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Palestinian supporters of Hamas participate in a rally to mark the 22nd anniversary of the group's founding in Gaza City, on December 14, 2009. Tens of thousands of Hamas supporters thronged downtown Gaza City Monday to mark the 22nd anniversary of the group's founding, in a massive display that showed the Islamic militants still enjoy broad support despite years of rule that have led to war, poverty and isolation.

Hamas Vows to Liberate Palestine

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still enjoy broad support despite years of rule that have led to war, poverty and isolation.

Gaza was decked out in Islamic green, with Hamas flags fluttering from roofs, lampposts

and cars. Some parents dressed small children in combat fatigues and green Hamas headbands.

The crowd packed an outdoor square where a huge

banner draped over the wall of a building showed a picture of Jerusalem's main Islamic shrine and photos of senior Hamas figures.

Leaders made fiery speeches, bands played and scout troops marched in processions.

"Gaza is free. Gaza is steadfast," shouted a male singing troupe, whose members wore military camouflage.

Hamas' Prime Minister Ismail Haniyeh exuberantly waved Palestinian and Hamas flags to the crowd as he took the stage.

In a long, defiant speech, Haniyeh pledged Hamas would never lay down its arms, nor recognize Israel.

"This movement, with the help of the militant factions liberated the Gaza Strip, and we

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New EU Foreign Chief Strongly Criticizes Israel

New EU foreign policy chief Catherine Ashton has used her first speech on the Middle East to criticize Israel's continued occupation of Palestine,

especially east Jerusalem.

Ashton, in a speech Tuesday to the EU Parliament in Strasbourg, France, came down

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Major Income Tax Reforms Aim to Drastically Reduce Taxes



Mr. Al-Bueshi Al-Lafi

The Director of Tax Authority Mr. Al-Bueshi Al-Lafi has told The Tripoli Post that his department is embarked on introducing new tax reforms that will completely change the present tax situation and help jumpstart the development process in the country. "The main aim of the reform of this law is to Reduce the Payroll Tax from 18%, 13% & 11% to 10% and 5%. And to reduce the Income tax on activity of individuals and small businesses from 44% to 15%, and reduce the Income tax of national and foreign companies from 44% to 20%," Mr Al-Lafi said.

See the exclusive interview on page 5.

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