

Israel hostage hopes rise

After weeks of deadlock, Israel has softened its stance on the conditions for a hostage deal with Hamas, raising hopes of a breakthrough in diplomatic efforts to end the war in Gaza



■ **Hostage deal:** Israel offers 40-day pause in fighting during which Hamas will release 33 of roughly 130 hostages held in Gaza in exchange for Palestinians jailed in Israel

■ **Oct 7, 2023:** Attacks by **al-Qassam Brigades** – military wing of Hamas – in southern Israel kill 1,200 Israelis and seize 253 hostages

■ **Gaza war:** Israel launches massive response, with Prime Minister **Benjamin Netanyahu** (right) declaring objective is to “**eliminate Hamas**” and al-Qassam Brigades.

Over 34,500 Palestinians killed as of Apr 2024



■ **Nov 24-30:** Truce sees Hamas release 105 hostages and Israel free 240 Palestinian prisoners

■ **Apr 7, 2024:** Defence Minister **Yoav Gallant** (right) claims Israel has killed 12,000 Hamas fighters and disbanded al-Qassam Brigades except for four in Rafah



■ **Apr 24:** **Khalil al-Hayya**, senior Hamas official, says group is willing to agree five-year truce with Israel, lay down weapons and convert to political party, if independent Palestinian state is established along pre-1967 borders. Precondition rejected by Netanyahu

■ **Apr 29:** U.S. Secretary of State **Antony Blinken** (right) meets with foreign ministers of France, UK, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Jordan and Egypt, in diplomatic push to end war

