

# Why Did Israel Collapse The Ceasefire Agreement Now? – Analysis

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Israeli PM Benjamin Netanyahu and top Hamas official Khalil al-Hayya. (Design: Palestine Chronicle)

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**By Robert Inlakesh**

**In the event that a full-scale ground invasion is launched once again, the Israelis will likely have committed an enormous strategic mistake.**

On Tuesday morning, at 2 AM local time, the people of Gaza were woken up by the sounds of explosions and the announcement from the Israeli leadership that they had chosen to scrap the ceasefire agreement. No armed response came from Hamas, who continued to try and pursue diplomacy.

It is important to note that Israel has violated the Gaza ceasefire, since the first day it went into effect on January 19, committing around 1,000 total violations. Not only did it repeatedly bombard

Gaza, refuse to follow through on the vast majority of its commitments, and repeatedly delay the release of Palestinian prisoners, for the last two weeks, leading up to its renewed assault on Gaza's civilian population, the Israeli occupying forces prevented the entry of aid.

“We are putting a complete siege on Gaza ... No electricity, no food, no water, no gas – it's all closed,” asserted former Israeli defense minister Yoav Gallant on October 9, 2023. For weeks, this policy was implemented, before international pressure forced Tel Aviv to allow limited aid into the besieged coastal territory. The above-mentioned statement attracted a lot of attention at the time, yet in early March when the current Israeli defense minister implemented the exact same policy, there was almost no media attention.

The fact that no aid has been permitted to reach the suffering people of Gaza is a crucial piece of context that is often missed and is important in demonstrating the way Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has sought to place pressure on Hamas to accept a new truce agreement that doesn't include any pledge to end the war. Clearly the idea of “pressuring Hamas” is simply to collectively punish the civilian population.

### Israeli Division and Netanyahu's Trap

From the outset of the original ceasefire agreement, the Israeli PM has made it abundantly clear that he will not commit to a total end to the war. However, the ceasefire deal that he signed pledges just this. Therefore, Netanyahu began pledging to return to the war in Phase Two of the three-phase deal.

The primary reason behind the need for the Israeli Premier to renege on the agreement is a desire to save his political career. Upon the signing of the ceasefire deal, Netanyahu's security minister Itamar Ben Gvir resigned from the ruling coalition, while Israeli finance minister Bezalel Smotrich threatened to follow if phase two of the deal was implemented. Phase two is when the war totally ends and Israeli forces fully withdraw from Gaza.

Netanyahu's problem is that his hold on power is almost completely dependent upon a group of loyalists, alongside hardline extremist settler fanatics. Both of these groups are crucial to his survival, yet they lack political maturity and strategic depth, something that ended up causing significant clashes between the Israeli Prime Minister's allies and the intelligence community along with the army.

One by one, Netanyahu eliminated his internal opponents, whether that meant getting rid of Benny Gantz, Gadi Eisenkot, or Yoav Gallant, all the way down to the removal of Israeli army spokesperson Daniel Hagari. However, recently, the Israeli premier decided to go after the Israeli intelligence community directly, culminating in the attempt to fire Shin Bet chief Ronen Bar.

The attempt to oust the head of the Shin Bet – Israel's domestic intelligence services – was ultimately challenged legally by the Supreme Court, which did not stop the pursuit of his firing. It also sparked an internal uprising against the Prime Minister.

As his internal crisis brewed, the Prime Minister decided to launch a large-scale air campaign against the Gaza Strip that killed around 400 civilians in just over five hours, announcing the end of the ceasefire agreement. Netanyahu, along with the heads of his military and intelligence

communities, were then stationed in fortified areas and bunkers in Tel Aviv. Yet, despite the announcement of a military operation the new Israeli military chief of staff, Eyal Zamir calls “Pride and Sword”, Hamas and the other Palestinian armed factions did not fire a single rocket in response.

Israel demonstrated that it couldn’t find valid military targets in Gaza, instead choosing to hit civilian targets and slaughtering entire families. The most telling aspect of Israel’s operation was its complete lack of strategic vision, choosing to assassinate civilian leaders in the Hamas leadership and institutions, even bragging about this on social media as if it was some kind of achievement. It also appears that by sheer coincidence, the Israeli airstrikes managed to kill the spokesman for Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ)’s Saraya al-Quds, Abu Hamza, along with his immediate family.

Speaking to the Palestine Chronicle on the condition of anonymity, a senior Hamas political official expressed that he believed the move was designed by the Israeli leadership to pressure Hamas into accepting a ceasefire proposal that abandons commitments to end the war.

The US’s Middle East Special Envoy, Steve Witkoff, had put a proposal on the table that sought to exchange the one remaining Israeli-American captive held by Hamas, along with the bodies of others, for a temporary truce between phase one and phase two of the ceasefire agreement. Initially, Hamas expressed their openness to the proposal and stated that they would accept it as long as there was a guarantee that Israel would then finally implement phase two of the original deal afterward. Israel rejected this proposal.

#### Where Egypt’s Gaza Proposal Gets It Right And Wrong – Analysis

Benjamin Netanyahu has never been interested in ending the war; instead, he seeks to delay and offset permanent solutions, all while he even more greatly refines his tightly knit circle of power. The assault on Gaza was a desperate attempt to again stall the process of ending the war once again, while also silencing internal opposition to the ousting of the Shin Bet chief.

Instead of distracting the public with Gaza, what ended up happening was that the families of the Israeli prisoners held by Hamas decided to escalate their campaign of pressure once again, fearing that they could lose the lives of their remaining loved ones. The anger grew even greater after Hamas announced Israel’s airstrikes on Gaza had killed another Israeli captive.

#### Donald Trump’s Weak Leadership

Despite US President Donald Trump’s tough guy act, he has actually proven himself to be weaker than Joe Biden so far when it comes to pushing back against Israel and the Zionist Lobby. The bar was already set low by the Biden administration, yet Trump hasn’t even been capable of telling Israel to allow humanitarian aid into the Gaza Strip.

Instead of simply requesting its ally, to which Trump has so far sent 12 billion dollars worth of military aid, allow aid to pass into Gaza, Washington has now declared a de facto war on Yemen in defense of collective punishment. Yemen’s Ansarallah were very clear, they provided a four-day deadline to allow the passage of aid into the Gaza Strip in line with international law.

#### Why Has Israel Scrapped Gaza Ceasefire and Blocked Aid Reaching Civilians?

The Israeli PM is clearly fixated on the ideas of “total victory” on a “seven-front war” and territorial expansion, which the Trump administration refuses to oppose. However, it does appear as if there is a Zionist contingent that is seeking to save Israel from the fate that Benjamin Netanyahu has designed for it, some of which are clearly working with the Trump administration.

At this point, due to a total lack of American willingness to stand up to Netanyahu directly, it appears as if a US-Israeli attack on Iran is now inevitable. If we take a look at the predicament of the region as a whole, Lebanon is still an open front and could ignite at any time, Syria is in a state of uncertainty and chaos, while all major nations of the region brace for what may be to come.

Nobody is safe at this time and a clash between the US and Iran directly appears to be on the table, yet the real question is whether such an exchange of fire can remain limited.

Hamas, watching the chaotic situation surrounding them, chose not to immediately fire rockets toward the Israelis in response to their civilian massacres, likely waiting for an opportunity to launch a more effective military in response instead. Depending on how his domestic situation goes, Netanyahu can either escalate or quiet down his offensive actions, which are not only limited to Gaza.

In the event that a full-scale ground invasion is launched once again, the Israelis will likely have committed an enormous strategic mistake.

*(The Palestine Chronicle)*