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<http://www.rsf.org/territoires-palestiniens-hamas-journalists-seize-union-14-10-2011,41204.html>

Middle East & North Africa - Palestinian territories

Forcible takeover

Hamas journalists seize union headquarters in Gaza

14 October 2011

Reporters Without Borders firmly condemns the forcible seizure of the Gaza headquarters of the Palestinian Journalists' Syndicate (PJS) on 11 October by several dozen journalists affiliated to Hamas and the Islamic Jihad Movement in Palestine. As police looked on without intervening, the journalists took over the premises, evicted employees and confiscated their mobile phones.

Proclaiming themselves as the union's new leadership, they said they wanted to hold internal elections within six months.

Reporters Without Borders regards the move as a threat to the independence of journalists in the Gaza Strip.

In a statement, the PJS described this "attack on journalists" as an attempt by Hamas to gain control over the union and stressed the fact that many members of the security forces had been present when it took place. The PJS also pointed out the Hamas government has been trying to restrict the activities of journalists in [the Gaza Strip](#).

The "Journalists' Block", a group affiliated to Hamas, applauded the occupation but denied having anything to do with it. It also criticised the PJS leadership for failing to keep its promise to hold internal elections.

The Palestinian Women Journalists' Club said the takeover had not respected the "the most elementary principles of journalists' work" and stressed its readiness to support all efforts to create a journalists' union through dialogue.
