

## Barhoum: IOA in collusion with Fatah insist on closure of Gaza crossings



Fawzi Barhoum, the Hamas spokesman in the Gaza Strip, has charged the IOA in collusion with certain parties within Fatah faction with insistence on maintaining all Gaza crossings closed with the hope to topple the Hamas Movement.

Barhoum, in a press release on Tuesday, denied that the caretaker government in Gaza had received any offer to open the Gaza crossings, affirming that the problem was of human nature and necessitated urgent acts by all parties to end it.

Palestinian media reported that the government of Ismail Haneyya in Gaza had turned down an initiative tabled by the (illegal) government of Salam Fayyad in Ramallah to end the Gaza siege and open all crossings.

The crossings have been closed down since Hamas took over control of the Strip in mid June 2007.

Barhoum said that the IOA along with certain parties within Fatah and the PA leadership were interested in tightening the noose on the Gaza Strip with the ultimate aim of toppling Hamas as evident in statements of many PA leaders in Ramallah.



The spokesman said that any offer to open the crossings would be "seriously" considered, hoping that Egypt would adopt a "daring and courageous step" and swiftly open the Rafah border terminal to allow the return of Gaza pilgrims.