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Tests show Arafat was murdered with polonium: Widow

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The widow of Yasser Arafat, the former leader of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), says her husband was poisoned to death with radioactive polonium.

Suha made the remark on Wednesday after receiving a report by Swiss scientists who tested samples taken from Arafat's corpse.

"We are revealing a real crime, a political assassination," she said.

The forensic report, which was handed to representatives of Arafat's widow, as well as representatives of the Palestinian Authority on Tuesday, said the tests on the corpse showed "unexpected high activity" of polonium-210, which "moderately" supported the poisoning theory.

"This has confirmed all our doubts," said Suha Arafat, adding that "It is scientifically proved that he didn't die a natural death and we have scientific proof that this man was killed."

The scientists -- from the Vaudois University Hospital Centre (CHUV) in Lausanne, Switzerland -- carried out a detailed examination of Arafat's medical records, samples taken from his remains, which were exhumed in November of last year, and items he had taken into the hospital in Paris where he died.

David Barclay, a British forensic scientist who had studied the report, said, "The report contains strong evidence, in my view conclusive evidence, that there's at least 18 times the level of polonium in Arafat's exhumed body than there should be."

He noted that the report represented "a smoking gun."

"It's what killed him. Now we need to find out who was holding the gun at that time," Barclay said, adding, "I would point to him being given a fatal dose. I don't think there's any doubt at all."

Arafat's widow did not accuse any country or person for her husband's death and acknowledged that he had many enemies.

Many Palestinian officials, however, believe that Israel poisoned Arafat.

Wasel Abu Yousef, a member of the executive committee of the PLO, claimed Israel was behind the alleged poisoning.

"President Arafat passed away as a victim of an organized terrorist assassination perpetrated by a state ... which was looking to get rid of him," he said.

"This report confirms the suspicions that we've had all along. We know Arafat was killed; now we know how. And we know who had the means, the opportunity and the motive. Justice must now take its course," said Hanan Ashrawi, a senior Palestinian leader.

Israel has denied any involvement in the matter and dismissed the Swiss investigation as "more soap opera than science."

"It is the latest episode in the soap in which Suha opposes Arafat's successors," Israeli Foreign Ministry spokesman Yigal Palmor said.

"Even if they did find traces of polonium that could indicate poisoning, there's no evidence of

how that poisoning occurred. Before the Palestinian Authority jumps to conclusions, there are many questions still to be answered.

"Israel is not involved in any way. There's no way the Palestinians can stick this on us. It's unreasonable and unsupported by facts. We will see yet another round of accusations, but there's no proof," Palmor added.

Arafat died in a French military hospital on November 11, 2004 after he was taken ill the previous month with diarrhea and vomiting.

French doctors have said he died of a massive stroke, although they were unable to find the origin of his illness.

French prosecutors opened a murder investigation in August 2012, after traces of polonium-210 were reportedly found on some of Arafat's belongings.