

Israeli officials rejected Hamas proposals

by UPI

GAZA -- Hamas officials outlined a multi-point proposal to reach a comprehensive agreement with Israel that Jerusalem rejected on general principle, al-Ahram reported. "The Hamas movement conveyed its vision of a comprehensive agreement to several foreign diplomats so that they could convey this vision to Israel. Yet all indicators show that Israel has not exhibited any enthusiasm for treating this vision in a positive manner," a former representative to the political wing of Hamas told the Egyptian newspaper al-Ahram Wednesday. Hamas officials, al-Ahram noted, are keen on using the international condemnation of the Israeli incursion into Gaza to embarrass Israel and paint it as the aggressor. The Hamas proposal deals with a mutual cease-fire in the West Bank and Gaza, a lift of the blockade on Gaza and a prisoner swap including the release of Israeli Cpl. Gilad Shalit, the newspaper said. Hamas officials said the proposal and protest activities are leading up to "dramatic steps" should the Israeli incursion in Gaza continue. Israeli officials rejected such moves by Hamas, saying it is a ploy to buy time for the militants to strengthen their forces. One Palestinian researcher said that the situation has frustrated the Palestinian people to the point that a third intifada is on the horizon, al-Ahram said.

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