



War in Israel: Update on Current Situation

July 31, 2025 - October 7 War, Day 664, 50 hostages remain in captivity

LATEST UPDATES

As allegations of famine in Gaza spread and disturbing images and video from Gaza continue to blanket the airwaves, Israel has taken significant steps to alleviate the situation. Nonetheless, global pressure on the Jewish state is mounting, with Canada, the United Kingdom, and France all saying they will recognize a Palestinian state in September. US Special Envoy Steve Witkoff has landed in Israel to discuss next steps on Hamas with Israel's leaders.

Humanitarian Situation in Gaza

- Over the last week, Israel has **adopted numerous measures** to [ease the plight of Gazan civilians](#).
- Since last weekend, the IDF has implemented **daily 10-hour pauses in fighting** in [parts of Gaza](#) (Al Mawasi, central Deir al Balah, and Gaza City) to enable aid delivery, along with designated “secure routes” for convoys operating from 6 a.m. to 11 p.m. Israel says that it will maintain these exact hours until further notice, to create “predictable daily windows” for UN and World Food Programme (WFP) aid convoys.
- In parallel with the daily pause, [aid airdrops](#) into Gaza have resumed. Yesterday, an additional **32 such drops** were made, following the 52 that were made the day before. In addition to the Israel Air Force [dropping supplies](#), Jordan and the United Arab Emirates have parachuted aid to areas that are more difficult to reach by truck.
- Around **200 supply trucks have been entering Gaza on a daily basis**. However, a significant backlog comprising [hundreds of trucks still remains](#) on the Gaza side of the border, awaiting pick-up and delivery by the United Nations.
- Despite the significantly increased aid, conflicting reports on the situation in Gaza persist. Israeli journalist Matti Friedman presented his thoughts and research on the issue, capturing the sentiment of many Israelis. In his article, [“Is Gaza Starving? Searching for the Truth in an Information War.”](#) he explores the difficulty of verifying claims about a famine amid a highly polarized and politicized media environment. Friedman interviews aid workers, Israeli officials and journalists, revealing that while there is real suffering and food insecurity, the most extreme claims — such as mass starvation — are often unsubstantiated or exaggerated for political purposes. He emphasizes the lack of reliable data and the manipulation of imagery and narratives by both sides, particularly Hamas, to shape global opinion.
- Tom Fletcher, the United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, has **publicly welcomed Israel's humanitarian pauses** and the

opportunity to scale up deliveries. He insisted that a larger volume of aid is needed to prevent famine.

- According to [UN data](#), since May 19, of the 2,010 aid trucks that entered Gaza, 1,753 (87%) **were intercepted**, “either peacefully by hungry people or forcefully by armed actors, during transit in Gaza.” Those numbers amount to 27,434 tons of aid, of which 23,353 was intercepted. Watch [this footage](#) of UN trucks being looted.
- Israel continues to contest the **severity of the crisis in Gaza**, maintaining that there is no “widespread starvation,” that there are adequate basic supplies for the population, and that large amounts of additional aid are entering the Strip.
- The Government also says that Hamas and other groups are **using the claim of famine to further their own political and strategic goals** to put international pressure on Israel that could lead to a ceasefire without the terror group’s having to release hostages. Many of the photos being disseminated in the media, they say, are based on false claims. See [here](#), for example.
- The Prime Minister’s Office released a statement on Monday that read, “While the situation in Gaza is difficult and Israel has been working to ensure aid delivery, **Hamas benefits from attempting to fuel the perception of a humanitarian crisis**. As such, they have been releasing unverified numbers to the news media while circulating images that are carefully staged or manipulated by Hamas.”
- Read [WSJ: Gaza Starvation Photos Tell a Thousand Lies](#)
- And: [Stop Blaming Israel for Starvation in Gaza: The Real Culprit is the UN](#)
- [See here](#) for a **recording of the webinar** held by Jewish Federations about the humanitarian situation in Gaza.
- Also see this [Humanitarian Aid Update](#) from July 28, 2025.

Gaza Fighting and Ceasefire Talks

- Over the weekend, **two IDF soldiers were killed** in Khan Younis when terrorists attached an explosive device to their armored vehicle. They were Captain Amir Saad, 22, (a Druze IDF officer) and Sergeant Yinon Nuriel Vanna (20).
- At the end of last week, after **talks on a hostage deal broke down**, Israel recalled its negotiators from talks in Qatar. The US expressed frustration with Hamas’ intransigence and blamed the terror group for the collapse of the negotiations. President Donald Trump said that Hamas apparently “want to die” and that “Israel should finish the job.”
- US Special Envoy Steve Witkoff said that **Hamas “does not appear to be coordinated or acting in good faith,”** and that the US “will now consider alternative options to bring the hostages home and try to create a more stable environment for the people of Gaza.”
- Israeli journalist Amit Segal noted, “In what should have surprised absolutely nobody, the pressure (other) countries exerted on Israel to keep compromising only **led Hamas to harden its stance even more.**”
- Hostage families are expressing deep frustration that Hamas is being emboldened by global sympathy and rewarded through negotiations, while their loved ones remain in captivity. This week they have accused the Israeli government of abandoning them twice — first on October 7, and again by failing to secure their release — insisting that the state has a moral obligation to pay any price to bring them home. Their protests have grown louder as public discourse possibly shifts.

Diplomatic Developments

- The global perception of widespread starvation in Gaza, and Hamas’s subsequent refusal to agree to the American ceasefire proposal, has **prompted numerous international reactions**.

- In Israel, the government said it **may annex territory in Gaza** if Hamas doesn't release hostages.
- Such an annexation would be different from the IDF's simply capturing territory in Gaza, as it has until now. While the military can withdraw from any territory it controls, under Israeli law, **leaving annexed land is almost impossible**, since relinquishing sovereignty needs to be approved either by 80 of the Knesset's 120 members (a "supermajority") or through a national referendum. Given the highly divisive nature of relinquishing territory (especially following Israel's 2005 withdrawal from Gaza), there is no easy path to such a move.
- Commentators point out that by threatening to seize territory in Gaza permanently, Israel **hopes to ramp up pressure on Hamas significantly**. They argue that one of the key components to defeating an extremist ideology is depriving it of territory under its control — and while Hamas can try to negotiate IDF withdrawals, it cannot negotiate its way into Israel giving up territory that it has annexed. As one senior Israeli journalist opined, "Hamas cares more about land than human lives."
- **Canada announced yesterday that it will formally recognize a Palestinian state** at the United Nations General Assembly in September 2025. Prime Minister Mark Carney stated that the decision "reflects growing international concern over the humanitarian crisis in Gaza and the perceived erosion of prospects for a two-state solution." Carney added that the recognition is contingent on the Palestinian Authority's commitment to governance reforms and its pledge to hold general elections in 2026, explicitly excluding Hamas from participation.
- Canada's decision follows a similar announcement by **France** earlier in the week, when the European country became the first major Western power to make such a move.
- President Emmanuel Macron described the move as part of France's "historic commitment to a just and durable peace in the Middle East," citing the **urgent need to end the war in Gaza** and address the humanitarian crisis. While reaffirming France's support for Israel following the October 7 Hamas attacks, Macron expressed growing frustration with the ongoing conflict and humanitarian conditions in Gaza.
- Macron emphasized that **"peace is possible"** and shared a letter sent to Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas confirming the decision.
- In response, Israel's Foreign Minister Gidon Sa'ar called France's decision a **"prize for terror"** and a move that would boost Hamas, rather than promote peace. He warned that unilateral recognition of what he described as a "fictional Palestinian state" would only push peace, security, and stability further away. He tweeted: "Israel will not be the Czechoslovakia of the 21st century. We won't sacrifice our own existence for the sake of the appeasement countries."
- The **United Kingdom** this week also announced a similar intention, "unless Israel takes specific steps to de-escalate the conflict in Gaza." Prime Minister Keir Starmer stated that recognition would proceed unless Israel agrees to a ceasefire, halts settlement expansion in the West Bank, and commits to a two-state solution. He emphasized that the move is aimed at reviving the peace process and addressing the worsening humanitarian crisis in Gaza. He also called on Hamas to release all hostages, agree to a ceasefire, disarm, and accept that it will play no role in Gaza's future governance; however, these were not set as formal preconditions for recognition.
- **Malta**, another EU member state, made a similar decision.
- Referring to the recent spate of international moves, Israeli commentators said that **any incentive for Hamas to agree to a deal to release the hostages had now been removed**, with the terror group able to achieve its goals without the need to compromise.
- Israel's Foreign Ministry said that international pressure, particularly from leaders like French President Emmanuel Macron, has backfired, causing Hamas to harden its position and undermining the chances of a ceasefire and hostage deal.
- On Tuesday, a group of **17 Arab and Muslim nations** — including Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Egypt, Jordan and Turkey — issued a joint declaration for the first time condemning Hamas's October

7, 2023 attack. The statement also urged the group to release all hostages, disarm and relinquish control of Gaza as part of efforts to end the ongoing war in the Strip.

- For the first time in 25 years, an **in-person meeting took place between an Israeli and Syrian minister**, with Israel's Strategic Affairs Minister Ron Dermer meeting Syrian Foreign Minister Asaad al-Shaibani in Paris over the weekend. According to reports, an agreement was reached to remove Syrian forces from the Druze region in Syria.

In Good News

- Despite the turbulent times, Palo Alto Networks announced yesterday that it is purchasing **Israeli technology firm CyberArk for \$25 billion**, making it the second largest Israeli exit ever.

Further Reading

- The New Yorker: [Israel's Zones of Denial](#)
- Jerusalem Center for Security and Foreign Affairs: [Is Gaza Starving?](#)
- Avi Mayer: [How we defend ourselves matters](#)
- [The Peace of the Victor: Israel's Transformation from Defender to Guarantor](#)
- Following the ouster of MK Yuli Edelstein as Chair of the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee: [Explainer - Replacing a Knesset Committee Chair](#)