The European Union officially welcomed the formation of the Palestinian unity government this morning. Hamas and Fatah members were sworn into the government last night, after the two terrorist organizations finally agreed on who would occupy the cabinet posts. The EU will continue its embargo of the Palestinian Authority until it meets the principles laid down by the Quartet, that Hamas recognize Israel's right to exist, renounce violence and abide by previous agreements with the Jewish state. The US and EU will continue to hold governmental contacts with non-Hamas members.

Quote: *""The Presidency of the EU welcomes the formation of a Palestinian Government of National Unity pursuant to the agreement reached in Mecca on 8 February 2007, which lays the foundation for Palestinian reconciliation," a statement issued by EU president Germany said. "The Presidency of the EU recalls the readiness of the EU to work with and to resume its assistance to a legitimate Palestinian government adopting a platform reflecting the Quartet principles. The EU will carefully assess the platform and actions of the new government and its ministers," it said.*

Russia on the other hand, has praised the formation of the unity government, and is calling for the lifting of the embargo against the Palestinian Authority. While Israel's Prime Minister, Ehud Olmert, called on the international community to shun the new government and all its members.

Quote: *"Prime Minister Ehud Olmert urged the international community on Sunday to join Israel in shunning the new Palestinian unity government, calling its platform "very problematic." "We will not be able to pursue contacts with the government or its members," Olmert told the cabinet. "We expect that the international community will not be misled by the creation of the coalition government."*

While I agree with what Olmert says, I can't help but feeling that he is somehow responsible for this whole mess in the first place. Olmert should have condemned the Mecca agreement as soon as it was announced. We knew from the start Hamas had no intention to recognize Israel's right to exist, Prime Minister Ismael Haniyeh said it himself. Initially Olmert said Israel neither accepted nor rejected the deal. Saying that was a big mistake, for it offered legitimacy to the PA in

the eyes of the world. Olmert even said that Israel was willing to change its stance on the agreement, if the Palestinians released Gilad Shalit. Well now the deal is done, Israel's right to exist has not been recognized, Hamas has vowed it will continue its struggle until all of Palestine is liberated, the international community is in disarray and Hamas is about to be given a cheque for a billion dollars from Saudi Arabia for making it happen.

Source Javno , USA Today , YNet News