

Hamas: We'll Never Surrender Palestine

Since the dawn of the so-called Arab spring nearly two years ago, the Muslim Brotherhood has made significant advancements both in Egypt and the Gaza Strip. Over the weekend, Hamas celebrated its 25th anniversary.

Some called it the biggest rally in the history of Gaza. Hundreds of thousands gathered to hear Hamas political leader Khaled Meshaal.

Egypt's new government allowed Meshaal to enter—something the Mubarak government would not do.

It marked the first time in 45 years since Meshaal had been in Gaza. He used the opportunity to pledge Israel's destruction.

"Palestine will be Palestine. We will never surrender the land, Jerusalem, the right of return or [our right] to resistance. We will not leave any inch of Palestinian land and we'll never give up on any of our rights," Meshaal said.

Israeli President Shimon Peres responded to Meshaal's speech.

"He unmasked the real nature of Hamas: to kill, to conquer, not to compromise, the people of Gaza can remain poor and hungry," Peres predicted.

The Hamas rally is a sign they feel they won their recent war with Israel. They're also emboldened after the rise of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt.

They announced their desire to reach a unity agreement with Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas. Some have speculated Meshaal could one day be a candidate for president of the P.A.

In Egypt, meanwhile, the crisis between opponents and supporters of Egyptian President Mohammed Morsi continues.

Morsi did not agree to rescind any part of his decree that gives him absolute power. And he did not agree to stop the referendum over the new constitution. The vote is scheduled for December 15.

Opponents of Morsi contend the new constitution will violate the rights of women, Christians and minorities. They also say it will lead Egypt toward an Islamist state.

"They have cancelled some very minor parts from the constitution [referring to President Mohammed Morsi's constitutional decree] and the voting will still take place on the 15th and we are all here because we're saying no, none of us want a cult to rule us," Ruby Rafah, one of the protesters, said.

Both Morsi and Hamas are part of the Muslim Brotherhood, a group that began in 1928 with the goal of overthrowing secular Arab governments, destroying Israel and establishing an Islamic caliphate throughout the Middle East. Despite opposition, they seem determined to reach those goals.