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Hamas wants a Gaza defense ministry

United Press International (UPI)

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GAZA, Dec. 6 (UPI) -- A Hamas official said the group plans to establish a defense ministry in the Gaza Strip to enhance resistance efforts against Israel.

Attending a ceremony in Gaza Wednesday to honor police officers injured during Israel's Operation Pillar of Defense, Hamas official Fathi Hamad said the Palestinian army must be prepared and ready to counter Israeli actions, Ahram Online quoted him saying.

"Zionist analysts are still talking about their failure and the collapse of their security system in the face of ours," The Jerusalem Post quoted Hamad saying.

Hamad warned that the next war with Israel could be "more fierce but we are determined to liberate Palestine."

He called on the Muslim world to supply the Palestinian resistance with funds and weapons, "rather than wasting time" on "Arab tears" for Gaza and endless debates concerning the Palestinian conflict that lead to nowhere.

Hamas Prime Minister Ismail Hanieyh told a European delegation in Gaza that Palestine can only be liberated "through resistance, jihad and steadfastness," the Post said.

Hamas will "never give up one inch of Palestine, which is Muslim-owned land," he declared.

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