

West 'moving to reinstall Abbas in Gaza'

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The West is reportedly working on a plan to bring back Mahmud Abbas's rule to Gaza and deploy international forces in the sliver.

Diplomats are working on the plan according to which the Fatah faction will once again rule the Gaza Strip, the British daily Times reported Saturday.

The plan also sees Turkish and French monitors policing a triangle at the southern end of Gaza, which would include the Rafah and Kerem Shalom crossings "to stop arms smuggling into the costal strip".

The new initiative comes after a UN Security Council resolution calling for a ceasefire failed to end violence in Gaza. Israel rejects the resolution, saying it will not allow any foreign forces to decide for Tel Aviv.

Nonstop aerial and ground offensive in the impoverished area has so far killed more than 827 people and wounded 3,500 others.

Israel insists that the issue of border tunnels, which Israel says is used for arm smuggling, should be tackled by an international group.

Hamas says it would allow international observers to monitor border crossings but it would not agree with the deployment of international forces in the region.

The tunnels have been the life line of Palestinians who have been struggling with an 18-month blockade on the Gaza Strip and are in dire need of food, medicine and other vital supplies.

Egypt, which is against the deployment of international forces on its soil, seeks EU monitors to observe the passage of people and vehicles through the Rafah border crossing.

Israel launched its Operation Cast Lead on December 27. Many victims of the massive offensive have been civilians according to the UN and aid agencies.

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