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Some of those present carried photos of the hostages under a sign saying 'abducted'

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The ceasefire, intended to pave the way to an end of the Israel-Hamas war, was scheduled to begin at 0630 GMT Sunday.

Under the deal, 33 hostages taken by militants during Hamas's October 7, 2023 attack on Israel will be returned from Gaza during an initial 42-day period.

In Paris, hostage supporters gathered opposite the Eiffel Tower anxiously awaiting the ceasefire.

"It's a mix of hope and fear," said Jean-David Ichay, president of the "Tous 7 Octobre" association.

"There's already the fact that only 33 hostages have been announced so far... The rest will either happen later or not at all," he said.

Of the 251 people taken hostage, 94 are still in Gaza, including 34 the Israeli military says are dead.

Two sources close to Hamas told AFP that the first group of hostages to be released would be three Israeli women soldiers.

"We call on the public to not fall into euphoria but to continue to come to rallies and speak up for the hostages."

Hamas's October 7, 2023 attack on Israel triggered the war and resulted in the deaths of 1,210 people, mostly civilians, according to an AFP tally of Israeli official figures.

Israel's retaliatory campaign has destroyed much of Gaza, killing 46,899 people, most of them civilians, according to figures from the health ministry in the Hamas-run territory that the United Nations considers reliable.