

Trump calls for a ceasefire deal on the war in Gaza

TEL AVIV, Israel (A) U.S. President Donald Trump on Sunday urged progress in ceasefire talks in the 20-month war in Gaza, as Israel and Hamas appeared to move closer to an agreement.

Ron Dermer, a top adviser to Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, was set to travel to Washington this week for talks on a ceasefire, an Israeli official said, and plans were being made for Netanyahu to travel there in the coming weeks, a sign there may be movement on a deal.

Netanyahu was meeting with his security Cabinet on Sunday evening, the official said on condition of anonymity to discuss plans that hadn't been finalized.

"MAKE THE DEAL IN GAZA. GET THE HOSTAGES BACK!!!" Trump wrote on social media early Sunday. Trump raised expectations Friday for a deal, saying there could be an agreement within the next week.

Trump has repeatedly called for Israel and Hamas to end the war. An eight-week ceasefire was reached just as he took office earlier this year, but Israel resumed the war in March after trying to get Hamas to accept new terms on next steps.

Some Palestinians greeted the possibility of a new

truce with skepticism after watching the last ceasefire shattered.

"Since the beginning of the war, they have been promising us something like this: Release the hostages and we will stop the war," said Abdel Hadi Al-Hour. "They did not stop the war."

Trump slams Netanyahu trial

Trump also doubled down on his criticism of the legal proceedings against Netanyahu, who is on trial for alleged corruption, calling it "a POLITICAL WITCH HUNT."

In the post Saturday evening, Trump said the trial interfered with ceasefire talks, saying Netanyahu "is right now in the process of negotiating a Deal with Hamas, which will include getting the Hostages back."

Last week, Trump called for the trial to be canceled. It was a dramatic interference by an ally in the domestic affairs of a sovereign state. It unnerved many in Israel, despite Trump's popularity there.

The trial has repeatedly been postponed at Netanyahu's request, citing security and diplomatic developments. On Sunday, the court agreed to call off two more days of testimony by him scheduled this week.



Relatives of Palestinians killed in Israeli strikes on the Gaza Strip mourn their deaths at Shifa Hospital in Gaza City, Saturday.

AP PHOTO

Major sticking point

Talks between Israel and Hamas have repeatedly faltered over a major sticking point — whether the war should end as part of any ceasefire agreement.

Hamas official Mahmoud Merdawi accused Netanyahu of stalling progress on a deal, saying on social media that the Israeli leader insists on a temporary agreement that would free just 10 of the hostages. About 50 hostages remain, with less than half believed to be alive.

Netanyahu spokesperson Omer Dostri said that "Hamas was the only obstacle to ending the war," without

addressing Merdawi's claim.

During a visit Sunday to Israel's internal security service, Shin Bet, Netanyahu said that the Israel-Iran war and subsequent ceasefire have opened many opportunities: "First of all, to rescue the hostages. Of course, we will also have to solve the Gaza issue, to defeat Hamas, but I estimate that we will achieve both tasks."

Hamas says it is willing to free all the hostages in exchange for a full withdrawal of Israeli troops and an end to the war in Gaza. Israel rejects that offer, saying it will agree to end the war if Hamas surrenders, disarms and goes

into exile, something that the group refuses.

The war in Gaza began with the Hamas-led attack on southern Israel on Oct. 7, 2023, in which militants killed 1,200 people and took roughly 250 hostage.

Gaza's Health Ministry on Sunday said that another 88 people have been killed by Israeli fire over the past 24 hours, raising the war's toll among Palestinians to 56,500. The ministry, which operates under the Hamas government, doesn't distinguish between militants and civilians in its count, but says more than half of the dead are women and children.

The war has displaced most of Gaza's population, often multiple times, obliterated much of the territory's urban landscape and left people overwhelmingly reliant on outside aid, which Israel has limited since the end of the latest ceasefire.

Fewer than half of Gaza's hospitals are even partly functional, and more than 4,000 children need medical evacuation abroad, a new U.N. humanitarian assessment says.

"We are exhausted, we are tired. We hope to God that the war will end," said one Palestinian, Mahmoud Wadi.

Trump says he's not planning to extend a pause on global tariffs

WASHINGTON (AP) President Donald Trump says he is not planning to extend a 90-day pause on tariffs on most nations beyond July 9, when the negotiating period he set would expire, and his administration will notify countries that the trade penalties will take effect unless there are deals with the United States.

Letters will start going out "pretty soon" before the approaching deadline, he said.

"We'll look at how a country treats us — are they good, are they not so good — some countries we don't care, we'll just send a high number out," Trump told Fox News Channel's "Sunday Morning Futures" during a wide-ranging interview taped Friday and broadcast Sunday.

Those letters, he said, would say, "Congratulations, we're allowing you to shop in the Unit-

ed States of America, you're going to pay a 25% tariff, or a 35% or a 50% or 10%."

Trump had played down the deadline at a White House news conference Friday by noting how difficult it would be to work out separate deals with each nation. The administration had set a goal of reaching 90 trade deals in 90 days.

Negotiations continue, but "there's 200 countries, you can't talk to all of them," he said in the interview.

Trump also discussed a potential TikTok deal, relations with China, the strikes on Iran and his immigration crackdown.

Here are the key take-aways:

Few details on possible TikTok deal

A group of wealthy investors will make an offer to buy TikTok,

Trump said, hinting at a deal that could safeguard the future of the popular social media platform, which is owned by China's ByteDance.

"We have a buyer for TikTok, by the way. I think I'll need, probably, China approval, and I think President Xi (Jinping) will probably do it," Trump said.

Trump did not offer any details about the investors, calling them "a group of very wealthy people."

"I'll tell you in about two weeks," he said when asked for specifics.

It's a time frame Trump often cites, most recently about a decision on whether the U.S. military would get directly involved in the war between Israel and Iran. The U.S. struck Iranian nuclear sites just days later.

Earlier this month, Trump signed an executive order to keep TikTok running in the U.S. for 90 more days to give his administration more time to broker a deal to bring the social media platform under American ownership.

It is the third time Trump extended the deadline. The first one was through an executive order on Jan. 20, his first day in office,

after the platform went dark briefly when a national ban — approved by Congress and upheld by the Supreme Court — took effect.

Trump insists US 'obliterated' Iran's nuclear facilities

U.S. strikes on Iran "obliterated" its nuclear facilities, Trump insisted, and he said whoever leaked a preliminary intelligence assessment suggesting Tehran's nuclear program had been set back only a few months should be prosecuted.

Trump said Iran was "weeks away" from achieving a nuclear weapon before he ordered the strikes.

"It was obliterated like nobody's ever seen before," Trump said. "And that meant the end to their nuclear ambitions, at least for a period of time."

Iran's supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, said Sunday on X that Trump "exaggerated to cover up and conceal the truth." Iran's ambassador to the United Nations, Amir Saeid Irvani, told CBS' "Face the Nation" that his country's nuclear program is peaceful and that uranium "enrichment is our right, and an inalienable right and

we want to implement this right" under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. "I think that enrichment will not — never stop."

Rafael Grossi, the head of the International Atomic Energy Agency, said on CBS that "it is clear that there has been severe damage, but it's not total damage."

Grossi also said the U.N. nuclear watchdog has faced pressure to report that Iran had a nuclear weapon or was close to one, but "we simply didn't because this was not what we were seeing."

Of the leak of the intelligence assessment, Trump said anyone found to be responsible should be prosecuted. Journalists who received it should be asked who their source was, he said: "You have to do that and I suspect we'll be doing things like that."

His press secretary said Thursday that the administration is investigating the matter.

A 'temporary pass' for immigration raids on farms and hotels?

As he played up his immigration crackdown, Trump offered a more nuanced view when it comes to farm and hotel

workers.

"I'm the strongest immigration guy that there's ever been, but I'm also the strongest farmer guy that there's ever been," the Republican president said.

He noted that he wants to deport criminals, but it's a problem when farmers lose their laborers and it destroys their businesses.

Trump said his administration is working on "some kind of a temporary pass" that could give farmers and hotel owners control over immigration raids at their facilities.

Status of China trade talks

Trump praised a recent trade deal with Beijing over rare earth exports from China and said establishing a fairer relationship will require significant tariffs.

"I think getting along well with China is a very good thing," Trump said. "China's going to be paying a lot of tariffs, but we have a big (trade) deficit, they understand that."

Trump said he would be open to removing sanctions on Iranian oil shipments to China if Iran can show "they can be peaceful and if they can show us they're not going to do any more harm."

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