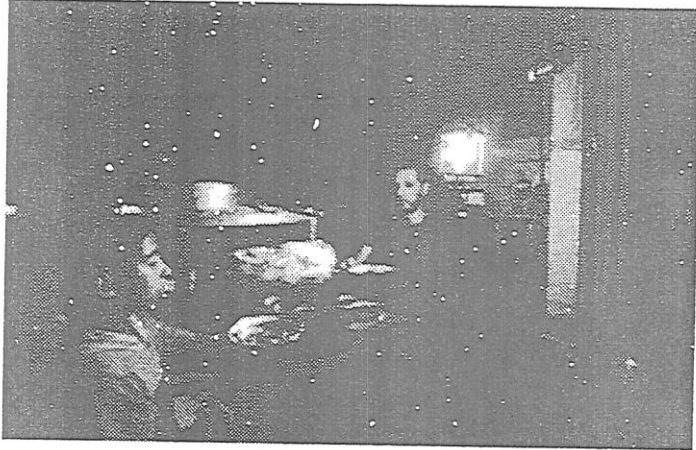


EU denies stop financing Gaza power plant

SATURDAY, 20 FEBRUARY 2010 21:01 ADDED BY PT EDITOR MOHAMMED SAID

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The Palestinian Telegraph (<http://www.paltelegraph.com>)



Brussels, February 20, 2010 (Pal Telegraph)- The EU denied that it had reduced or stopped the financing of fuel for the operation of Gaza's main power plant, saying, at the same time, that the funds allocated to it were all sent to the Palestinian Authority.

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This came in official letters received by the office of the Brussels-based European campaign to end the Siege on Gaza from European officials, including foreign

ministers, in response to inquiries made by the campaign to the European Union countries regarding the cessation of funding of electricity fuel in the besieged Gaza Strip.

In a statement, the campaign said it was clear from the official European messages that the EU had not reduced or stopped the amount of money, "but what happened is that the PA demanded the EU last November that the amounts of money, allocated to Gaza's fuel, be transferred to it, and then it would decide what to spend the money on according to priorities."

The messages indicated that the European Union in 2009 made sure to provide Gaza with sufficient amounts of fuel to run the power plant at possible rate of 202 MW, 120 of which come through Israel, 17 come from Egypt, and 65 MW come through the power station in the Gaza Strip, bringing the total of about 70 percent of the needs of the strip.

The European officials, annoyed by what had been said in the media about the EU, particularly with regard to the humanitarian situation in Gaza, said they would discuss the issue with the PA-especially because there was a steep decline in fuel supplies in Gaza last January."

The campaign criticized the use of the humanitarian needs of 1.5 million people for political wrangles, especially when "such a thing could cost the lives of hundreds of Palestinians, especially those who are ill, and threaten serious humanitarian disasters."