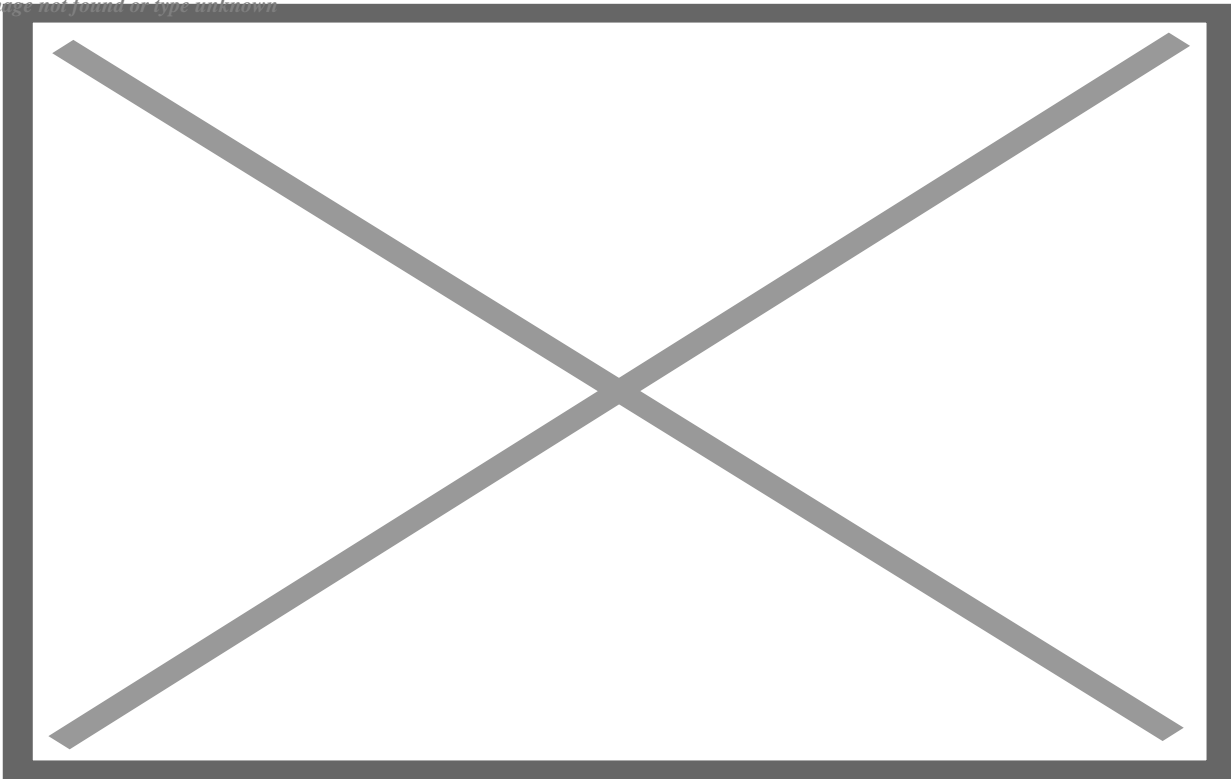


Hamas warns Israel: Your captives may return to you as corpses

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Beirut, May 28 (RHC)-- Hamas has warned the Israeli regime that the longer Tel Aviv sustains its genocidal war against the Gaza Strip, the more likely it is for the regime's captives to die as a result of the aggression.

"The longer [Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin] Netanyahu and his supporters delay committing to this (cessation of the aggression)..., the more of their prisoners will lose their lives at the hands of their army with Zionist bombing and American missiles," Osama Hamdan, the Palestinian resistance movement's representative in Lebanon, told a news conference in Beirut on Monday.

"The continued procrastination and airstrikes mean that their hostages may not return but as corpses, and perhaps they will never return," he added.

Around 250 people were taken captive on October 7 last year during Al-Aqsa Storm, a retaliatory operation by Gaza's resistance groups. Hamas released 105 of the captives during a week-long truce in late November.

Earlier in May, Khalil al-Hayya, deputy chief of Hamas' Political Bureau, said the regime's bombing of Gaza had killed 70 percent of the Zionist captives.

The movement has conditioned releasing the rest of the captives on complete cessation of the war, withdrawal of the aggressors, conclusion of a proper captive exchange deal, and transfer of humanitarian supplies to Gaza.

It recently agreed to another truce proposal presented by Egyptian and Qatari mediators, which was rejected by the Israeli regime.

Hamdan reasserted that "the Zionist occupation will not get back their prisoners held by the resistance except according to its conditions, which were presented to the mediators in Egypt and Qatar through a real and serious deal."

More than 36,000 Palestinians, mostly women and children, have died in the Israeli war that was launched following Al-Aqsa Storm.

Elsewhere in his remarks, the Hamas representative blasted the regime for killing at least 50 Palestinians during earlier airstrikes against a designated safe zone for displaced people in the southern Gaza city of Rafah.

The Hamas' official said: "The occupation's claim of the presence of armed men at the site of the massacre during its (the airstrikes') implementation is shameless and false."

The claim "is refuted by pictures of the bodies of the martyred civilians, including children and women. In addition, the area is located west of Rafah and is far from the area of the occupation's operations and its focus in Rafah and its clash with the resistance," he concluded.

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