

Palestinians finally sleep without fear of bombs falling on first night of ceasefire in Gaza



Gaza City, January 20 (RHC)-- For the first night in more than a year, people slept without having the fear that unpredictable bombs are falling on their heads inside their homes or inside their tent camps.

[Early] this morning, [there was] a bit of concern and uncertainty, after there was a bit of a delay in the ceasefire taking effect.

But then at 11:30 in the morning, when [the ceasefire] started taking effect, everyone felt the relief at the much-needed pause in the killing.

And despite all of the concern that happened in the morning, people went on into celebrating and feeling the excitement and the happiness. [They began] leaving all of their tent sites and going back to the areas where they used to live to check on their homes, on the memories that they left behind.

Unfortunately and sadly enough, they could not find any of the memories that they left behind in their homes. Fifteen months of devastation have turned many areas across the Gaza Strip into a pile of ruins, destruction everywhere, roads unrecognisable, many of the buildings just evaporated as the intense bombing campaign did not stop for a long time.

For all these 15 months, people were not given any respite other than the first temporary truce back in December 2023. That was the only week that people had one to sleep without hearing the buzz of the drones.

Here, it feels really unusual to see this quiet and calm moment. This is an important, much-needed moment for Palestinians, for Palestinian families, to be gathering in Beitunia in this moment together.

Singing, chanting, welcoming their loved ones.

Indeed, this is something that Palestinians were looking forward to after more than 15 months of this devastating war on the besieged Gaza Strip. Watching difficult images and videos of their fellow Palestinians being bombarded, killed day in and day out.

And now, they've not only seen the ceasefire take effect, but now, also, the exchange deal is moving forward, and we're seeing families greeting their loved ones.

We've seen the bus make its way outside of the Ofer military prison and all the families were gathering near the buses trying to get a glimpse of their loved ones.

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