# Freed Israeli hostage addresses UN, highlighting plight of captives



Freed Israeli hostage Eli Sharabi, who endured significant suffering during his 491 days in captivity by Hamas, addressed the United Nations Security Council on Thursday, expressing his deep anger and despair over the prolonged captivity of hostages. During his emotional testimony, he questioned the inaction of international bodies, asking, “Where was the United Nations? Where was the Red Cross? Where was the world?” His remarks highlighted the plight of the remaining 59 hostages currently believed to still be in Gaza.

Sharabi's appearance came just days after Israel resumed military operations following a six-week pause that allowed for the exchange of some hostages for Palestinian prisoners. His comments drew attention to the striking contrast between the UN's discussions about humanitarian aid for Palestinians and the conditions endured by hostages. He described the scarcity of food, stating that during his captivity, he was reduced to eating barely a piece of pita and having only a sip of tea and an occasional dry date each day. Upon his release on February 8, he weighed merely 44 kilos (approximately 97 pounds), significantly less than his youngest daughter, who had been killed during the Hamas attack on October 7, 2023.

The atmosphere in the Security Council was tense, as Sharabi highlighted the urgency of the situation for those still in captivity. He asserted that many hostages are believed to be dead, a grim scenario following the uptick in fighting. Earlier in November, the United States vetoed a resolution from the Security Council that aimed to demand an immediate ceasefire in Gaza, underscoring political complexities surrounding the conflict. Subsequently, a resolution adopted by the General Assembly in December reiterated the call for a ceasefire and the release of hostages, though it holds no binding authority.

The recent resurgence of violence in Gaza resulted in over 400 Palestinian deaths following Israel's airstrikes, marking one of the highest casualties recorded in the ongoing conflict, which has persisted for close to 18 months. Reports indicate that a significant portion of those affected were women and children, raising further discussion regarding the humanitarian situation.

During the session, Britain’s deputy ambassador James Kariuki acknowledged the unimaginable suffering of Sharabi, stating that “Hamas must be held accountable for their despicable actions.” He, however, also denounced the remarks made by Israeli Defense Minister Israel Katz, who warned of the total destruction of Gaza. Kariuki articulated the UK’s position advocating for increased humanitarian aid to Gaza and a thorough investigation into incidents of violence against Palestinian detainees.

France’s newly appointed U.N. ambassador, Jérôme Bonnafont, expressed condolences to Sharabi but condemned the renewed bombing of Gaza, asserting it would not contribute to the release of hostages and called for an end to Israel’s humanitarian blockade. Russia’s deputy U.N. ambassador Dmitry Polyansky labelled the brutality faced by hostages as inexcusable, urging Israeli leaders to reconsider their approach toward the ongoing conflict and move towards a peace-oriented resolution.

The discourse came to a conclusion with the Palestinian U.N. ambassador, Riyad Mansour, offering condolences to Sharabi for the loss of his family and acknowledging the universal pain experienced by those in captivity. He remarked that Palestinians resonate with Sharabi’s suffering, as it reflects their ongoing hardships.

Sharabi's final plea was a heartfelt one, aiming to represent not only his own plight but also that of other hostages. He called for their immediate return, declaring, “Bring them all home. Now!” As tensions remain high and the situation develops, the fate of the remaining hostages continues to invite scrutiny and concern from the international community.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://www.israelhayom.com/2025/03/20/from-paradise-to-hell-former-hostages-moving-un-speech/> - This article corroborates Eli Sharabi's emotional testimony at the UN Security Council, where he shared his harrowing experiences as a Hamas hostage and questioned the inaction of international bodies.
* <https://www.timesofisrael.com/liveblog_entry/freed-hostage-eli-sharabi-to-testify-before-un-security-council/> - This article supports the details of Eli Sharabi's appearance at the UN Security Council, highlighting his advocacy for the release of hostages in Gaza.
* <https://www.israelhayom.com/2025/03/20/from-paradise-to-hell-former-hostages-moving-un-speech/> - This article further explains Sharabi's testimony, including his descriptions of captivity conditions and his criticism of humanitarian aid reaching Hamas.
* <https://www.timesofisrael.com/liveblog_entry/freed-hostage-eli-sharabi-to-testify-before-un-security-council/> - This article provides context on the international response to Sharabi's testimony, including reactions from various countries' ambassadors at the UN.
* <https://www.israelhayom.com/2025/03/20/from-paradise-to-hell-former-hostages-moving-un-speech/> - This article details Sharabi's personal tragedy, including the loss of his family during the Hamas attack on October 7, 2023, and his subsequent captivity.