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## **US says Hamas involved, if not responsible, for fate of Israel's lost boys**

The United States confirmed on Tuesday it has strong evidence that Hamas is culpable, if not directly responsible, for the kidnapping and killing of three Israeli youths. State Department deputy spokeswoman, Marie Harf said, "There are many indications as part of this investigation that Hamas may have been involved, I am not at this point saying they were responsible." Harf noted that Hamas has praised the kidnapping, which gripped Israel over 18 days as security forces searched for the boys. The US government lists Hamas as a terrorist organization. In an evening statement on Monday, President Barack Obama expressed empathy and fury, "As a father, I cannot imagine the indescribable pain that the parents of these teenage boys are experiencing," Obama said. "The United States condemns in the strongest possible terms this senseless act of terror against innocent youth."