

Special Update

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Geopolitical Report: Negotiations to End the War Gaza as of March 10, 2025

As of March 10, 2025, negotiations to end the war in Gaza, which erupted on October 7, 2023, following Hamas's attack on Israel, remain at a critical yet precarious stage. The conflict has claimed over 48,000 Palestinian lives and 1,200 Israeli lives, displaced millions, and devastated Gaza's infrastructure, prompting intense international efforts to broker a lasting ceasefire. Mediated by the United States, Qatar, and Egypt, the talks have progressed through a phased deal initiated in January 2025, but the expiration of its first phase on March 1 has cast doubt on its future, with both Israel and Hamas accusing each other of obstructing progress.

The ceasefire agreement, announced on January 15 and effective from January 19, outlined three phases to end hostilities (Reuters, 2025-01-15). Phase one, a six-week truce, saw Hamas release 33 hostages—women, children, and elderly—in exchange for Israel freeing hundreds of Palestinian prisoners, alongside a partial withdrawal from populated areas and increased humanitarian aid (AP News, 2025-01-15). Phase two, intended to begin negotiations by mid-February, aimed for a permanent ceasefire, full Israeli withdrawal, and the release of remaining hostages, but talks stalled (NBC News, 2025-03-01). Phase three would focus on reconstruction, supervised by Egypt, Qatar, and the UN, but remains distant amid current tensions (Brookings, 2025-01-17).

Key sticking points include Israel’s refusal to fully withdraw from the Philadelphia Corridor, a strategic border strip with Egypt, and Hamas’s demand for a guaranteed end to the war and its continued governance in Gaza (NBC News, 2025-03-01). On March 1, Israel proposed extending phase one by 50 days via U.S. envoy Steve Witkoff, offering a continued truce for half the remaining hostages, but Hamas rejected this, insisting on advancing to phase two (Al Jazeera, 2025-03-01). Israel halted aid deliveries in response, exacerbating Gaza’s humanitarian crisis, while Hamas accused Israel of “evading the commitment to end the war” (AP, 2025-03-01). Negotiations resumed in Cairo on February 27, but no breakthrough has emerged as of March 9, with protests in Tel Aviv pressuring Israel to secure the remaining 59 hostages (Reuters, 2025-03-09).

Geopolitically, the U.S. faces pressure to finalize a deal before domestic focus shifts, with President Trump, sworn in January 20, leveraging the ceasefire to push his Abraham Accords agenda (Reuters, 2025-01-15). Qatar and Egypt remain pivotal mediators, though regional tensions—spurred by Israel’s conflicts with Hezbollah and Iran’s proxies—complicate diplomacy (BBC, 2025-01-18). Posts on X reflect skepticism, with some users noting Hamas’s leverage via hostages and others criticizing Israel’s strategic concessions (X, @IsraelRadar_com, 2025-03-01). The UN warns of resuming hostilities without a permanent truce, urging a two-state solution (UN, 2025-02-25).

The ceasefire’s future hinges on bridging Israel’s security demands with Hamas’s political survival goals. Without compromise, the risk of renewed fighting looms, threatening further regional instability.

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