

Number of Israelis Signing Petitions Demanding Return of Captives Swells to 140,000

AL-QUDS (Dispatches) – The number of Israelis who signed petitions demanding the return of captives from Gaza even at the cost of halting the war climbed to nearly 140,000 as of Saturday, according to the campaign, which is gaining momentum across Israeli society.

The movement, coordinated through the website Restored Israel, reflects growing frustration over the regime’s military strategy and its failure to secure the release of captives.

In the past 24 hours alone, over 10,000 new signatories joined the campaign. As of early Saturday, the total number of signatures had reached 138,434, up from 128,114 on Friday. The number is expected to continue rising.

According to the platform, the number of petitions available for public signature rose from 47 on Friday to 50 by Saturday, including 21 launched by former or reserve members of the Israeli military.

Despite warnings from Zionist prime minister Benjamin Ne-



Protests continue in Tel Aviv, demanding hostage swap deal.

tanyahu, more active and former military personnel are joining the initiative.

Netanyahu had previously threatened to dismiss soldiers who speak out against the war or publicly support petitions aimed at halting the conflict.

While the majority of signatories are civilians – 127,255, according to the latest data – 11,179 military figures have also signed.

Among the civilian signatories

are 73,599 ordinary people, 1,500 parents of active-duty soldiers, and 1,300 relatives of soldiers killed in aggression.

The campaign has also attracted widespread support across society, including teachers, academics, doctors, artists, lawyers, and tech professionals.

Among military reservists and retirees, paratroopers are the largest group to sign the petitions, with 2,151 signatures, followed

by 1,700 former members of the Armored Corps, 1,600 from the military intelligence’s Unit 8200, 791 from special forces, 612 from the artillery division, 553 from the elite Golani Brigade, and 312 from the naval commando unit Shayetet 13.

Several prominent former military leaders have also signed the petitions, including former prime minister and chief of general Staff Ehud Barak, former chief of staff Dan Halutz, former southern command head Amram Mitzna, former central command head Avi Mizrahi, and former military intelligence chief Amos Malka.

On Friday, Israeli media reported that the regime had begun taking disciplinary action against military doctors who had signed the petitions.

The move follows Netanyahu’s recent claim that the signatories are engaging in insubordination with the support of foreign-funded organizations aiming to topple his cabinet, which has been in power since late 2022.

Pro-Palestinian Former Student: U.S. ICE Detention Like Nazi Concentration Camps

WASHINGTON (The Hill) – Mahmoud Khalil, the former Columbia University student being held in an Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) detention center for his support for Palestine, has compared “some aspects” of his conditions to those who were in Nazi concentration camps.

“I pick up my copy of Viktor Frankl’s ‘Man’s Search for Meaning.’ I feel ashamed to compare my conditions in ICE detention to Nazi concentration camps, yet, some aspects of Frankl’s experience resonate: not knowing what fate awaits me; seeing resignation and defeat in my fellow detainees,” Khalil wrote in a new op-ed published in The Washington Post.

Khalil has been in ICE detention for more than a month while his wife is set to give birth in two weeks. A green-card holder, Khalil was picked up and targeted because of his position as the lead negotiator for the pro-Palestinian encampment on his campus last spring. In a recent ruling, an immigration judge said Khalil’s proceedings could continue based on the government’s argument the secretary of state can order the deportation of non-citizens if they pose adverse effects to the foreign policy of the United States. In the proceedings, the judge gave the government 24 hours to produce evidence.

Khalil’s lawyers argue the judge’s move was too quick and

did not give them enough time to review the Donald Trump administration’s filings. Khalil in the op-ed criticized “the breakneck speed with which my case was heard and decided,” arguing it ran “roughshod over due process.” In a separate proceeding in federal court challenging his detention, the judge ruled Khalil could not yet be deported.

Khalil decried his detention as illegal and said no evidence has been produced against him besides his pro-Palestinian speech.

“Why should protesting Israel’s indiscriminate killing of thousands of innocent Palestinians result in the erosion of my constitutional rights?” Khalil said.

He hopes his detention will be a

warning and inspiration to others to stand up against injustice. “I write this letter as the sun rises, hoping that the suspension of my rights will raise alarm bells that yours are already in jeopardy. I hope it will inspire your outrage that the most basic human instinct, to protest shameless massacre, is being repressed by obscure laws, racist propaganda and a state terrified of an awakened public,” Khalil wrote in his conclusion.

“I hope this writing will startle you into understanding that a democracy for some – a democracy of convenience – is no democracy at all. I hope it will shake you into acting before it is too late,” he ended.

200,000 Patients Face Death Due to Gaza Crossings Closure

GAZA (Dispatches) – The Palestinian Ministry of Health has warned that 200,000 people with chronic illnesses are at life-threatening risk due to the continued closure of crossings by Zionist troops, which threatens the functioning of hospitals across the strip.

Khalil al-Daqran, spokesperson for Al-Aqsa Martyrs Hospital in central Gaza, described the healthcare situation in the enclave as catastrophic.

“The occupation is systematically targeting the health system in Gaza,” he asserted in a press statement, adding that children are being subjected to severe harm either through direct attacks or by the denial of essential medicines.

Earlier this week, Dr. Marwan al-Hams, director of field hospitals in Gaza, reported a total collapse in medical services across the territory. He stated that hos-

pitals have entirely run out of medicines and medical supplies and that the Zionist troops have blocked the entry of all forms of treatment or healthcare aid for more than 50 days.

According to al-Hams, the depletion of resources has brought the Palestinian Ministry of Health’s operations to a standstill.

“Hospitals can no longer admit the wounded and injured due to the ongoing airstrikes and intense bom-

bardment,” he explained, pointing out that emergency and intensive care units are fully occupied.

As a result, medical teams have been forced to implement triage protocols, choosing to treat only those whose lives can still be saved while leaving others without care. Al-Hams described this as “one of the most difficult decisions a medical team can be forced to make under occupation.”

Talks...

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Oman said the third round would be in Muscat, returning to the site of the first talks a week ago.

A statement from the Omani Foreign Ministry, which has been acting as a mediator, outlined further details about the talks.

The two officials “have agreed to enter into the next phase of their discussions that aim to seal a fair, enduring and binding deal which will ensure Iran completely free of nuclear weapons and sanctions, and maintaining its ability to develop peaceful nuclear energy,” the Omani statement read.

In a separate post, Omani Foreign Minister Badr Albusaidi thanked Witkoff and Araghchi for their “highly constructive approach” to the negotiations, saying: “These talks are gaining momentum and now even the unlikely is possible.”

Last week’s talks, where Witkoff and Araghchi spoke directly, marked the first known direct engagement between Iranian and U.S. officials under the Trump administration.

U.S. President Donald Trump, in his first term, unilaterally withdrew from Iran’s nuclear deal with world countries in 2018, setting off years of negotiations that failed to restore the accord.

Iranian officials informed U.S. negotiators during talks in Oman last week that Tehran requires “watertight guarantees” that Washington will not again quit a nuclear deal in order to “accept some limits on its uranium enrichment,” according to a report by Reuters.

“Tehran’s red lines ‘mandated by Supreme Leader Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei’ could not be compromised in the talks,” the British news outlet cited what it called a senior Iranian official without identifying him.

The red lines reportedly include dismantling Iran’s centrifuges for enriching uranium, halting enrichment altogether, or reducing the amount of enriched uranium the Islamic Republic currently possesses. Negotiators will also “not negotiate over [Iran’s] missile program, which Tehran views as outside the scope of any nuclear deal,” the report said.

“Iran understood in indirect talks in Oman that Washington doesn’t want Iran to stop all nuclear activities, and this can be a common ground for Iran and the U.S. to start a fair negotiation,” the source added.

The report was published hours after Araghchi said from Moscow that a new nuclear deal is possible if Washington makes no “unreasonable demands.”

“We will only negotiate over the nuclear issue, and other topics will not be included in these negotiations ... I believe there is a possibility of reaching an agreement if they demonstrate seriousness of intent and make no unrealistic and unreasonable demands,” Araghchi said during a joint press conference with his Russian counterpart, Sergei Lavrov.

Earlier this week, Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Khamenei said the first round of talks in Oman was “implemented well in their initial steps,” but added that the Islamic Republic is “very skeptical” of the other side.

During his first term in office, Trump unilaterally abandoned the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) and launched a “maximum pressure” sanctions campaign against Iran.

Trump restored that policy after returning to the White House in January. However, he has since indicated a willingness to negotiate a new deal.

Over...

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Taliban Minister Expresses Concern to Pakistan Over Afghan Repatriation Drive

KABUL (Reuters) – The Taliban’s acting foreign minister on Saturday expressed “concern and sadness” during a rare meeting with Pakistan’s foreign minister over the deportation of tens of thousands of Afghans, according to a statement.

Pakistan has expelled more than 80,000 Afghan nationals since the end of March, a senior official said on Friday, as part of a renewed surge in a repatriation drive that began in 2023.

But Saturday’s meeting marked a possible thaw in relations for the neighboring countries, whose forces have also clashed violently in recent months. Islamabad slayed militants who have carried out attacks in Pakistan have safe havens in

Afghanistan, a charge Kabul denies.

Pakistani foreign minister Ishaq Dar travelled to Kabul for the one-day visit to discuss security and commerce, the first such visit by Pakistan since 2022.

The Taliban administration’s acting foreign minister Amir Khan Muttaqi said in a statement he “expressed deep concern and sadness over the situation of Afghan migrants in Pakistan and their forced deportation.”

“He strongly urged Pakistani officials to prevent the violation of the rights of Afghans residing in or arriving in Pakistan,” the statement said, adding that they also discussed a boost to bilateral trade

and ensuring returning Afghans could take the proceeds of their property in Pakistan with them.

Pakistan’s foreign office said in a statement that Dar “emphasized the paramount importance of addressing all pertinent issues, particularly those related to security and border management, in order to fully realize the potential for regional trade and connectivity.”

Tensions between the nations have run high, with Pakistan carrying out airstrikes on Afghan territory last year and a key border crossing between the two countries being closed for almost a month in February amid clashes between forces from both sides.