

## Hamas welcomes Egypt's call for holding dialogue with Fatah in Cairo



The Hamas Movement welcomed Friday the invitation of Egyptian president Hosni Mubarak to hold dialogue with Fatah faction in Cairo and voiced its immediate response to this initiative, expressing hope that this call will find the same response from Fatah and PA chief Mahmoud Abbas. "We welcome the invitation of president Mubarak to hold dialogue between Hamas and Fatah in Cairo and we appreciate this Egyptian position which is keen on the unity of the Palestinian people," Dr. Sami Abu Zuhri, the Hamas spokesman in Gaza, stated in an exclusive statement to the PIC.

Abu Zuhri underlined that any rejection by the Fatah faction of this invitation would hold it fully responsible for the persistence of internal division and the suffering of the Palestinian people. The Egyptian president announced Friday that his country is ready to mediate between the two factions to end the estrangement between them that have occurred since June last year, and pointed out that Egypt had asked the estranged Palestinian factions to return to negotiations without preconditions.

The Egyptian head of state considered in a press interview that the rupture between Fatah and Hamas does not only weaken the Palestinian position, but also the PA negotiator who seeks to find a solution to the Palestinian issue. With regard to the developments at the borders between Egypt and the Gaza Strip, the Hamas spokesman underlined his Movement's insistence on breaking the siege and opening all crossings especially the Rafah crossing. Abu Zuhri called on the Egyptian leadership to confront the Zio-American pressures, which call for the closure of the Rafah crossing, and to continue facilitating the movement of citizens in order to purchase their basic needs.

The spokesman underscored that Hamas got information that the PA leadership in Ramallah had conducted contacts with external parties, hostile to the Palestinian people, to pressure Egypt to stop any facilities provided to Gaza citizens and to re-close the Rafah crossing. For its part, the caretaker government headed by premier Ismail Haneyya welcomed the call launched by the Egyptian president to resume mediation between Fatah and Hamas, adding that this call comes in the context of Egypt's historic role in support of the Palestinian people.