

## Egyptian proposal for Palestinian unity

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Palestinian  
President Mahmoud Abbas

Egypt on Saturday submitted a proposal to rival Palestinian factions in a fresh mediation attempt after Islamic Hamas movement and Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas' Fatah party failed to reach an agreement to form a unity government

The Egyptian proposal is more detailed and focuses on forming a joint committee to restore political unity to the Palestinian territories, according to Xinhua

The committee will coordinate between Hamas authorities in Gaza and the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) in the West Bank until elections are held in the middle of next year.

Fatah party on Wednesday said it had accepted the proposal as part of a broad package meant to end a bitter rivalry with the Islamic militant group Hamas.

Egypt gave Hamas a respite to respond to the plan by Thursday.

The first point in the document, entitled "The Palestinian National Accord Agreement -- Cairo 2009," said "An Egyptian-presided Arab committee will supervise and follow the implementation of this deal."

The core of the agreement is to end the consequences of Hamas' violent takeover of Gaza in June 2007.

President Abbas is authorized to decree the formation of a 16-member committee to pave the way for Hamas and Fatah

to hold the elections, according to the Egyptian document.

Fatah and Hamas will have eight seats in the committee while the rest would go to other smaller factions and independents. Abbas "would be the reference of that committee in his capacity as the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO)'s chairman and the president of the PNA."

## ELECTIONS

The 25-page document says the committee's mandate will start as soon as the agreement is signed by the concerned parties and will end when the elections are completed.

On June 28, 2010, the Palestinians will vote for a new president, parliament and the Palestinian National Council (PNC) which represents Palestinians inside the territories and in Diaspora.

"Proportional representation system would be used in the PNC election while the legislative elections would be done through mixed system of constituencies (25 percent) and proportional (75 percent)," the document says.

## PRISONERS

Before Hamas and Fatah sign the agreement, they have to hand over to Egypt and a local rights group names of prisoners they arrested in Gaza and West Bank.

As soon as the agreement is signed, the two authorities have to start freeing the prisoners. Later, the two sides have to inform Egypt of the conditions that prevented particular prisoners from being released and how to resolve their problem.

## RESTORING INSTITUTIONAL LIFE

The committee will oversee the reopening of the Palestinian public and national institutions in the territories that were closed as a result of the fighting.

The document says that the situation in these organizations must return to what it was before June 14, 2007, during which Hamas completed Gaza takeover.

The PNA employees in Gaza should also return to their work and Hamas people who were fired in the West Bank for their affiliation with the Islamic movement must also go back to their jobs.

The committee will oversee the rebuilding of the destroyed houses and institutions in Gaza during Israel's military operation in December and January.

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