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Netanyahu Refuses to End War, Rejects Hostage Deal

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has [refused a proposal offered by Hamas](#) that would have resulted in the release of all hostages in exchange for a 135-day ceasefire and Israeli withdrawal from the Gaza Strip. At a press conference, [Netanyahu said](#), “There is no other solution but a complete and final victory,” and “If Hamas will survive in Gaza, it’s only a question of time until the next massacre,” reiterating the Israeli objective of completely destroying Hamas.



AP Images
Benjamin Netanyahu

The BBC reports that the first phase of the proposal by Hamas included the release of all elderly, sick, women, and males under 19 in exchange for the release of Palestinian women and children being held in Israeli jails. Also included in the first phase was Israeli military withdrawal from populated areas in Gaza, and reconstruction of hospitals and refugee camps in Gaza. Netanyahu called these proposals “bizarre” in the press conference.

Israel has called for the release of the remaining hostages being held by Hamas, but has refused proposals to end the war in exchange for their release. Since the start of the war on October 7, 2023, Gaza’s health ministry reports that more than [27,000 Palestinians have been killed by Israel, over two-thirds of whom were women and children](#).



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