMO: "Hamas is committed to the ceasefire agreement announced by the mediators."

As I mentioned yesterday, there are those inside the government who don't like the deal and those differences need to be worked out as well:

Israeli Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich's Religious Zionism Party signaled on Thursday it would likely exit Netanyahu's coalition over the ceasefire agreement with Hamas.

A party official called the crisis "serious and real," according to Channel 12.

Who Is Released

We turn to an [article](#) from *CBN.com* that tells us what is holding the vote up:

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu accuses Hamas of making new demands about which Palestinian prisoners will be released in exchange for the hostages in Gaza. He says the Security Cabinet, slated to vote on the agreement today, won't meet until Hamas backs down.

It appears that Hamas is trying to sneak in changes on who is released at the last moment and Netanyahu won't roll over just to get the deal. And it should concern anyone when Hamas applauds it:

Qatar's Prime Minister Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim Al Thani announced the deal on Wednesday as crowds cheered it in the streets of Gaza.

The deal is detailed this way and as I said yesterday, I don't see it lasting that long:

The agreement is supposed to take effect in three stages with the guns going silent and the first three hostages coming out this Sunday, two of them Americans.

More of the 33 hostages who are over 50, female, children, or sick will then be freed every few days in the six-week-long first stage.

After 16 days, negotiations begin for stage two, which according to the agreement should secure the freedom for the rest of the living hostages and bring about an end to the war.

In exchange, Israel would release around 1,000 Palestinian prisoners, including many terrorists serving life sentences for murdering Israelis.

Of course Hamas loves this deal. They get an overwhelming amount of bad people back to fight against Israel, they get time to regroup since they won't be attacked during the ceasefire, and they get the southern border back to bring in more troops and arms. The foreign minister for Israel says that they need to take the deal even if it strengthens its enemies, ones that brutally attacked, murdered and took the hostages in the first place:

Israel's Foreign Minister Gideon Sa'ar points out that it's tough to accept a deal that leaves Hamas terrorists in power who have killed so many Jews and still hold so many hostages. Sa'ar noted, "But if we will postpone the decision, we don't know how many of them will survive. So, we have to take a very tough decision, and painful."

The protests in Israel are notable as well:

A sizable number of Israelis are not happy with the agreement or with the cheering crowds in Gaza, considering that hundreds of IDF soldiers have died and thousands have made substantial progress trying to defeat Hamas and rescue the hostages.

Large banners on a major Jerusalem street near the Prime Minister's Office read in Hebrew, "This is not victory."

The report quotes someone who fought in the IDF who doesn't see this deal in a good light at all: *Speaking on CBN News Faith Nation, former Israel Defense Forces officer Jonathan Conricus, now with the Foundation for the Defense of Democracies, explained, "Hamas in power means more war; more terror; more instability, more suffering in Gaza – and it means that we're kicking the can down the road and we're not really solving the problem."*

He did see one upside:

Conricus added, "The positive side is that some hostages will come home, hopefully. We still don't know who's alive and who isn't."

One hostage family member has mixed feelings about the deal:

Hostage families are reacting with a combination of joy and dread, rejoicing that their relatives may be freed soon, and fearful that many may never come back.

Ifat Kalderon, cousin of hostage Ofer Kalderon, said, "I really, really hope that it won't end with only 33 hostages returning home, but all of them because everyone must return, both the living and the dead."

I continue to see red flags and I still think that there's more to Netanyahu's hesitance about it than meets the eye, but as I write this it appears the issues have been resolved. I pray that the PM knows what he's doing because this deal is not a good one.