

Abbas asks EU to end Palestinian sanctions

by UPI

ATHENS, Greece - Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas sought an end to European Union economic sanctions against his nation during a recent series of meetings in Greece.

Meeting separately with Greek Foreign Minister Dora Bakoyannis and Prime Minister Costas Karamanlis in Athens, Abbas asked that the European Union lift its embargo on his Hamas-led government as his nation meets the international group's expectations, Kathimerini reported Monday.

"We call on the European Union to lift the embargo imposed on our people, whose continuation will only succeed in encouraging extremism," Abbas said at a weekend meeting with Bakoyannis.

"We recently formed a government of national unity, its agenda has been announced and we believe that it corresponds to all expectations," he added.

While the European Union was once a staunch supporter of the Palestinians, it ended its international aid once Hamas took power in 2006.

Both Greek officials said they would convey Abbas' wishes to the European Union, with Karamanlis adding on Monday his nation would "continue to work, both in the United Nations and the European Union and at bilateral level, for the advancement of the peace process."

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