

**Israel-Hamas war**

## Joe Biden's Gaza ceasefire plan endorsed by UN Security Council

Vote increases pressure on Israel and Hamas to bring an end to conflict



The UN Security Council endorsed the US's three-phase proposal, which would begin with an immediate ceasefire and the release of some Israeli hostages and Palestinian prisoners from Israeli jails © Sarah Yenesel/EPA-EFE/Shutterstock

**Felicia Schwartz** in Washington and **James Shotter** in Jerusalem YESTERDAY

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The UN Security Council has passed a US resolution backing President Joe Biden's Gaza ceasefire plan, part of an American-led effort to increase pressure on Israel and Hamas to end the war in which tens of thousands have been killed and injured.

The security council on Monday joined the G7 and a number of governments in endorsing Biden's three-phase proposal, which would begin with an immediate ceasefire and the release of some Israeli hostages and Palestinian prisoners from Israeli jails.

The second phase would lead "upon agreement of the parties" to a permanent ceasefire, the release of the remaining hostages and the full [withdrawal](#) of Israeli forces from Gaza. The final phase would involve reconstructing the besieged enclave, where residents are enduring [near-famine conditions](#).

The UN resolution was non-binding but its adoption will increase pressure on both sides to respond positively to the US proposal. After eight months of fighting and

sides to respond positively to the US proposal. After eight months of fighting and faltering negotiations to end the conflict, Biden has thrown his weight behind the plan, which comes at what he has described as a critical moment to end the bloodshed.

The resolution “calls upon Hamas” to accept the May 31 ceasefire proposal, which it states Israel has approved. The group has previously said it supports parts of Biden’s plan and on Monday issued a statement “welcoming” the security council resolution. It added it was ready to “co-operate with the mediators to enter into indirect negotiations on the implementation” of its principles.

The Israeli government did not immediately respond to the resolution, although US officials have insisted Biden’s plan was drafted and approved by the country’s war cabinet.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu’s coalition of far-right and ultra-religious groups is deeply divided over the US proposal, which contains several elements that are likely to be difficult for the government to accept.

The resolution stated the second phase of the deal would bring a “permanent end to hostilities”, and makes clear the territory of Gaza must not be reduced in size. Israel is constructing a buffer zone in the enclave.

The resolution also states the ceasefire will hold as long as the negotiations to release the hostages and reach a permanent end to the hostilities continue, even if they extend beyond six weeks.

Netanyahu has insisted he will not agree to any deal that forces Israel to end [the war](#) before Hamas has been destroyed.

His five-party coalition has also disagreed publicly over Biden’s proposals. The two ultra-orthodox groups have said they will back a deal. But the two far-right parties, led by finance minister Bezalel Smotrich and national security minister Itamar Ben-Gvir, have threatened to topple the government if the prime minister accepts the plan.

Meanwhile, Benny Gantz, a centrist former general who backed Biden’s deal, [quit Netanyahu’s emergency government](#) on Sunday night in a move that diplomats said was likely to make the prime minister more dependent on his far-right allies.

The UN vote came after US secretary of state Antony Blinken met senior leaders in Egypt and Israel earlier on Monday in an attempt to press both parties to support the ceasefire deal.

“This is a critical moment, because we see the possibility, we see the prospect of an immediate ceasefire, of getting all the hostages home, of getting on the path to a durable resolution to the conflict in Gaza,” Blinken said as he was departing Cairo and heading to Israel.

The ceasefire efforts come after an Israeli rescue operation at the weekend [freed four hostages](#) but also included heavy fighting that killed hundreds of Palestinians, according to Gaza health authorities.

*Additional reporting by Neri Zilber*

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