
Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs: Qatar Committed to Bridging Gap to Reach Ceasefire in Gaza

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Doha, June 12 (QNA) – HE Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim Al-Thani affirmed Qatar’s commitment to bridging the gap and bringing parties together to achieve a ceasefire in Gaza, the release of all prisoners and hostages.

During a joint press conference with HE U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken today, His Excellency said that today’s meeting built on a series of important discussions and deliberations over the past eight months regarding the war in Gaza and ways to end it, in addition to discussing working to prevent the expansion of violence and conflict in the region. His Excellency added that he discussed with the U.S. Secretary of State the response Qatar received yesterday, Tuesday, from Hamas and the Palestinian factions regarding the latest proposal on a ceasefire and prisoner

exchange deal. He said that the response is currently being studied, and coordination with the concerned parties on the next steps is underway.

His Excellency stressed that Qatar, Egypt, and the United States are committed to their partnership to end this war and reach a prisoner and hostage exchange deal. He expressed appreciation for the intensive efforts exerted by U.S. President Joe Biden to unify visions and reach this proposal in a way that approximates, as much as possible, the perspectives of all parties.

The Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs underscored Qatar's commitment to bridging the gap between the parties and its continuous efforts to resolve these differences in the best way to end the war as soon as possible. He stressed that every day lost is a loss in civilian and innocent lives.

His Excellency pointed out that everyone should take a clear stance to demand an end to this war, explaining that since the beginning of the crisis, nearly 37,000 have been martyred and 84,000 have been wounded so far, in addition to the ongoing policy of collective punishment and starvation used against the brothers in Gaza.

His Excellency said that there was a shift in this conflict in recent times, and there is a clear and firm call to end this war. In this context, His Excellency noted the U.S.-sponsored UN Security

Council resolution calling for an immediate ceasefire and a deal for the release of hostages and prisoners, and a return to political negotiations to find sustainable solutions.

HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs highlighted Qatar's participation in many regional and international meetings and conferences over the past period, aimed at unifying visions and reaching a sustainable solution to the Palestinian issue, in addition to the visits and tours that took place within the ministerial committee mandated by the Arab and Islamic summit on developments, including meetings with foreign ministers and representatives of European countries, and participation in the EU Foreign Affairs Council. He also mentioned attending the "Call for Action: Urgent Humanitarian Response for Gaza" conference yesterday, Tuesday, following a joint invitation from King Abdullah II of Jordan, President Abdel Fattah El Sisi of Egypt, and UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres.

His Excellency said that the conference called for urgent measures to end this conflict and ongoing operations in Gaza, and to respect international law. He appreciated the resumption of U.S. air assistance to Gaza after a period of suspension due to operations in the region.

His Excellency praised the announcement by the U.S. Secretary of State of additional humanitarian aid for Gaza, confirming Qatar's continuous efforts to send humanitarian aid to the brothers in Gaza.

HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs said that reaching an agreement to save innocent lives during this period is very important, in addition to its role in saving the region from being on the brink of collapse and explosion. His Excellency pinned hopes on the American role and Qatar's partners in Egypt and all countries to pressure all parties to reach an agreement to end this war.

His Excellency that the conflict has reached a turning point to find sustainable solutions, not temporary ones, that would bring security and stability to Gaza, the West Bank, and everyone living in this region. His Excellency emphasized that the permanent solution is a just solution by establishing a Palestinian state with Jerusalem as its capital according to international legitimacy resolutions, on the 1967 borders.

His Excellency pointed out, during the press conference, that the countries in the region are open to having a clear peace plan according to the Arab Peace Initiative, noting the movement at the UN General Assembly to accept Palestine as a full member of the UN, contributing to a two-state solution. His Excellency expressed his appreciation for the cooperation and strategic partnership with the United States in this crisis and in many common issues between the two countries.

In response to journalists' questions, His Excellency confirmed that Qatar's efforts in the negotiation process are not new, as they undergo phases of give-and-take to reach an agreement

and usually do not include a definitive yes or no answer. He expressed hope to reach an agreement as soon as possible. His Excellency said that there was hope for more momentum in the past few days, but that unfortunately there were challenges. His Excellency reiterated Qatar's commitment to providing proposals to bridge the gap between the parties. He noted that having three countries (Qatar, Egypt, and the U.S.) as guarantors of this process ensures that these negotiations will continue to reach a permanent ceasefire.

His Excellency reaffirmed that achieving a ceasefire is the cornerstone of stability in the future. He emphasized that Qatar acts as a mediator and tries not to consider itself a party in this conflict, with the goal of ending the war, ending the suffering of the people in Gaza, and releasing the hostages, and then thinking about the next day.

The Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs called for pressure on both parties, especially given the contradictory statements from different Israeli officials, requiring pressure on them similar to that exerted on the other side.

His Excellency said that as a mediator, Qatar tries to do everything to bridge the gap in positions, not to favor one side over another. His Excellency said that the biggest concern was the time it takes to bridge the gap between the parties, noting that this war is the longest that has occurred in Palestine.

His Excellency noted that the Hamas office in Doha is maintained to keep communication channels open, saying that Qatar's interest lies in seeing security and stability prevail in the region. His Excellency said that Qatar's policy is clear in supporting the Palestinian people to achieve their legitimate rights, but that in the end, Qatar is a state rather than a political party.

For his part, HE US Secretary of State Antony Blinken said that Qatar has shown great generosity in helping people who are in desperate need, providing 4,700 tons of food and medicine, along with other urgent aid.

His Excellency added that the United States is the largest provider of aid to the Palestinians and will continue to do everything possible to support them, especially at this time, confirming his country's continued efforts to increase the flow of aid to the Gaza Strip and ensure it reaches those who need it.

He referred to the conference held yesterday, Tuesday, in Jordan aimed at mobilizing international support to address the humanitarian crisis in Gaza, where the United States announced an additional \$400 million in aid to the Palestinians, bringing the total aid provided by his country to \$670 million since the war began.

The U.S. Secretary of State affirmed his country's efforts to improve the protection of civilians and secure the release of hostages, adding that the quickest and most effective way to end the suffering of both Palestinians and Israelis, and to address the humanitarian crisis and prevent further violence, lies in reaching a ceasefire, which will allow for a permanent end to the conflict.

His Excellency said that Qatar has always been an unwavering partner in mediation efforts to reach an agreement on the release of hostages, noting that the issue was discussed here in Doha on Oct. 13 and on several other occasions since then.

Blinken affirmed his country's continued efforts alongside regional partners to urgently push for a deal, in light of the proposal put forth by U.S. President Joe Biden, noting that it benefits Israelis, Palestinians, the region, and the entire world. He emphasized the need for an immediate ceasefire, followed by a permanent end to the war, and the preparation of a comprehensive plan for the day after the war in Gaza ends. His Excellency added that the coming weeks will see a proposal for elements of that plan, including concrete ideas on how to manage Gaza, security, and reconstruction. His Excellency pointed out the importance and necessity of this plan to transform the truce into a permanent end to the war, and to convert the end of the war into a just and lasting peace, which can serve as a foundation for building a more integrated, stable, and prosperous region.

During the press conference, he mentioned that he had heard many stories from Palestinians who managed to leave Gaza and learned about the conditions of their families and relatives there, saying that this drives him to work on ending this suffering, ending the conflict, and putting everyone on a path to just and lasting peace. (QNA)