

Ellis, Alex

From: Ellis, Alex
Sent: Tuesday, February 18, 2025 2:52 PM
To: Ellis, Alex
Subject: ICYMI: Fox News Op-ed by Idit Ohel on Her Son's Captivity

ICYMI, here's an op-ed from *Fox News* by Idit Ohel, the mother of Alon Ohel, a Serbian-Israeli citizen who has been held hostage by Hamas for nearly 500 days. She shares the heartbreaking reality of his captivity and urges President Trump to help secure his release.

[My son is in Hamas tunnels – President Trump, you have the power to get him out](#)

'President Trump has already proven he can make the impossible possible'

By [Idit Ohel](#)

As I write these words, my heart is heavy. For almost 500 days, I've lived in a nightmare that no mother should ever endure. My son, Alon, spent his 24th birthday earlier this week in the dark tunnels of Hamas, chained, tortured and abused – his second birthday in captivity.

Alon is my eldest son. He has two younger siblings. He is beautiful, with blond hair and bright green eyes. He's also an incredibly talented pianist and a sensitive young man with many dreams yet to fulfill. Alon is a people person – I am always inspired by his ability to connect with others and build deep bonds. I miss his smile, his voice, his sense of humor, and our conversations about life. I miss just having him with us, watching him make his way in the world with his characteristic determination and curiosity.

On Oct. 7, 2023, Alon attended [the Nova music festival](#). When the attack began, he and others sought refuge in what we now tragically call the "death shelter." Out of 27 people hiding there, only seven survived. Four were kidnapped: my son Alon, Or Levy, Eliya Cohen and Hersh Goldberg-Polin. Or was just released this past weekend, Eliya is set to be released later this month, and Hersh was tragically executed in captivity. And my son? Despite his severe injuries and deteriorating condition, he is not even included in the current phase of releases.

This past Saturday, when I watched the release of Or Levy – who was kidnapped together with Alon – along with Eli Sharabi and Ohad Ben-Ami from captivity, I collapsed. Something that hadn't happened to me once in the past 16 months. I burst into tears that I couldn't stop for hours. It was so shocking to see them and the terrible state they were in, so emaciated, pale, with sunken eyes. I tried to imagine my Alon, my beautiful boy. How does he look now?

That same evening, to my great joy, I received a message – the first sign of life since Oct. 7. Along with this came the horrifying descriptions of the conditions in which he is being held. He was with Or and Eli throughout their time in captivity. He has been restrained with iron shackles during his entire captivity, limiting his movement. He has a severe injury to his eye, with a foreign body lodged in it, leaving him able to see only shadows. There are also shrapnel embedded in his arms and neck that have been left untreated. He, like the others, receives barely one piece of bread per day. Almost 500 days in complete darkness.

And he is still there – not even included in the current phase of the deal. How is my son, chained and wounded, not considered a "humanitarian case"?

I am deeply grateful to [President Trump](#) for his extraordinary efforts in securing the hostage deal. In a matter of weeks, he achieved what seemed impossible, bringing many of our loved ones back home. His unwavering stance has been clear and powerful – all hostages must be released, and they must be released now. He understands they have no time left. There are still about 20 living hostages, including my son, who aren't included in the first phase of releases.

President Trump has already proven he can make the impossible possible. Our hope for Alon's return, and the return of all remaining hostages, rests strongly with him. These efforts, alongside [Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's work](#), have reunited families and saved lives.

Alon's great-grandfather survived Auschwitz, weighing just 38 kilos when liberated. He came to Israel and built a beautiful family. Perhaps it's this resilient DNA that keeps Alon alive now, as he endures conditions that echo the darkest chapters of our people's history. But how can we, in 2025, allow such suffering to continue?

The tunnels where my son is held are dark, but our determination to bring him home must shine brighter than ever. I refuse to let Alon mark another birthday in captivity. I refuse to let him become another statistic in this brutal saga. Bring them home now. Bring my son home now. Before it's too late.

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