

# *Palestinian Parties Reach Reconciliation Agreement in Egypt*

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Cairo, October 12 (RHC)-- The Movement of Palestine Islamic Resistance ( Hamas) and the Palestine Movement of National Reconciliation ( Fatah) signed a reconciliation agreement in Cairo on Thursday.

The deal stipulates that legislative, presidential and national council elections should be conducted within one year of its signing and that Hamas and Fatah form an interim government before the elections.

At a press conference, the head of the Palestinian Authority delegation Azzam al-Ahmad said the two sides agreed that the Rafah border crossing between Egypt and Gaza would be operated by the presidential guards of president Mahmoud Abbas by November 1st.

Unity talks between the rival Palestinian groups began in the Egyptian capital on Tuesday and were centered on the implementation of the 2011 Cairo agreement between the two political parties that seeks to put end the 10-year old rift between the two parties.

The Fatah party lost control of Gaza to Hamas in 2007. But last month, Hamas agreed to cede civil powers in Gaza to President Mahmoud Abbas' Fatah-backed Palestinian Authority in a deal mediated by

Egypt.

The agreement signed today is expected to ease Gaza's dire humanitarian situation provoked by Israel's blockade.

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