

# Two Women Returning Home After Taken Hostage By Hamas: Pritzker, Duckworth Express Relief

by Dan Brannan, Content Director  
October 20 2023 2:28 PM



**CHICAGO** — Judith Raanan and her teenage daughter, Natalie, were reportedly released from a hostage situation today. The two Americans from Evanston, Ill., had been taken hostage by Hamas and sources say they were released on Friday.

The two had been abducted on Oct. 7, 2023. After their release, Governor J.B. Pritzker issued the following statement:

"I am incredibly relieved that Natalie and Judith Raanan of Evanston have been released from captivity in Gaza. In what was supposed to be a visit to their loving family in Israel, they were violently abducted by a terrorist organization. After being held against their will for nearly two weeks, they are now safe and receiving necessary medical treatment.

"I cannot wait to welcome them back home after demonstrating immense strength and bravery in the face of unthinkable terror. We must continue to advocate and pray for the safe return of those still held by Hamas. We will not let those who use terror as their weapon win."

Judith and Natalie had been excited to travel to Israel to celebrate a relative's 85th birthday and the Jewish holiday season, according to their rabbi.

### **Duckworth Statement on Illinois Hostages Released by Hamas Terrorists**

U.S. Senator Tammy Duckworth, a member of both the U.S. Senate Foreign Relations and Armed Services Committees, also celebrated the release of the two Illinois hostages in the following statement:

"The release of two Illinoisans, Judith and Natalie Raanan, who've been held hostage by Hamas since last weekend's awful terrorist attacks in Israel is an undeniable relief - not only for those of us who've been working for their release but for their family, friends and all their loved ones who can breathe a little easier today.

"This is - and should be - a day of celebration for them, but I know there are still so many families going through the unimaginable anguish of worrying about the fate of their loved ones still being held hostage and my heart goes out to them today too.

"I, along with our entire government, remain hard at work doing everything I can to ensure the Americans - and anyone - still in Hamas captivity can return home safely. Hamas owes these families the swift release of all hostages, and they must immediately allow life-saving medical care to reach those still in their custody as we work to secure their safe release."

The family hadn't heard from either the mother or daughter since the surprise Hamas attack. The community in their suburb north of Chicago fears they are among roughly 200 people abducted by Hamas gunmen following the terrorist group's mass-murderous incursion into Israel on October 7, 2023.

The Mother-daughter duo had been celebrating Simchat Torah, a festive Jewish holiday that marks the conclusion of the annual reading of the Torah.

They were in Nahal Oz, a kibbutz in Israel about a mile (1.61 kilometers) from the Gaza border.