
Hamas and Fatah Agree on Unity Government in Gaza

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The breakthrough in talks has been reached on a number of unspecified issues and an agreement will be announced later on Thursday, according to member of Hamas who spoke to AFP on condition of anonymity.

Fatah official Jibril Rajoub also confirmed that the two groups had reached a deal.

The Islamist movement of Hamas, which has been in power in the Gaza strip since 2007, and West Bank-based Fatah faction of Mahmoud Abbas' Palestinian Authority (PA) set up a unity government of independents in June.

But a dispute over PA's non-payment of salaries to Gaza's 45,000 public sector employees raised tensions between the two groups. Abbas had earlier accused Hamas of running a "parallel government" in Gaza.

"All civil servants will be paid by the unity government because they are all Palestinians and it is the government of all Palestinians," said Azzam Ahmed of Abbas' Fatah movement.

Last month, an Egypt-brokered ceasefire between Israel and Hamas ended Israel's Operation Protective Edge against the Palestinian militant group in Gaza.

The truce, which included preconditions that the PA led by Abbas should take over civil administration in Gaza from Hamas, will be strengthened by separate indirect talks in late October between a Palestinian delegation and Israel.

In addition to the unity government, control of Gaza's border crossings will be overseen by the United Nations.

"The United Nations will come to an agreement with Israel and the unity government on how to run the crossings," Moussa Abu Marzouk, chairman of Hamas' political bureau said, according to Reuters.
