

Report: Israel's Netanyahu Held Secret Meeting in May in Cairo With Egypt's Sisi to Discuss Potential Gaza Deal



Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Egyptian President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi meet in New York City, Sept. 18, 2017. Photo: Avi Ohayon / GPO.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu flew to Cairo at the end of May for a covert meeting with Egyptian President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi, Israel's *Channel 10* reported on Monday.

The purpose of the May 22nd meeting, according to *Channel 10's* Barak Ravid, was to discuss Egypt's effort to promote a long-term diplomatic deal that would include a return of the Palestinian Authority to the Hamas-ruled Gaza Strip, a ceasefire between Israel and Hamas, a significant easing of the Israeli and Egyptian blockades of Gaza, and a rehabilitation of critical infrastructure in the Strip.

Netanyahu and Sisi also talked about finding a solution to the issue of the bodies of fallen IDF soldiers and the live Israeli civilians held by Hamas in Gaza.

An additional agenda item was the Israeli-Palestinian peace plan the Trump administration hopes to present in the near future.

The prime minister spent only a few hours in Egypt, accompanied by a small team of aides and bodyguards, and returned to Israel late at night, with the trip being kept secret even from most members of Netanyahu's security cabinet.

This ongoing behind-the-scenes regional diplomacy could explain the relative restraint shown by Netanyahu in recent months amid a series of violent flare-ups on the Israel-Gaza border, Ravid theorized on Twitter.

Netanyahu and Sisi previously met publicly last September on the sidelines of the annual UN General Assembly gathering in New York City.

Source: <https://www.algemeiner.com/2018/08/13/report-israels-netanyahu-held-secret-meeting-in-may-in-cairo-with-egypts-sisi-to-discuss-potential-gaza-deal/>

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