

Hamas never greedy for control over Gaza; emphasizes path of Resistance

International Desk

INTERVIEW

The representative of the Palestinian Islamic Jihad movement in Tehran stated, "Hamas has never been greedy for leadership and management of Gaza; rather, it has sought to manage Gaza without deviating from the path of resistance taken by the Palestinian people."

After 470 days of conflict in the Gaza Strip, Israel and the Hamas resistance group reached an agreement, and the Prime Minister of Qatar announced the cease-fire. This agreement came into effect on January 19, at 8:30 AM local time.

Many believe that the outcome of the truce is a victory for Hamas. The severe and historic blow dealt by Operation Al-Aqsa Storm was for Benjamin Netanyahu a complete and utter defeat. The flames of war that ignited after Oc-



tober 7, 2023, lasting for 15 months, represented a "battle of wills." During these 15 months, the world witnessed unprecedented and indiscriminate bombings in the 365-kilometer-long Gaza Strip, aimed at breaking the will of Hamas and the people

of Gaza. Netanyahu repeatedly attempted to push the people of Gaza out of this narrow strip into Egypt, but the Israeli prime minister failed, and the people held their ground. When faced with the resistance of the people of Gaza and Hamas,

Netanyahu and his cabinet set certain goals for themselves, which included "the complete destruction of Hamas, the occupation and control of the Gaza Strip, the establishment of Israeli settlements within Gaza, and the liberation of prisoners."

Throughout the war days, Netanyahu rejected any notion of retreat or cease-fire. In contrast, Hamas had its own objectives in mind, such as the liberation of prisoners, disrupting the Saudi-Israeli agreement, and seeking revenge against the Israeli regime



Nasser Abu Sharif, the representative of the Palestinian Islamic Jihad movement in Iran, (L) elaborates on the conditions and contexts surrounding the "Gaza cease-fire agreement" in an interview with Mehr news agency.

● ALI HADDADI ASI/MEHR

for its transgressions against the Al-Aqsa Mosque. Hamas continued to resist until the very last day, inflicting heavy casualties on the Israeli regime, including 900 killed and over 10,000 wounded. Realizing that the destruction of Hamas' military organization and the resistance of the people of Gaza was nothing but a myth, Netanyahu ultimately conceded to the cease-fire.

Nasser Abu Sharif, the representative of the Palestinian Islamic Jihad movement in Iran, elaborated on the conditions and contexts surrounding the "Gaza cease-fire agreement" in a conversation, the text of which follows:

Under what circumstances was the Gaza cease-fire accepted? What led the Israel to agree to this truce?

From the outset of the war against Gaza, the Palestinian resistance proposed a cease-fire based on certain conditions. The withdrawal of Israeli forces from Gaza was the primary condition. Additionally, the second condition involved the release of prisoners between the Israeli and the Palestinian side within the framework of a "prisoner exchange agreement."

Netanyahu obstructed the cease-fire conditions due to personal and party interests; one reason he was reluctant to accept a truce was his intention to free all prisoners by force. He also sought to avoid a withdrawal from Gaza, allowing Israeli soldiers to remain in the area. Netanyahu was focused on suppressing the resistance in Gaza and aimed to put an end to it. After 470 days, the only achievement he could claim was committing even more horrific atrocities, all of which were documented by media outlets and international organizations.

According to experts, the Israeli regime was left with two bad options: to accept the cease-fire or face worse consequences. They chose the lesser of two evils—agreeing to the cease-fire. Former US president Joe Biden had previously proposed a prisoner exchange plan, which was halted with the arrival of Donald Trump and his team. A phased withdrawal was supposed to be designed, allowing Israeli forces to gradually exit Gaza. These represent the fundamental terms and conditions of the truce.

With the truce in Gaza now in effect, how will the management of this territory be organized?

Regarding the governance of Gaza, it is essential that the people of Gaza make their own decisions and govern themselves; this is entirely a Palestinian matter. No one from outside the Gaza Strip can govern Gaza. Management must be entirely internal. Hamas and the Resistance are

part of the people of Gaza and its governance, which is why civil and security administration must be within Gaza itself—no external entity can manage it.

This is an inviolable issue and a red line for us. Hamas has never desired to govern Gaza. There have been several proposals for the Palestinian Authority to come in and take over the administration of Gaza instead of Hamas. However, Hamas has never been greedy for leadership; it seeks to manage Gaza without deviating from the path of Resistance chosen by the Palestinian people.

such as UNRWA, the World Health Organization, and the World Food Programme, have expressed their readiness to assist Gaza.

After the cease-fire began, Israel launched attacks in the West Bank. Should we expect further wars and crimes in the West Bank? Fundamentally, what objectives does Israel pursue in the West Bank?

The real battle is not in the Gaza Strip but in the West Bank. During Trump's first presidency, the "Deal of the Century" was introduced, which included annexing Al-Quds

Gaza Strip. For decades, this issue has been raised, and efforts have been focused on the West Bank. Netanyahu stated that 2010 was the year for the near-complete annexation of Al-Quds and the western regions to the Israeli regime. Now, with the Netanyahu's cabinet and the finance minister, who is effectively the minister for settlements, we can see the current state of affairs.

Bezalet Smotrich holds views that advocate for the expansion of settlements and is extremely supportive of Israeli settlements. On the Palestinian side, we wit-

no rights to their land. In the future, we will witness a widespread confrontation.

What impact will Trump's return to the White House have on the Palestinian issue?

Trump is an unpredictable figure who will ultimately yield to international institutions and global components. He put immense pressure on Arab countries, which eventually led to the "Abraham Accords" or the normalization of relations between the Israeli regime and Arab states. The Abraham Accords coincided with Operation Al-Aqsa Storm. The reason behind the operation was the pressures placed on the Palestinian people.

They aimed to eliminate the Palestinian people and the Palestinian cause. The relocation of the US Embassy to Al-Quds and the aggressions against Al-Quds, which Trump endorsed, were among the factors that led to the formation of Operation Al-Aqsa. These pressures will one day result in an explosion of the situation, which will not only harm Palestine but also the Arab world and even Jordan.

Saudi Arabia believed that if it wanted to enter the normalization process, it needed to accept the two-state solution, which they did not and will not accept. Trump must understand that without resolving the Palestinian issue, the region will not see peace and stability. There is a possibility that Trump's pressures could lead to an explosion in the region, resulting in unpredictable changes and transformations.

They pressured the nationalist government of Iran, led by Mossadegh, and ultimately overthrew it, but the Islamic Revolution in Iran occurred. They occupied Afghanistan, which led to the emergence of the Taliban in a new form that took control of the Afghan government. The more pressure they apply to the region, the less effective it will be; rather, it may lead to a significant upheaval.

The interview by Mehr was published on the Persian service of the news agency.



The photo published on Feb. 4, 2025 shows a view of an area in Gaza City destroyed by the Israeli forces in Gaza City.

● ABDEL KAREEM HANA/AP

The Palestinian Authority has raised the issue of Hamas' leadership due to Arab and international pressures; otherwise, Hamas has never sought power. Instead, Hamas desires a collaborative intellectual approach to managing Gaza. There are many technocrats who can come in and govern Gaza. These individuals come from civil institutions, charities, and unions. We, as the Resistance, are also content with this arrangement.

Charitable organizations and unions in Palestine can play a significant role in providing assistance to the Gaza Strip. Countries like Egypt and Jordan, along with international organizations

and some Israeli settlements to the Israeli regime. Today, the plan has expanded significantly. The current proposal includes the annexation of large portions of the West Bank, Israeli settlements, Area C, and military and border regions to the Israeli regime.

The confrontation we face today is a genuine struggle. The fascist, right-wing, and extremist Israeli cabinet does not believe in the two-state solution for Palestinians and Israelis. Trump and his administration, which is now in power, do not support this two-state solution either.

The battle we are currently engaged in is essentially taking place in the West Bank, not in the



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