

GNITN

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They're Coming Home

Finally

After 734 days of abject torture the 20 remaining living hostages are slated to come home either next Monday or Tuesday of next week as we read in a [report](#) from the *Jewish News Syndicate*: *U.S. President Donald Trump said on Thursday that the remaining hostages, whom Hamas holds in Gaza, will be released on Monday or Tuesday under the peace agreement that the terror group signed with Israel.*

The US President had huge words for the deal:

Speaking at a cabinet meeting, Trump called the deal a “momentous breakthrough.”

“We secured the release of all of the remaining hostages and they should be released on Monday or Tuesday. Getting them is a complicated process,” Trump said. “That’ll be a day of joy.”

Trump said that he would try to attend an official signing ceremony for the agreement in Egypt but said the exact timing for that meeting still needed to be determined.

This time I’ll give him his due because getting the offer over its first hurdle wasn’t easy. But this is the first part and it still has complications all by itself:

One potential complication in the agreement is whether Hamas will be able to retrieve and deliver both the living hostages, thought to number about 20, and bodies of the approximately 28 hostages who are thought to have been killed in captivity.

The living ones are easier to locate, but the remains of those who died pose a significant challenge:

“We have the hostages for the most part,” Trump said at the meeting. “The situation with the bodies—they say 28—some are going to be a little bit hard to find, but we’re going to do the best we can.”

Some in the Trump government praised him for the accomplishment:

Cabinet secretaries applauded Trump for his role in securing the 20-point plan between Hamas and Israel, with Marco Rubio, the U.S. secretary of state, hinting that the full story of the negotiations might not be able to be told for years.

Rubio added this:

“You convened an historic meeting, not simply of Arab countries, but Muslim-majority countries from around the world—Indonesia was there, Pakistan was there—and created this coalition behind this plan,” Rubio said. “Perhaps the stories will be told. Perhaps they will never be told.”

The Next Hurdle

Now the deal must go before the Israeli leadership for a vote, although Trump thinks it will pass: *The hostage release deal may face a more contentious reception within the Israeli cabinet later on Thursday. Bezael Smotrich, the finance minister, stated that he would vote to oppose the deal. Asked by a reporter if he thought Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu’s government could survive, Trump said that he expects the deal to boost Netanyahu’s domestic popularity.*

“He’s much more popular today than he was five days ago,” Trump said. “Maybe people shouldn’t run against him. Five days ago, it might not have been a bad idea. Now, Bibi has become—this has been a very good thing—I don’t think he did it for that reason, OK? But I think just looking as an analyst would look at this, I think Bibi should be very popular right now.”

That is yet to be seen since there are those who think that Hamas still being in power could be a big problem. And I tend to agree with them. And Netanyahu has stated he won’t leave Gazan territory until all the hostages are back including the deceased ones. This is a big start, a significant one really, but landmines loom on the horizon. I still don’t think Hamas is going to disarm nor surrender and leave. And we must also remember that these terrorists are getting back some 2,000 prisoners back for this. There are a number of these terrorists who are serving multiple life sentences for heinous crimes and while they are being released into another country, probably Turkey, they still pose a threat to go back to terrorism against Israel. Will the concessions Israel had to make be worth it? Understanding how much Israelis value redeeming the hostages I would say they will answer that question in the affirmative. Now the even harder part comes. As we pray for the peace of Jerusalem we need to petition Heaven that Israel is prepared for the tricks and traps ahead. This deal was like dancing with the devil. And the dance is far from over.