

Hamas Working to Free 8 Russian-Israeli Hostages – Reports

By [AFP](#)

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A woman places flowers in memory of the Palestinian victims near the Palestinian embassy in Moscow, Russia, on Oct. 18, 2023. **EPA/MAXIM SHIPENKOV/TASS**

Hamas is trying to locate eight Russian-Israeli dual citizens among nearly 230 taken hostage during its attack on Israel after Moscow's request to free them, Russian news agencies reported Saturday.

Russia has good relations with the Palestinian militant group, which it does not consider a terror group, and has launched a diplomatic effort to try to free hostages held in Gaza.

Israel has said it believes 229 people were taken hostage by Hamas during its massive attack on Israel on Oct. 7.

"From the Russian side, via the Foreign Ministry, we received a list of citizens that have dual citizenship," senior Hamas representative Moussa Abu Marzook said, the RIA Novosti news

agency reported.

"We are looking for those people... It is hard but we are looking. And when we find them, we will let them go."

"We are very attentive to this list and will process it carefully because we consider Russia to be a close friend," he said.

"About the peaceful citizens that were taken and that are now in Gaza, we treat them as guests," claimed Abu Marzook, who arrived in Russia on Thursday for talks on the hostages.

"We will free them as soon as there will be the conditions," he said referring to the Russian-Israelis.

Russia's Deputy Foreign Minister Mikhail Bogdanov confirmed Hamas had handed over a list bearing eight names.

"They have promised to react, to help, to find them and take all necessary measures to free the Russians," TASS quoted Bogdanov as saying.

Marzook told Russian media there was no progress on international talks to free the hostages.

He was quoted as saying "dozens of Western and regional officials came to us to demand the liberation of the detainees."

The civilians were taken as "a result of chaos," he said.

The Kremlin admitted earlier this week it had not succeeded in freeing Russian hostages and that it did not know how many of its citizens had been taken.

Israel launched a withering bombardment of Gaza after Hamas gunmen stormed across the border, killing 1,400 people, mostly civilians, and taking nearly 230 others hostage, according to Israeli officials.

The health ministry in the Hamas-run Gaza Strip said Saturday the Israeli strikes had killed 7,703 people, including more than 3,500 children.

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