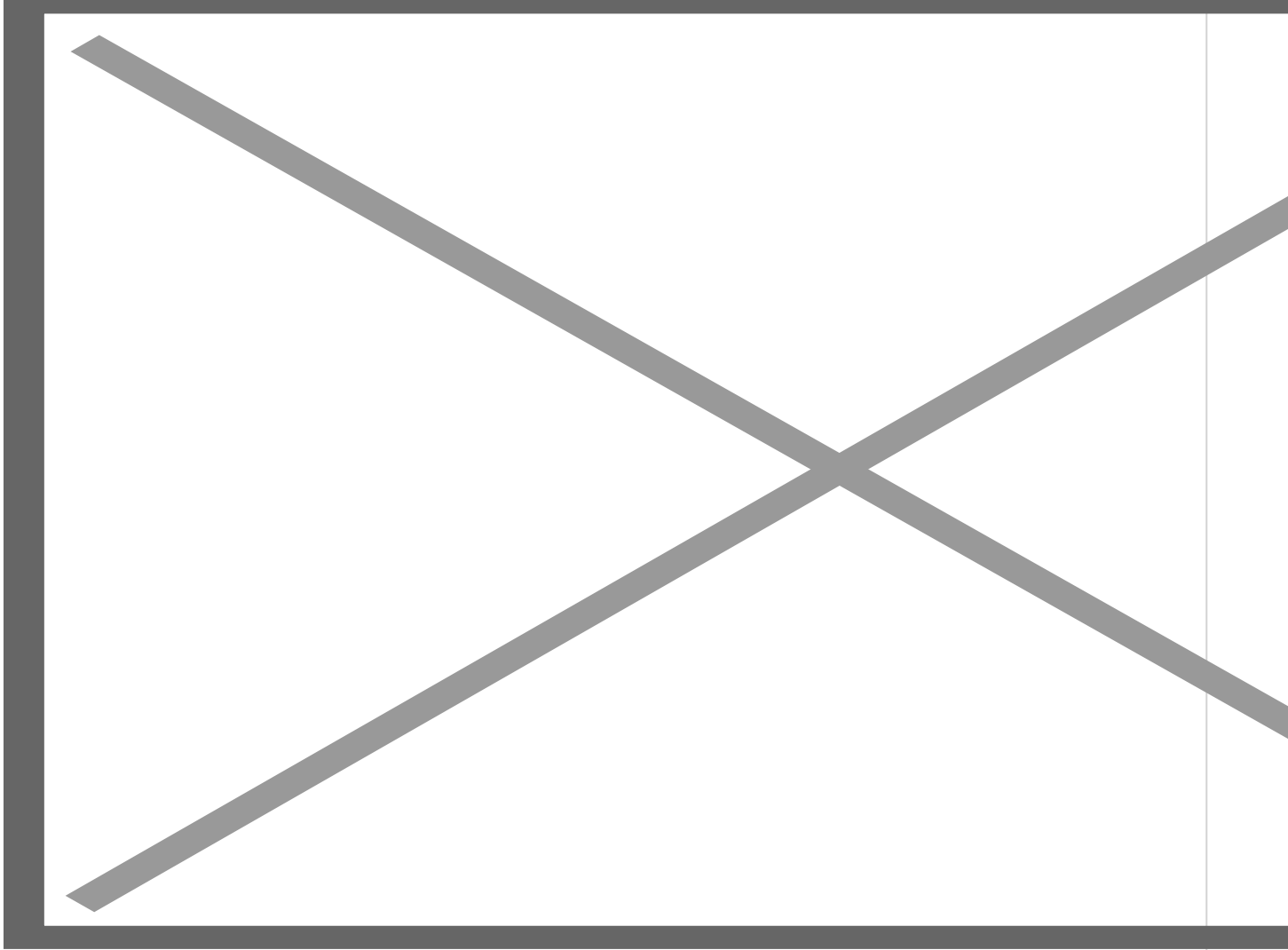


*Hamas official says any ceasefire
in Gaza must entail full
withdrawal of Israeli forces and
end of siege*

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Osama Hamdan, the representative of the Palestinian resistance movement Hamas in Lebanon

Beirut, February 4 (RHC)-- A senior official of the Palestinian resistance movement Hamas says any ceasefire deal in the Gaza Strip must entail complete withdrawal of Israeli forces and lifting of the regime's blockade of the territory.

Osama Hamdan, the movement's representative in Lebanon, made the remarks at a press conference in Beirut on Saturday. "Since the beginning of the aggression, the movement has stated that it is open to discussing any initiatives or ideas that can stop the barbaric aggression on our people and restrain this criminal enemy that has murdered civilians, including children, women, and the elderly, and destroyed civilian infrastructure and human life in the Gaza Strip," he said.

Hamdan added that the movement has received the general framework proposal discussed at the Paris Quartet meeting, adding, "The [Hamas] leadership's discussions and consultations on are based on the premise that negotiations would lead to a total end of the terrorist aggression against our people and a complete withdrawal of the occupation army from Gaza."

He noted that Hamas also seeks lifting of the siege "that has been imposed on Gaza for 17 years, reconstruction of what the occupation has destroyed, a serious prisoner exchange deal, and practical international recognition of our people's right to self-determination and the establishment of their fully independent state with al-Quds as its capital."

"For 120 days, this Nazi occupation [regime] has not stopped committing the most heinous crimes and massacres against unarmed civilians, mostly children, women, the elderly, and displaced people who lack the most basic human necessities, in addition to the brutal destruction of [their] homes, properties, and infrastructure," Hamdan said.

"This Nazi war will remain a testament to the brutality of the occupation and a stain on the forehead of all those involved in it, and those who falter in criminalizing and stopping it," the Hamas official added. He also slammed the global inaction in the face of Israel's crimes in Gaza, saying, "The crimes of genocide and ethnic cleansing are being committed in plain sight of the whole world, which stands by watching, [and] procrastinating, and [is] unable to stop the Zionist crimes that are supported by the US administration."

Hamdan reiterated that the United States "is complicit in [Israel's crimes in Gaza] and responsible for the continued aggression against more than two million Palestinians there."

The Hamas representative also warned about false news and reports circulated "by hostile entities about the course of the ceasefire negotiations," which he said were aimed at undermining and weakening "unity, steadfastness, and resilience" of the people of Gaza.

"The failed criminal [Israeli prime minister Benjamin] Netanyahu and his criminal extremist warlords continue their campaign of lies and deception. They have not been and will not be able to achieve any of their aggressive objectives as failure is surrounding them at all stages of their Nazi war against our people," Hamdan said.

He asserted that at the end, Netanyahu and his criminal regime will "have no choice but to submit and comply with the terms of our people and our victorious resistance."



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