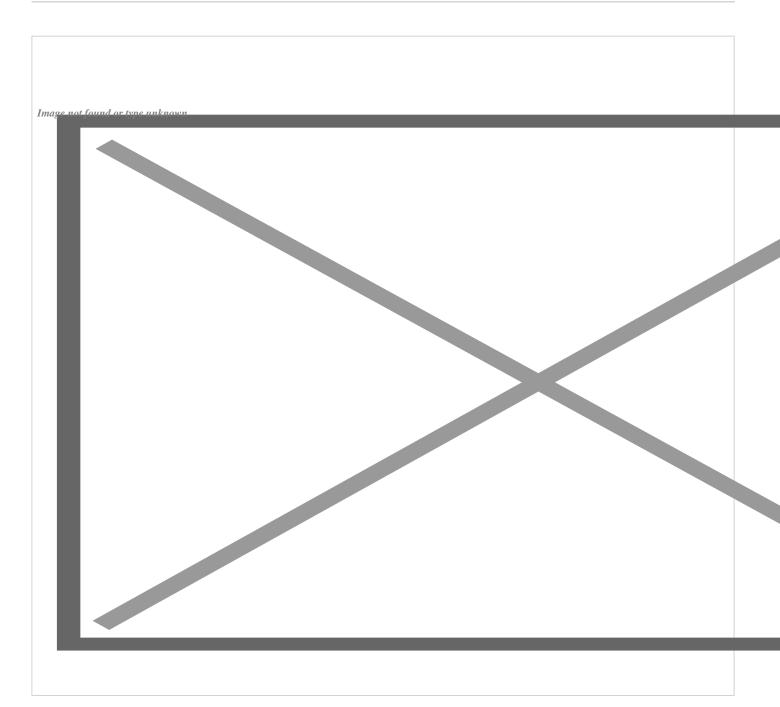# Israel reportedly agrees to ceasefire deal, paving way for some captives' release

Tel Aviv, November 22 (RHC)-- The Israeli cabinet has agreed to a temporary ceasefire deal that will enable the release of about 50 people who have been held captive in Gaza since the Hamas armed group

stormed southern Israel on October 7.

The agreement came after talks on a Qatar-mediated deal that continued into the early hours of Wednesday morning, with Israeli media reporting heated exchanges between ministers of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's government.

In the end, only three of the 38 members of the cabinet voted against the truce – National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir and two other members of his far-right political party.

The prime minister's office said the deal would require Hamas to release at least 50 women and children during a four-day truce. For every additional 10 hostages released, the pause would be extended by a day, it said, without mentioning the release of Palestinian prisoners in exchange.

"Israel's government is committed to return all the hostages home. Tonight, it approved the proposed deal as a first stage to achieving this goal," it said in its brief statement.

Hamas, which controls Gaza, also released a statement, confirming that 50 women and children held in the territory would be freed in exchange for Israel releasing 150 Palestinian women and children from Israeli jails.

It said that Israel would also stop all military actions in Gaza and that hundreds of trucks carrying humanitarian, medical and fuel aid would be allowed into the territory.

The accord is the first truce of a war in which Israel has flattened vast swathes of Gaza, which is home to about 2.3 million people. Palestinian officials say at least 14,100 people have been killed, while the United Nations says about 1.7 million people have been forced from their homes.

Netanyahu stressed that Israel had no intention of ending the conflict. "We are at war and we will continue the war until we achieve all our goals," he said in a recorded message. "To destroy Hamas, return all our hostages and ensure that no entity in Gaza can threaten Israel."

Still, some analysts said the international community should use the pause to try and secure a more lasting end to the fighting.

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