

Qatar suspends mediation efforts on Gaza due to lack of progress

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**A Palestinian walks through the site of an Israeli attack in the courtyard of the Al-Aqsa Hospital
[Abdel Kareem Hana/AP Photo]**

Doha, November 9 (RHC)-- Qatar says it has suspended its mediation efforts between Hamas and Israel until the parties show “their willingness and seriousness” to end the war in Gaza. In a statement on X on Saturday, Qatar’s foreign ministry spokesman, Majed Al Ansari, said Qatar had informed the relevant parties 10 days ago of its intentions.

Earlier on Saturday, The Associated Press reported a diplomatic source as saying that Hamas's political office in Qatar "no longer serves its purpose". However, Al Ansari said that reports regarding the Hamas political office in Doha were inaccurate, "stating that the main goal of the office in Qatar is to be a channel of communication between the concerned parties".

A senior Hamas official said they were aware of Qatar's decision to suspend mediation efforts, "but no one told us to leave."

In Washington, a U.S. official said the Biden administration had informed Qatar two weeks ago that the continued operation of the Hamas office in Doha was no longer useful and the Hamas delegation should be expelled.

"After rejecting repeated proposals to release hostages, [Hamas] leaders should no longer be welcome in the capitals of any American partner. We made that clear to Qatar following Hamas's rejection weeks ago of another hostage release proposal," a US senior administration official said.

The officials spoke on condition of anonymity because of the sensitivity of the issue. The Israeli prime minister's office did not comment.

Qatar's announcement comes after growing frustration with the lack of progress on a ceasefire deal. There continued to be no end in sight to the Israel-Hamas war in Gaza and the Israel-Hezbollah war in Lebanon, where Israel's military said it struck command centres and other infrastructure overnight in Beirut's southern suburbs.

In Gaza, three separate Israeli attacks killed at least 16 people, including women and children, on Saturday, Palestinian medical officials said, while Israel announced the first delivery of humanitarian aid in weeks to the territory's hungry, devastated north.

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