

Hamas Claims to Accept Hostage Deal – Israel Warns: Not the Deal We Agreed To

Following the bombshell announcement that Hamas agreed to a hostage deal on Monday evening, Israeli officials strongly denied that Hamas had agreed to a proposal that had been approved by Israel.

“We gave the Egyptian and Qatari mediators our agreement to their proposal for a ceasefire,” a senior Hamas source told the Qatari news channel Al Jazeera, which was **barred in Israel yesterday**.

In an additional statement, the terror group announced: “The head of the politburo, Ismail Haniyeh, called the Prime Minister of Qatar and the head of Egyptian intelligence, and informed them that the organization agrees to their **proposal regarding a ceasefire**.”

Government officials briefed several Israeli media outlets that Hamas had not agreed to terms that were approved by Israel, indicating that the mediators might have sent Hamas a proposal without prior Israeli consent.

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The Saudi channel Al-Arabiya in the evening quoted a Hamas source saying that the proposal included a permanent ceasefire and a complete lifting of the blockade of the Gaza Strip, which would necessitate a full withdrawal of Israeli troops.

Israel has maintained that it **wouldn't agree to stop the war** in exchange for any hostage deal. Al-Arabiya also reported that the proposal Hamas agreed to was amended by the terror

group with the U.S. guaranteeing Israel would accept the changes.

Senior Hamas official Khalil al-Hayya later told Al Jazeera the terms of the deal that Hamas agreed to include three stages, each stipulating 42 days of ceasefire.

During the second stage of the deal, Israel is to announce a permanent ceasefire, meaning an end to the war. He claimed that the mediators assured Hamas that the U.S. would guarantee Israel's acceptance of the deal.

According to Politico's White House correspondent, however, the U.S. hadn't approved the proposal before it was sent to Hamas. American officials reacted cautiously to Hamas' claims, only saying the U.S. was studying the issue together with its allies.

Israeli officials denied Hamas' announcement would be taken seriously, adding that Israel was studying the group's official response which was transmitted on Monday before deciding how to react.

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In response to Hamas' surprise announcement, Israeli officials sent out strongly worded statements telling media outlets that the terror group was trying to deceive the public by agreeing to a proposal that had been explicitly rejected by Israel.

Channel 13 reported that inside the Israeli government, the prevailing assessment was that the announcement was an attempt to postpone the **Israeli operation in Rafah**, the terror group's last major stronghold in the Gaza Strip.

Security officials stressed that the preparations for the military operation in Rafah continued as planned and there

were no changes, according to Army Radio.

This was affirmed by the IDF's Spokesman Brig. Gen. Daniel Hagari in a briefing on Monday evening.

"During the day, the Air Force attacked over 50 terror targets in the Rafah area, we are preparing for a ground incursion in the area," Hagari stated.

A short time earlier, Defense Minister Yoav Gallant's office had issued a statement saying he met with IDF Chief of Staff Lt. Gen. Herzi Halevi and the head of the IDF Operations Directorate, Maj. Gen. Oded Basiuk.

They discussed "the IDF's expected operational plans in the Gaza Strip, with an emphasis on the Rafah area," according to the statement.

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