

Palestinian authority frees 100 Hamas prisoners

Contributed by Egypt News
Monday, 29 June 2009

Palestinian
President Mahmoud Abbas

A spokesman for pro-Abbas forces Adnan al-Dumiri reported that Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas ordered Monday that the release of 100 Hamas' prisoners in the West Bank

The release of the Hamas supporters would be completed by Tuesday according to Abbas' orders, said al-Dumiri.

In a statement faxed to the media, al-Dumiri said that "This step reflects abidance by the national interests and the enforcing of the law and it paves the way for making the Palestinian national dialogue successful"

He said those who would be released "don't pose any threat to the general security and order."

On the other hand, Hamas freed 20 Fatah activists on Sunday in the Gaza Strip after saying that initial interrogation found them not guilty.

Hamas and Fatah have been cracking down against each other since the Islamic movement routed pro-Abbas forces and seized control of the Gaza Strip in June 2007.

Al-Dumiri said Hamas continued to arrest his movement's supporters in Gaza while Hamas said more than 750 of its members and activists were imprisoned in the West Bank.

The mutual arrests makes it harder for Egypt to speed up signing a Palestinian national deal reconciling the two movements and creating a unified Palestinian government.

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