

# [***Biden: Americans Are Among Hamas Hostages***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:69CB-GHX1-JBCM-F015-00000-00&context=1516831)

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**Length:** 585 words

**Byline:** Sara Dorn, Forbes Staff

**Highlight:** The president delivered a speech on the Israel-Hamas war from the White House on Tuesday.

**Body**

**Topline**

President Joe Biden confirmed Americans are among those being held hostage by Hamas militants who invaded Israel over the weekend, he said Tuesday in a White House speech about the crisis.

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US Secretary of State Antony Blinken looks on as President Joe Biden speaks about the Palestinian militant group Hamas' attacks on Israel in the State Dining Room of the White Houses in Washington, DC, on October 10, 2023. (Photo by BRENDAN SMIALOWSKI/AFP via Getty Images)

AFP via Getty Images

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**Key Facts**

Biden confirmed an Israeli official sprevious statementthat Americans are among the hostages and also announced the number of Americans killed in the conflict has risen to 14.

It s unclear how many Americans are being held hostage in Gaza or their condition U.S. National Security Adviser Jake Sullivan said Tuesday 20 or more Americans were missing from Israel, but not all of them have necessarily been taken hostage.

The president said he has directed U.S. officials to share intelligence with the Israeli government and deploy experts to aid in hostage recovery efforts.

Recounting his third phone call with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on Tuesday, Biden said he told him if the United States was experiencing what Israel is experiencing, our response would be swift, decisive and overwhelming.

The U.S is also deeply engaged in contingency planning for any and all escalation scenarios, according to Sullivan.

Biden and Sullivan reiterated Tuesday the U.S. Navy s decision to move the USS Gerald R. Ford Carrier Strike Group to the eastern Mediterranean, closer to Israel, was intended to deter a larger regional conflict: Let me be clear, we did not move the carrier for Hamas, Sullivan said.

**Crucial Quote**

There s no justification for terrorism. There s no excuse. Hamas does not stand for the Palestinian people s right to dignity and self determination. The stated purpose is the annihilation of the state of Israel and the murder of Jewish people, Biden said during the 10-minute speech.

**What To Watch For**

Biden said he will ask Congress to take urgent action to fund additional national security measures when the House returns from recess, adding this is not about party or ***politics***. The conflict has brought new urgency to electing a new House speaker after Rep. Kevin McCarthy (R-Calif.) s ouster last week, as it s unclear what powers the House has to pass legislation without a speaker in place.

**Key Background**

Hamas invaded Israel from the Gaza Strip by air, land and sea on Saturday in a surprise attack that marks an escalation of the decades-long conflict between Israel and the Palestinian militant group. The Israeli death toll surpassed 1,000 Tuesday, Israeli officials said, and another 3,400 people have been wounded in the attacks, according to the Israeli embassy in Washington, D.C. The Gaza Health Ministry estimates more than700 Palestinianshave been killed. At least 15o people, mostly civilians and some Israeli soldiers, have been kidnapped from Israel and taken to Gaza as hostages. Hamas threatened on Monday to execute captives and broadcast their killings if any civilians in Gaza were targeted, but claimed all Israeli hostages were currently safe.

**Further Reading**

Americans Taken Hostage In Hamas Attack On Israel As Death Toll Passes 1,000(Forbes)

Hamas Threatens To Execute Israeli Civilian Hostages For Attacks On Gaza Without Prior Warning (Forbes)

Hamas Takes Israeli Soldiers, Civilians As Prisoners Of War(Forbes)

**Load-Date:** October 11, 2023

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