



EUROPEAN UNION

European Commission Technical Assistance Office (West Bank and Gaza, UNRWA)

By e-mail

REVIEW OF THE PALESTINIAN PRESS

January 24, 2008

1. Summary of key news

- **Thousands of Gazans cross the border to Egypt to buy food and medical supplies**
- **Haniyeh announces willingness to manage Rafah crossing**
- **Washington blames Hamas for the Gaza situation**
- **Donors conference stresses need to intensify efforts to deal with the Gaza crisis**

2. Domestic situation

2.1 Political

- **Mubarak says he ordered Egyptian forces to allow Palestinians to cross the border to buy food supplies**
- **Whitehouse spokesperson says Hamas is to be blamed for Gaza crisis**
- **"The Damascus conference is a feeble replication fabricated by Syria," says PLO Executive Committee's secretary General**
- **Mash'al says Hamas is ready for an open unconditional dialogue**
- Thousands of Palestinians from the Gaza Strip crossed the borders to the Egyptian side after some Palestinian gunmen blew up part of the border wall between Egypt and the Gaza Strip. Later, Egyptian President said he instructed the Egyptian border police not to prevent the Palestinians from crossing to help them buy their food and medical supplies and go back to Gaza as long as they are disarmed. (*All Palestinian dailies, maannews, PNN, PBC*) Meanwhile, deposed Hamas PM Haniyeh expressed willingness to make an agreement with the Palestinian presidency and Egypt to manage the Rafah crossing. (*Al-Quds*)
- Whitehouse Spokeswoman blamed Hamas yesterday for the crisis the Gaza Strip is going through. (*Al-Quds*)
- The Secretary General of the PLO's Executive Committee said the National Palestinian Conference to be held in Damascus is merely a "feeble replication" of a project fabricated by Syria to strengthen division. (*All three dailies*)
- The head of Hamas' political bureau Khalid Mash'al reiterated at the opening of the National Palestinian Conference in Damascus that Hamas is ready for unconditional dialogue with the PA to be sponsored either by Palestinians or Arabs, to preserve the rights of the Palestinian people. (*All three dailies, Maannews*)

2.2 Security

- **Security campaigns in West Bank cities are underway**
- **Palestinian security coordination with Israel is increasing**
- Police officers in West Bank cities of Qalqilya and Toubas stated they are in the process of imposing law as part of their security campaigns to restore law and order. (*All three dailies*)
- The Head of the Israeli Civil Administration in the West Bank declared that security coordination with the PA is increasing, pointing out that PA security services are trying to impose control on the ground and prove their efficiency. (*Samanews*)

3. Palestinian - Israeli conflict

- **Olmert reiterates his determination to negotiate a peace agreement with Palestinians and orders evacuation of a West Bank settlement**
- **Donors conference urges the Palestinians and the Israelis to make more efforts**
- **Fayyad is expected to meet Israeli FM Livni and DM Barak at the World Economic Forum**
- While stressing he would never allow a humanitarian crisis in the Gaza Strip, Israeli PM Olmert said he is still determined to reach a peace agreement with Palestinians through negotiations. (*All three dailies*)
- Olmert orders evacuation of a major settlement bloc in the West bank by August 2008. (*Al-Hayat Al-Jadida*)

- At its concluding session, the Donors Conference in Paris urged the Palestinians and the Israelis to intensify their efforts to reach an agreement. (*Al-Ayyam*)
- After Israel's decision to stop supplying Gaza with fuel, Gaza Power Plant will stop operating today (note: this is not correct, as 950,000 l of fuel have been delivered so far this week). (*Maannews*)
- " From now on, Egypt should take care of Gaza's humanitarian needs," says an Israeli Security source. (*Maannews*)
- Israeli forces shot and killed a fifty-year-old Palestinian man in the northern Gaza Strip. (*All three dailies, maannews*)
- 150 Palestinian and international demonstrators staged a candlelit vigil in front of the Church of the Nativity in the West Bank city of Bethlehem to demand an end to the Israeli siege of the Gaza Strip. (*All three dailies, maannews*)
- Israeli authorities are planning to punish the Director of the Palestinian intelligence services in the West Bank city of Nablus, Abdullah Kameel, for allegedly operating in Israeli-controlled areas. (*Maannews*)
- Palestinian PM Fayyad is expected to meet today with Israeli FM Livni and DM Barak and Quartet Envoy to the Middle East Tony Blair at World Economic Forum. Fayyad met earlier with German Chancellor Angela Merkel in Berlin, and said that Israel has to open the crossings and to halt settlement activity. (*All three dailies, wafa*)

4. EU-related

- **Paris donors say more efforts are needed to deal with the Gaza situation**
- **EUCOPPS delegation visits West Bank town of Toubas**
- **European NGOs condemn siege on the Gaza Strip**
- As the Paris donors conference that concluded yesterday, participants including EU Commissioner Benita Ferrero-Waldner stressed that additional efforts should be made by all sides as the Gaza situation creates dangerous economic and human concerns. (*All three dailies*)
- An EUCOPPS delegation visits Toubas Governorate in the West Bank and met with the Chief of the Police, who expressed his appreciation for the EU efforts to support the Palestinian Police. (*Wafa*)
- European NGOs condemned the imposed siege on Gaza, considering it as a programmed slow killing against the Gaza population. (*Wafa, Al-Quds*)
- The Belgian Minister of Education Marie Arena, accompanied by a Belgian delegation visited on Wednesday the Palestinian Ministry of Education in Ramallah and met with her counterpart Lamis Al-Alami. The Belgian and the Palestinian education ministers discussed the education system in the Palestinian territories and the challenges facing the Palestinian Ministry of Education. (*Maannews*)

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION ON ANY OF THESE ITEMS, PLEASE EMAIL Haifa Siam:

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