Israeli girl with autism thought kidnapped by Hamas found dead

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<https://www.jns.org/israeli-girl-with-autism-thought-kidnapped-by-hamas-found-dead/>

Eleven days after Hamas’s terrorist onslaught began, rescue workers found the lifeless bodies of Noya Dan, a 12-year-old Israeli girl with autism, and her grandmother Carmela Dan, officials said on Thursday.

Residents of Kibbutz Kissufim and Kibbutz Nir Oz, respectively, the two had been assumed kidnapped by the Hamas terrorist organization and brought over the border to the Gaza Strip. But on Oct. 18, their bodies were found near the border fence, Israel’s *Kan News* public broadcaster reported.

Noya’s plight went viral on social media on Sunday after the Israeli Foreign Ministry’s X (formerly Twitter) account enlisted the help of British author J.K. Rowling in an effort to help bring her home.

“Noya is sensitive, kind, funny and a massive Harry Potter fan,” Jerusalem wrote to the famed author, sharing a photo of the girl in a Harry Potter costume.

Rowling reposted the photo, stressing to her 14 million followers that kidnapping children is “despicable and wholly unjustifiable.

“For obvious reasons, this picture has hit home with me. May Noya and all hostages taken by Hamas be returned soon, safely, to their families,” wrote Rowling.

On Thursday, the ministry said, “We are devastated to announce that Noya and her grandmother’s bodies were found yesterday. Thank you, J.K. Rowling, for sharing her story with the hope that she would come home. Our hearts are broken. May their memory be a blessing.”

**‘Many bodies are still waiting to be identified’**

Noya’s uncle Ofer Calderon, his 16-year-old daughter and his 12-year-old son are still missing, *Channel 12* quoted the family as saying.

“Today was a difficult day,” said Sharon Kaldron. “Carmela Dan and Noya Dan are no longer with us. May they be remembered for love. We continue to fight to bring Ofer, Sahar and Erez home.”

[Hamas](https://www.jns.org/idf-paves-way-for-a-ground-offensive-but-could-hamas-escape-with-civilians/) terrorists killed at least 1,400 Israelis and wounded more than 4,500 in a massive offensive launched from Gaza on Oct. 7, which included the firing of thousands of rockets at Israel and the infiltration of the Jewish state by terrorist forces.

Terrorists took at least 203 hostages from Israel to the Strip during the invasion, IDF Spokesperson Rear Adm. Daniel Hagari said on Thursday, adding that the number is not final.

“The IDF has been scanning the Gaza border area for bodies of missing Israelis, locating some, and many bodies are still waiting to be identified,” said Hagari.

Rescue volunteers on Thursday also located the bodies of 58-year-old Arik Peretz and his daughter Ruth, who suffered from muscular dystrophy and cerebral palsy. The two had been missing since terrorists attacked the Supernova Sukkot Music Festival near Kibbutz Re’im on Oct. 7.