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Strategic Dialogues: Regional Leaders Convene in Cairo for Truce Talks

### *Trucetalks in Cairo*

Trucetalks has been held in Cairo, Egypt, with high profile names attending. The Egyptian President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi welcomed the CIA Director, William Burns, Qatari Prime Minister, Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim Al Thani, as well as the Director of Israeli intelligence service Mossad, David Barnea, as “... international concern mounted over Israel’s plan to press its ground offensive into the city of Rafah, where more than half of the territory’s population has sought refuge” (New York Times, 2024). In hope for a ceasefire, delivering more aid to civilians and the exchange of hostages between Israel and Hamas are the topics the meetings are highlighting. The talks that ultimately concluded on Tuesday, February 13, ended without yielding the desired outcome the parties were hoping for before arriving in Cairo (Al Jazeera, 2024). As the Israeli delegation had talks with the Qatari and Egyptian mediators on Tuesday, Hamas delegation was expected to hold talks with the Qatari and Egyptian mediators on Wednesday, February 14:th, the day after the talks were finished with the Israelis.

Around 1.4 million people have left Gaza due to various bombings and attacks that have occurred lately and civilians has been fleeing to Rafah where Israel's Prime Minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, has declared that “Israel will conduct such an offensive and has ordered the military to draw up plans to evacuate civilians from the city” (New York Times, 2024). These people that currently are hiding in Rafah are just waiting in fear of an Israeli attack.

### *Hamas and Israeli officials*

According to officials of Hamas, Israeli hostages will be released if Israel agrees to a long-term ceasefire, the release of Palestinians who are being kept in Israeli jail and an Israeli military withdrawal from Gaza. Netanyahu has been unequivocal in his stance on different occasions, delivering the message that the Israelis will proceed its military operations until

Hamas is crushed and the hostages are safely released (New York Times, 2024). According to Israel, the reason for the offensive in Rafah is that they want to eat various military personnel from Hamas who are in illegal hiding places in the city, and to free the hostages held in Rafah (Aawsat, 2024).

### *Erdogan arriving in Egypt's capital*

This was Erdogan's first visit since 2012. It was due to, in 2013, when Cairo and Ankara decided to sever relations when the Egyptian president, who had strong support from the AKP party in Turkey, Mohamed Morsi was overthrown in a coup. The President of Türkiye, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, held a joint press conference on Wednesday, February 14, with his Egyptian counterpart, President al-Sisi. The regional powers have taken big steps towards rebuilding relations and are ready for cooperation to rebuild Gaza. The recent events in Gaza were the primary focus of their discussions, with Erdogan emphasizing the importance of addressing the situation, and conveyed that Türkiye is ready and supportive for all sorts of gatherings that can lead to stability and peace in the region (Retuers, 2024).

### *Conclusive analysis*

It seems that despite multiple efforts, the negotiations between Israel and Hamas have concluded without reaching an agreement. When Israel's intelligence chief was sent to the talks in Cairo, people were led to believe that "It indicates that you are close to an agreement". I have always been skeptical of these talks, (If they could potentially result in any agreement), given Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's stance against Hamas, despite the hostage situation. I strongly do believe that Israel will not reach a point where it agrees to sign a peace agreement with Hamas for the upcoming future.

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