UN chief visits families of Hamas captives

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United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres met Monday with the families of Israeli soldiers and citizens currently held hostage by Hamas in the Gaza Strip.

During their meeting, the families of Oron Shaul, Avera Mangistu and Hisham Al-Sayeed requested the Secretary-General’s assistance in the effort to return their sons to Israel. During the meeting, Israel’s UN Ambassador Danny Danon stated, “Hamas is displaying appalling cruelty by holding our citizens and soldiers. The UN must act to ensure their return to Israel.”

Guterres is on [a three-day visit in the Jewish state](http://www.israelnationalnews.com/News/News.aspx/234645) as the UN and Israel attempt to “turn a new page” after decades of chilly relations.

During his visit, Guterres visited the Yad Vashem Holocaust Museum in Jerusalem and met with Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu.

Netanyahu chided the UN for its failure to act against the rampant anti-Israel and anti-Semitic incitement in the Arab world, including in the Palestinian Authority.

“The UN is mandated to pursue peace,” said Netanyahu, "but it allows Palestinian hate speech to flourish in its institutions.”

In his [conversation with Guterres](http://www.israelnationalnews.com/News/News.aspx/234658), Netanyahu also raised the issue of [illegal construction](http://www.israelnationalnews.com/News/Flash.aspx/395493) in the UN's Armon Hanatziv compound in Jerusalem, saying that the UN should obey the rules for construction and Israeli law. At the meeting, it was agreed that Israel and the United Nations would try to arrive at a negotiated solution that would respect Israeli law.