

October 7 Timeline

Information from ADL

October 7, 2023 - Hamas Attack

October-November 2023 – Regional Escalation

November 2023 - First Ceasefire and Hostage Exchange

2024 - Prolonged Conflict and International Pressure

September-October 2025 - Ceasefire Agreement

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On October 7, 2023, during the Jewish Sabbath and Simchat Torah holiday, Hamas launched an unprecedented surprise attack on Israel. In a coordinated assault, Hamas terrorists breached Israel's security barrier and invaded Israeli communities near Gaza, systematically killing over 1,200 Israelis—including entire families, children, and elderly civilians. At the Nova Music Festival alone, terrorists shot into crowds of young people, killing nearly 400 attendees. On October 7, Hamas took 251 hostages, including children and elderly civilians, dragging them back to Gaza. The attack represented the largest massacre of Jews since the Holocaust. Prime Minister Netanyahu declared a "long and difficult war" and mobilized army reserves for what would become Israel's longest conflict with Hamas.

October-November 2023 - Regional Escalation

Following Hamas's call for regional resistance groups to join the attack, Iranian-regime proxy groups across the Middle East began launching attacks on Israel. The Houthis in Yemen started firing missiles and drones at Israeli cities, while Hezbollah increased attacks from Lebanon. This multi-front conflict stretched Israeli air defenses, caused destruction throughout the country and forced civilian evacuations from border areas.

November 2023 - First Ceasefire and Hostage Exchange

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On November 22, 2023, after weeks of intense fighting and international mediation, Israel and Hamas reached a temporary ceasefire agreement. During this pause, 105 hostages were released in stages in exchange for approximately 240 Palestinian prisoners—many of whom had been imprisoned for violent crimes—and a halt in military operations. The ceasefire expired in early December 2023, and combat resumed with continued rocket fire and ground operations.

2024 - Prolonged Conflict and International Pressure

The war continued throughout 2024, resulting in massive destruction in Gaza and significant Palestinian casualties. Despite Israeli military efforts to provide advance warnings before operations in populated areas, the urban warfare environment and Hamas's strategy of embedding military assets within civilian infrastructure led to substantial civilian harm. Additionally, a humanitarian crisis emerged as aid struggled to reach Gaza's population due to Hamas stealing aid, security concerns, logistical challenges, and restrictions by Israeli forces. The Israeli population felt the impacts of the conflict as Hamas continued psychological warfare by releasing propaganda videos featuring hostages, and continued rocket attacks on the country with the help of allies like the Houthis in Yemen.

A second, shorter ceasefire in January 2025 resulted in the release of an additional 33 hostages.

September-October 2025 - Ceasefire Agreement

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On September 29, 2025, President Trump and Prime Minister Netanyahu announced a comprehensive peace agreement. The United States' direct involvement proved crucial in achieving the breakthrough that had eluded negotiators for months, utilizing the diplomatic relationships and regional partnerships established through the Abraham Accords to pressure all parties toward a resolution.

On October 13, 2025, the first phase of implementation began with Hamas releasing the remaining 20 living hostages in exchange for Israel's withdrawal of forces from Gaza, significantly increased humanitarian aid access to the Strip, and the release of approximately 2,000 Palestinian prisoners, including approximately 250 convicted murderers. Hamas also began releasing the remains of 28 hostages who were murdered by Hamas on October 7 or during their time in captivity. While Hamas has repeatedly violated the ceasefire agreement - including staging the "recovery" of a hostage's body - as of this writing, the ceasefire is still in place.