Israeli officials are seeking an increased role from the European Union at the Rafah border, in an effort to clamp down on weapons and cash smuggling between Egypt and Gaza. Javier Solana, the High Representative for the European Common, Foreign and Security Policy, helped secure the historic agreement between Israel and the Palestinians, and the EU became the first third-party body that Israel had permitted to get involved in the conflict. Around ninety EU personnel monitor the Rafah border, but the EU does not have the power to confiscate smuggled goods. Israel has become concerned at the amount of money flowing through the border, which helps fund Hamas' terrorist regime, and heavy weapons manufactured by Iran and Syria. The EU's Rafah border mission is set to expire on the 24th of May.

Quote: *"Jerusalem - Israel has asked the European Union to expand the powers of its monitors at Gaza's border crossing with Egypt to help prevent militants from bringing in money and equipment, EU diplomats said yesterday. "There is some flexibility" to negotiate the mandate of the monitors, said a senior EU official involved in talks, a month before the expiry of the current mandate at the border. But the official said the bloc would not accept changes that transform the monitoring mission into one with expansive executive powers. European and Israeli officials sought to play down any discord, but one Western diplomat involved in the matter said preparations were under way in case the EU decided to pull the monitors out of the Rafah crossing with Egypt altogether.*

There is no doubt, the EU's involvement on the Rafah border , although largely symbolic at present, is a major step towards the fulfilment of Biblical prophecy. For I believe that it will be the European Union that will be the one to broker a peace agreement between Israel and many nations. Europe is the biggest benefactor for the Palestinian Authority, and Europe is Israel's biggest trading partner. How the peace agreement finally comes about, and what circumstances bring it about, is not yet known. But as we have seen with Lebanon and Beit Hanoun, it mightn't take much for the EU to decide it needs to be involved in a greater way in the Middle East, to foster an environment in which "peace" can take hold.

Source The Peninsula