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Russian Hostage Freed by Hamas in Prisoner Swap

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Israeli-American Sagui Dekel-Chen (2nd from the left) and Israeli-Russian Sasha Troufanov (2nd from the right) stand on stage next to Palestinian militants during their handover to a Red Cross team in Khan Younis in the southern Gaza Strip on Feb. 15, 2025,. **Eyad Baba / AFP**

Militant group Hamas freed three hostages on Saturday as part of its ceasefire deal with Israel, including one Russian citizen, The Times of Israel Reported.

Alexander Troufanov, a 29-year-old citizen of Israel and Russia, Sagui Dekel-Chen, a 36-year-old citizen of Israel and the United States and Iair Horn, a 46-year-old citizen of Israel and Argentina, were released.

All three were kidnapped by terrorists from Kibbutz Nir Oz on Oct. 7, 2023. Troufanov, Russian diplomats reported earlier, was wounded in the abduction.

An AFP journalist saw masked Hamas gunmen parade the hostages onto a stage before a crowd in Gaza's southern city of Khan Younis.

They were handed over to staff of the International Committee of the Red Cross. Red Cross staff then handed over the former hostages to IDF soldiers who would escort them to Israel.

“Finally, Sasha can be surrounded by his loved ones and begin a new path,” Troufanov's family said in a statement.

The Kremlin on Saturday said it was grateful to Hamas for freeing a Russian-Israeli hostage from Gaza in another prisoner exchange with Israel.

“Moscow welcomes the freeing of Alexander Troufanov and expresses its gratitude to the Hamas leadership for taking this decision,” Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said, according to the state-run RIA Novosti news agency.

AFP contributed reporting.

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