**Hamas bans Palestinian women’s TV channel in Gaza**

February 19, 2018

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Times of Israel

https://www.timesofisrael.com/hamas-bans-palestinian-womens-channel-in-gaza/

Hamas on Sunday banned the launching of a new television station specializing in Palestinian women’s affairs in the Gaza Strip.

The Hamas-controlled Ministry of Information said that the station, the first of its kind in the Gaza Strip, had failed to obtain a proper license from the relevant authorities.

The new station was supposed to go on air during a ceremony in the Gaza Strip, which is ruled by the Hamas terror group, on Sunday evening.

However, the organizers of the event said that they received an order from the Hamas ministry prohibiting them from holding the ceremony.

The ministry said that the decision came after Taif TV for Palestinian Women had ignored repeated requests to obtain a license.

It also claimed that another institution in the Gaza Strip carried the same name — a further reason why the television station was banned from launching its broadcasts.

Saying it honored freedom of expression, the Hamas ministry expressed “regret” that the managers of the new station had failed to abide by the law.

The channel’s management expressed its own regret over Hamas’s decision to ban the launching of the station.

In a statement, the management said that the channel was part of a program belonging to the Haifa Institute for Media and Communication, which already operates with a license from the Hamas ministry.

“We regret the claims made by the Government Press Office in Gaza and affirm that our legal status is intact and is not in violation of the law,” the women’s television channel said.

It also noted that the management had obtained a permit from the Ministry of the Interior in the Gaza Strip to proceed with the ceremony to launch the broadcasts.

The management said that the television station was aimed at “serving Palestinian women, developing their capabilities, and supporting their role in the process of the development of Palestinian society.”

Some Palestinians took to social media to express their anger over Hamas’s decision to ban the new women’s television station.

Palestinian journalist Alaa Helou commented: “Those who are ruling the Gaza Strip make us hate them every day. The boisterous [Hamas] regime has to leave its fingerprint.”

Facebook user Islam Zendah remarked: “The doors of the Gaza Strip carry a sign that reads: Here live the [Hamas] dream-killers.”

In another Facebook comment on the Hams ban, Zeina Al Mashharawi said: “Regrettably, they [Hamas] haven’t left a corner where they haven’t sown hatred, animosity and oppression. There’s no justification for today’s ban.”