

VOA NEWS

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I'm VOA's Joe Ramsey with your worldwide news update.

Hamas released three hostages Sunday as part of a newly reached cease-fire deal with Israel. VOA's Arash Arabasadi has the story.

Freedom for the first three of 33 hostages to be released by Hamas in phase one of the deal. The Israeli military confirmed the handover as part of a recent cease-fire agreement.

The International Committee of the Red Cross received the freed hostages, all of them women.

U.S. President Joe Biden on his final full day in office.

"After so much pain, destruction, loss of life, today the guns in Gaza have gone silent. I've worked in foreign policy for decades and this is one of the toughest negotiations I've been part of."

In exchange, Israel was freeing 90 Palestinian prisoners, 69 women and 21 teenage boys.

As part of the deal, in the next six weeks Hamas will release 30 more hostages in exchange for about 2,000 Palestinians held by Israel.

The truce clears the way for the flow of aid back into Gaza. And as for risks of the cease-fire collapsing, the incoming administration of President-elect Donald Trump says Hamas is backed in a corner.

Trump's incoming national security adviser Mike Waltz, speaking on CNN's State of the Union show as provided by the social media platform, X.

"They have no option except to let our hostages go. They cannot be a terrorist organization any longer and they will never govern Gaza."

The hostage release and prisoner swap cease-fire deal comes after 15 months of fighting that reduced entire areas of the Gaza Strip to rubble.

Arash Arabesadi, VOA News.

This is VOA News.

President-elect Trump is preparing to take office after a presidential race that stood out for its heated rhetoric. VOA's Veronica Balderas Iglesias reports.

The U.S. Capitol saw some protests Saturday, but overall the atmosphere in this government transition period remains calm.

Former Trump's strategist Steve Bannon anticipates the president-elect will adopt a conciliatory tone after his sworn-in Monday for a second term in office. Bannon's remarks aired Sunday on ABC's "This Week Show."

"I think he'll lay out the challenges and he'll lay out the beginning in some sort of 60,000-foot level, what his policies and proposals are, but I think it'll all be about unifying the country and going forward together."

Democrats stand ready to work with the incoming administration. Democratic Senator Alex Padilla told ABC.

"If we want to build on our progress from the last four years in record job creation, wage increases, record-sustained low unemployment and historic investments in our nation's infrastructure from an economic and security standpoint, that's great."

At least 25,000 law enforcement personnel are expected to be deployed to protect a smooth transfer of power from Biden to Trump on inauguration day.

Veronica Balderas Iglesias, VOA News, Washington.

TikTok announced it was restoring service to users in the U.S. on Sunday after it briefly went dark in anticipation of a law forcing it to shut down the country. Reuters correspondent Zachary Goelman reports.

The video-sharing app said the reversal was thanks to U.S. President-elect Donald Trump, who said he would revive the app in the U.S. after he was sworn into office on Monday.

A bipartisan law had threatened to force TikTok to either divest its U.S. operations or shut it down, citing national security concerns and data risks due to the app's Chinese parent company, ByteDance.

The law passed overwhelmingly by Congress gives the incoming Trump administration sweeping authority to ban or seek the sale of other Chinese-owned apps.

Reuters correspondent Zachary Goelman.

Southern Californians are again bracing for gusty winds and a heightened risk of wildfires less than two weeks after the start of deadly blazes that have killed at least 27 people and destroyed thousands of homes.

The U.S. National Weather Service has issued a red flag warning signaling increased fire danger for Los Angeles on Monday and Tuesday due to low humidity and warm, dry Santa Ana winds.

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