

VOA NEWS

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Hi, I'm VOA's Alexis Strobe with your worldwide news update.

Israel's cabinet has approved a deal for a cease-fire in Gaza and the release of dozens of hostages that will pause the 15-month war with Hamas for six weeks. The deal, agreed to early on Saturday, brings Israel and Hamas a step closer to ending their deadliest and most destructive fighting ever. The cease-fire will go into effect on Sunday.

Netanyahu instructed a special task force to prepare to receive the hostages returning from Gaza. The 33 Israeli hostages include women, children, men over 50, and sick or wounded people. Hamas has agreed to free three female hostages on Day 1 of the deal, four on Day 7 and the remaining 26 over the following five weeks.

Palestinian detainees are to be released as well. Israel's Justice Ministry published a list of 95 to be freed in the deal's first phase and said the release will not begin before 4 p.m. local time Sunday. All people on the list are younger or female.

President-elect Donald Trump said his inauguration on Monday will take place inside the U.S. Capitol rather than outdoors because of severe cold. Reuters correspondent Freddie Joyner reports.

The inauguration address, prayers and other speeches will be delivered inside the United States Capitol rotunda.

The last time an inauguration was moved indoors because of the bitter cold was in 1985 for former Republican President Ronald Reagan's second swearing-in when the afternoon wind chill fell into the range of minus 10 to minus 20 degrees Fahrenheit.

The forecast for Washington on Monday puts temperatures at the time of Trump's swearing-in at around 19 degrees Fahrenheit and will feel even colder with wind chill.

According to Trump, his presidential parade would be moved to Capital One Arena, a sports venue in downtown Washington that holds 20,000 people. It was not immediately clear how a parade would be organized inside the sports venue.

That was Reuters correspondent Freddie Joyner.

This is VOA News.

U.S. President Joe Biden called the Equal Rights Amendment "the law of the land" on Friday, backing an effort to enshrine the change into the U.S. Constitution more than a century after the guarantee of gender equality was first proposed.

"Today, I affirm the Equal Rights Amendment to have cleared all the necessary hurdles to be added to the U.S. Constitution now. The Equal Rights Amendment is the law of the land now. It's the 28th amendment to the Constitution now."

It was unclear what practical impact Biden's comments might have. The White House issued his statement just three days before he leaves office, handing off to President-elect Donald Trump on Monday.

The ERA declares that "equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any state on account of sex."

Its supporters say that it is needed to protect against sexual discrimination and would help achieve equal pay, while opponents argue that the original timetable to have it become part of the Constitution has passed and that the amendment is no longer needed.

Mexico has agreed to expand support to other Latin American and Caribbean nations as part of a regional migratory response. The announcement Friday comes days before U.S. President-elect Donald Trump takes office with a promise to carry out mass deportations.

The aid was announced by Mexico's Secretary of Foreign Affairs Juan Ramón de la Fuente after a two-day closed meeting with representatives of 11 countries. De la Fuente acknowledged that "significant changes are imminent" in the United States, the primary destination for most migrants traveling through Latin America.

A warrant has been issued for the former president of Bolivia. AP correspondent Haya Punjwani reports.

A Bolivian judge has ordered the arrest of former president Eva Morales in a sex abuse case. The judge ordered the warrant after former president Morales didn't appear to testify in court in a case alleging that he sexually abused a minor.

The hearing was in the southern region, where the alleged victim lives.

Morales, who is 65 years old, is alleged to have had a child with a teenage girl in 2016, a sexual relationship that's considered statutory rape under Bolivian law.

I'm Haya Punjwani.

A rare wave of U.S.-China camaraderie broke out online in recent days as "refugees" from the popular short video platform TikTok poured onto a Chinese social media platform.

As the fate of TikTok hangs in the balance, U.S. TikTok users are flocking to Xiaohongshu, making it the top downloaded app in the U.S.

Some of the TikTok "refugees," as they call themselves, say the TikTok alternative, a Chinese app, is being chosen in protest of the TikTok ban. The app is also known as RedNote.

That wraps up this update, but the world and news never stop. For additional updates, visit our website. I'm Alexis Strobe, VOA News.