

The Royal Committee for Jerusalem Affairs

Jerusalem in Jordanian and Palestinian Media

A Weekly Summary

Jordan and Jerusalem

His Majesty the King of Jordan: I Will Continue to Oppose any Violation of Al-Aqsa Mosque's Sanctity

Amman – Jordanian Sovereign King Abdullah II reiterated Jordan's opposition to any threat to Jerusalem's Arab Muslim and Christian identity. "As Hashemite custodian of Jerusalem's Muslim and Christian Holy Sites, I will continue to oppose any violation of Al Aqsa Mosque's sanctity", the King said.

According to the statement issued from the Hashemite Royal Court, Jordan's King stressed in his address to the Plenary Session of the 69th United Nations General Assembly that the Palestinian people seek what all humanity seeks. It is the common cause of this General Assembly: justice, dignity, opportunity, and hope. He noted that the Palestinian issue is one which unites the member states of the General Assembly.

"We cannot address the future of my region without addressing its central conflict: the denial of Palestinian rights and statehood", the King continued, calling for an end for all unilateral actions that seek to pre-empt negotiations.

The Jordanian sovereign also demanded the mobilization of international efforts to rebuild Gaza. He also asked the international community to marshal the united, global response needed to achieve a once-and-for-all, lasting settlement. Such action can create the environment necessary to re-launch final-status negotiations on the basis of the Arab Peace Initiative. The King stressed that this is the only path to a comprehensive settlement based on the two-state solution and international legitimacy and terms of reference.

King Abdullah II stressed that this settlement will guarantee for Israel, security and normal diplomatic and economic relations with Arab and Muslim states. For Palestinians, a viable, independent, sovereign state, along the 1967 lines, with East Jerusalem as its capital

Ar-Rai, September 25th, 2014

Jordan Condemns Israeli Desecrations of Al-Aqsa Mosque

Amman – Abd Ar-Razzaq Abu Hazeem- The Jordanian government warned of the continued Israeli assaults on the Al-Aqsa Mosque and providing protection to Jewish

extremists to desecrate the holy shrine in a manner that would inflame religious conflict at a time when the world seeks to fight extremism and terrorism.

State Minister for Media Affairs, Mohammad Momani, condemned Israeli forces' storming of the Al-Aqsa yards and sealing its gates, allowing access to Jewish extremists and attacking Muslim worshippers with rubber bullets and tear gas causing injuries among some of them. Momani, who is also government spokesperson, said Israel's provocative measures against the holy shrine threaten to touch off the passions of more than 1.7 billion Muslims across the world, a provocation which may trigger a religious war in the region.

He called on international organizations, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, the Arab League and the UNESCO to pressure Israeli authorities to lift the siege on Al-Aqsa Mosque, enable Muslim worshipers to enter it and stop violations against the holy mosque.

Head of the Jerusalem Awqaf Department Sheikh Azzam Al-Kahtib valued the efforts of His Majesty King Abdullah II and the Jordanian government which resulted in the total removal of the wooden ramp from the Moroccan Gate in Al-Aqsa Mosque.

Sheikh Al-Khatib, and in a letter sent to the Awqaf Minister Dr. Hayel Dawud said that these efforts were greatly welcomed in Jerusalem and on all levels, calling for greater pressures on the Israeli government especially in relation to the Gate of Mercy which has been closed by Israeli police for no valid legal reason. Sheikh Al-Khatib also called for pressures to remove the Israeli obstacles on construction projects within Al-Aqsa Mosque.

Ar-Rai, September 25th, 2014

Judeh: The World and the Region Won't Enjoy Peace and Security in the Absence of a Solution for the Palestinian Issue

New York – Petra- Minister of Foreign and Expatriates Affairs, Nasser Judeh stressed the need for concerted efforts to counter terrorism in all of its forms.

Judeh made his remarks during his participation in the Arab foreign ministers consultative meeting which was held on the sidelines of 69th session of the UN General Assembly in New York in response to a call by Arab League Secretary-General Nabil Alaraby.

Judeh pointed to Jordan's efforts under the leadership of His Majesty King Abdullah II to fight terrorism and extremism and drying the sources of their funding, and the efforts made to enhance interfaith dialogue and to clarify the true image of Islam, which is based on moderation and tolerance and rejects terrorism and extremism.

The minister said that one of the key factors which lead to extremism is the absence of a just and comprehensive solution to the Palestinian issue, adding that the region will not enjoy peace and security without a just solution to the Palestinian issue.

The ministers discussed the latest developments in the Middle East, especially, Syria, Yemen, Libya and the Palestinian issue and the diplomatic efforts to deal with these issues.

Al-Ghad, 25th September, 2014

Political Affairs

Palestinian-Israeli Negotiations

Strategic Affairs Minister Yuval Steinitz stated that the indirect Gaza truce talks with Hamas in Cairo scheduled at the beginning of the week were unlikely to achieve a long-term solution to the situation in Gaza.

The Israeli minister who's close to Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said the talks were unlikely to achieve anything beyond agreement on certain elements of rebuilding the battered Gaza Strip.

"I don't have very high hopes for the talks in Cairo as long as Hamas won't agree to demilitarize Gaza and give up its weapons, unfortunately, I don't see it accepting these principles, so, apart from the immediate rehabilitation (of the enclave), there is no real, long-term solution to the situation in Gaza," he said.

"We are expecting tough negotiations in Cairo," an Israeli diplomatic source told Sunday Israeli site Walla! "Israel will not relinquish its security demands. No date was set for further talks beyond this week," he added.

Egypt, which has played a key role in the talks, had initially invited both sides to resume talks Wednesday but it was pulled forward because of Jewish New Year, which begins at sundown on Sept. 24 and runs into the weekend.

The negotiations are to tackle a number of unresolved issues including a Palestinian demand for a seaport and airport in Gaza, and Israel's demand for militants in the territory to disarm.

In the mean time, and fearing the fire will return during the New Year, 500 Israelis, from communities along the border with Gaza, attended a protest march Saturday night near the southern city of Sderot.

The rally was organized by members of the movement for the future of the western Negev. The demonstrators called on the government to stop neglecting the south and find a diplomatic solution to ensure that another round of rocket and tunnel attacks on communities near Gaza will not erupt.

Ad-Dustur, September 22nd, 2014

The World Not Interested in the Palestinian Issue, Israel Says

Nazareth – Barhoum Jarayissi – Sources in the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs and its UN delegate claimed that the international community “is not interested in the Palestinian issue”. The same sources said that Mahmoud Abbas’s chances of passing his initiative in the UN General Assembly are minimal. In the meantime, Israel is working on issuing UN resolutions relating to anti-Semitism.

Yedioth Ahronoth on its website, ynetnews.com, reported from these sources that they said: “The international community in the UN is not very concerned with the Palestinian issue. Their interest is focused on countering ISIS, fighting the Ebola virus, and the war in the Ukraine”. The same sources claimed that Abbas’s chances of passing his initiative for a time schedule to establish a “state of Palestine” have become slim.

The same Israeli sources claim that Abbas no longer seems capable of guaranteeing the support of nine UN Security Council states to transfer the resolution draft to the UN, and this is even before the United States has to veto this Palestinian draft and which is considered a “unilateral move” by Israel.

“Abu Mazen (Abbas) is a tight spot... the world does not have the patience to concentrate on the Palestinian issue. The only exceptions are probably some European countries which support the Palestinians such as Belgium and Norway and which harassed Israel several time. But even these states turned on themselves as they became occupied with their fear of Islam in Europe” the sources continued.

“This does not mean that there will be no pressures on Israel and threats to boycott it, but the situation is not half as bad as it used to be” the sources also said.

The same website also pointed out that there are diplomatic channels which work on passing a UN Security Council Resolution relating to Gaza and the results of the last conflict. According to what is being said in Israel, the draft of the resolution does not

include the word “demilitarizing Gaza”, but it does include a clause which forbids exporting arms into the strip. It also said that Israel accepts such a text.

On the other hand, Israel is trying to put the subject anti-Semitism on the schedule of the UN General Assembly’s next meeting early next year, 2015, which marks the 70th anniversary of the end of World War II.

Al-Ghad, September 24th, 2014

Violations

Israel Bars Muslims from Entering the Hebron Ibrahimi Mosque

The Israeli authorities will close the Ibrahimi Mosque in the West Bank city of Hebron to Muslims on Wednesday and Thursday for the Jewish Rosh Hashanah holiday, a Palestinian official has said.

"Israeli authorities notified us that the Ibrahimi Mosque would be open to Jews and closed to Muslims during the Jewish New Year holiday," Tayseer Abu Sneineh, director of religious endowments in Hebron, told Anadolu Agency.

"Visiting Jews are expected to perform Talmudic rituals inside the site," he added.

According to Abu Sneineh, at least 50 Jewish settlers – led by Israeli Transport Minister Yisrael Katz – had entered the precincts of the holy site early Wednesday.

The Israeli army, meanwhile, has stepped up its presence around the mosque with an additional 300 soldiers, Abu Sneineh added.

Ad-Dustur, September 22nd, 2014

Israeli Desecrations of the Aqsa Mosque Continue while Knesset Committee Demands Securing Jewish Rituals in the Mosque

Throughout the week, the accidents of Israeli desecration of Al-Aqsa mosque continued unabated. Settlers guided by extremist Jewish Rabbis stormed the mosque several times and tried to provoke the Muslim worshippers.

In one incident a Jewish settler deliberately drank wine in the sanctuary of the mosque provoking the anger of the worshippers, and in another incident a settler tried to break through to the Dome of the Rock platform before being prevented by the mosque guards.

On Monday September 22nd 72 Israeli women soldiers stormed the mosque with guides who told them mythic stories about the history of the alleged Temple there. This occurred simultaneously as 30 other settlers broke into the mosque's sanctuary organizing a tour in its platforms. The occupation's police forces tightened security around the mosque and prevented women from entering it as angry reactions began to rise as a result of the continued desecrations of the mosque.

The occupation's authorities also announced that it will make special arrangements for the Jewish New Year. In the mean time the Knesset Interior Committee demanded from the Israeli police to secure the settlers' Talmudic rituals in Al-Aqsa, and to put a stop to the Palestinian protests against storming the mosque.

The issue was raised in a special hearing of the committee in which it blamed the police for not permitting the Jewish settlers to perform their rituals in the platforms and yards of the mosque.

The police have proved to be incapable of protecting and treating fairly Jewish visitors to the Temple Mount, Knesset Interior Committee chairwoman Miri Regev commented.

Al-Hayat Al-Jadeedah, September 23rd, 2014

United Nations

Israel Prevents UN Official from Entering Occupied Palestinian Territories

The Israeli authorities have so far refused to grant access to a UN official planning to visit the occupied Palestinian territories (OPT) between 20 and 28 September, a UN statement said.

The new UN Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in the OPT, Indonesian diplomat Makarim Wibisono, is set to undertake his first official visit to the region this week.

The statement said that Wibisono will gather first-hand information on the current human rights situation in the OPT following the July-August Israeli war, which resulted in at least 1,473 Palestinian civilians killed, including some 501 children.

During his mission, the Special Rapporteur will still meet with Palestinian officials, religious and community leaders and civil society representatives, among others.

According to the statement, Wibisono will discuss the human rights situation across the occupied Palestinian territories with a focus on the situation for Palestinian children, in particular, and the long-term impacts of violence, conflict and occupation on their fundamental human rights.

"The Special Rapporteur will present an oral update to the General Assembly in October 2014 on his findings and conclusions, and report fully on his mission with recommendations, to the Human Rights Council in March 2015," the statement said.

In addition, a press conference will be held at the end of the Special Rapporteur's visit to the region on Sunday 28 September at 10:30 am, at the Fairmont Heliopolis hotel in Cairo.

Ar-Rai, September 20th, 2014

UNRWA Warns from Bedouin Relocation Plan

The United Nations refugee agency for Palestine issued a statement on Sunday calling on the international community to step up its opposition of an Israel plan to transfer thousands of Bedouin from the central West Bank to a new town near Jericho Haaretz newspaper reported.

Implementation of the plan would "give rise to concerns that it amounts to a 'forcible transfer' in contravention of the Fourth Geneva Convention," said Pierre Krähenbühl, Commissioner General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency.

"It might also make way for further Israeli illegal settlement expansion, further compromising the viability of a two state-solution," Krähenbühl added.

The intention of Israel's Civil Administration to expel some 12,500 Bedouin from land east of Jerusalem and resettle them near Jericho in the yet-to-be-created town of Nueima was revealed in two plans published over the past few weeks.

"I urge the Israeli authorities not to proceed with the transfer of these communities and I also urge the donor and state community to take a firm stand against it," Krähenbühl said.

"The humanitarian impact of the planned transfer could be immense."

Haaretz had previously reported that the project aiming at the relocation of one tribe was expanded to include 12,500 Bedouins from the Jahalin, Kaabneh and Rashaida tribes from areas which were selected for building new settlements.

Reports

Israeli Racism and the Defilement of Aramaic Heritage

Barhoum Jarayissi- It is very difficult for a week to pass on Israeli policy makers without provoking an event or issuing a decision reflecting the racism with which the 1948 Palestinians are targeted. Other than the policy enacted over the last few years, Israel's Interior Minister Gideon Saar signed a resolution of the government of Israel regarding the implementation of the "Aramaic-Christian" nationality into the civil registry. This, in fact, was not done due to the existence and demands of a large "Aramaic" segment of society, but in response to the demands of a marginal segment of individuals who wish for the Christian Arabs to serve in the occupation's army. As for the second decision, it is the Israeli High Court of Justice's approval of a dangerously racist law allowing the Jewish town to prevent Arabs from living in them. Both decisions reflect the Zionist mentality which only grows more aggressively racist by the day.

Three years ago the Israeli government set up plans to incorporate Arab Christian young men into the Israeli Army but great national consciousness of the 1948 Palestinians caused the plan to fail miserably. This is not Israel's first attempt to tear down the 1948 Palestinians into various sects and ethnic groups, in the past it invented the "Druze nationality", and then this was followed by the invention of the "Bedouin nationality". All this was done to attract the young men of these segments of Palestinian society to serve in the Israeli army. The Israeli government failed each time, and even the meager achievements of the past experienced great losses over the past few years.

The recognition of the "Aramaic nationality" came in response to the demands of a small forum comprised of individuals who call for the recruitment of Christians into the Israeli Army. This forum devised an innovation which states: "The Christians are not Arabs". This forum and others like it are moved by extremist right wing political movements, but the general impression among the people is that just as the recruitment and all other previous distinction plans failed, this plan will also fail even if it found people responsive to it such as that marginal forum, defiling the good name of the Aramaic people, an ancient and noble people who will not be influenced by such defilements.

Also we have finally seen the exposure of the Israeli judicial system for what it is: a system which was never far from the racist Zionist mentality which rules over Israel. Even if there are some negligible exceptions to this mentality, the Zionist extreme right is striving to obliterate even these exceptions. The Israeli High Court of Justice ruled by a

majority vote the approval of a law which was voted on in the Knesset three years ago. This law allows Jewish municipalities to prevent the residence of any Arab families which seeks residence there through forming “Acceptance Committees” to look into whether any applying family is suitable for the Zionist cultural atmospheres of these towns and municipalities. This law, by the way, can even apply to Sephardim (eastern) Jews, and there was a case of an eastern Jewish family being denied residency under this law two years ago.

No research effort is needed to determine the racist nature of this law. Even the judges who approved it did not deny the discrimination permeating in it, but they considered this discrimination a right for the inhabitants of these municipalities. This means that Israel’s top legislative body has become unabashedly clear about its acceptance and endorsement of racism. This is not the first decision of its kind, the very same court previously approved a citizenship law which prevented the repatriation of Palestinian families in the 1948 territories. This law threatens to break thousands of Palestinian families apart.

The list of Israeli racist laws is endless. There is, for example a law approved by the Knesset in 2008 which refused to consider the decision of Jewish National Fund (Keren Kayemeth LeIsrael) – a Zionist organization which owns 13% of the lands of Palestine occupied in 1948- to prohibit the sale or even the lease of these lands to Arabs a racist decision. This, like many other Israeli legislations, are laws the like of which no longer exist in the world or even in its modern history, even under the most viciously racist of regimes.

The recognition of the Aramaic nationality is closely connected with this decision to deprive Arabs from living in Jewish municipalities. This is the essential racist rule upon which Zionism is based, and without which it loses the very reason for its existence. This rule was once based on the fear that the Palestinians of 1948 would threaten the absolute Jewish majority in the “Jewish” state, but this threat has ceased to exist for decades and for many reasons. The fear over the last two decades shifted from the “Jewish majority” issue to the issue of fear for the majority of an absolutely right-wing policy. The right wing politicians fear that Palestinians one day may become a voting force to be reckoned with in the Israeli political arena, and there was an instance in 1992 when they did influence the results of the votes to give the Israeli middle and left wings the majority despite their recession before the right wing –and the extreme right wing in particular. Once racist motives multiply, they become more vicious and dangerous.

Al-Ghad, September 20th, 2014

Netanyahu's Government to Decide on Rerouting the West Bank Separation Barrier

The cabinet on Sunday is set to debate the rerouting of 3 kilometers of the security barrier in the Gush Etzion near Battir, a World Heritage Site.

It is reviewing the barrier's route at the order of the High Court of Justice, in a move that forces the government to make a public stand on a contentious diplomatic issue that has been mostly dormant in recent years, the West Bank security barrier.

The route runs through national park lands of the Nahal Refaim Valley and the ancient agricultural terraces of the Palestinian village of Battir, which are more than 2,000 years old. The village is also the site of Bar Kochba's final battle against the Romans.

Palestinians, settlers, and environmentalists oppose the route and petitioned the High Court of Justice against it. Palestinians oppose the barrier in principle, because they believe it is a land grab, and have also objected to this three-kilometer stretch.

In hopes of blocking construction of the barrier near Battir, the Palestine Liberation Organization sought help from the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization, whose World Heritage Committee registered the village's ancient terraces in June to the "state of Palestine."

The Palestinians, the Gush Etzion Regional Council, and environmental groups, have all petitioned the High Court.

On July 29th the court ordered the government to review the issue by October 2, particularly in light of the diplomatic implications of Battir's new status as a World Heritage Site. It noted a review was also needed because over the last eight years the route was altered for environmental and quality of life reasons.

The Israeli Ministry of Public Security claimed that the damage caused by the wall to the agricultural terraces and irrigation system of Battir would be minimal.

Haaretz newspaper reported that the government intends to go through with the route as planned despite the expected damages to the site.

Ad-Diyar, September 20th, 2014

Translations

Occupation and Settlement Destroy the State

Haaretz – Uri Misgav – What is really expected from a person who lives here and who makes up his mind at one point that he does not wish to participate in a project of occupation and settlement? What do they want from him? This is a serious question and I demand for an answer for it from both the Right and the Left. This is a human being who was born and raised in Israel and who fulfilled all of his duties to it, and on the political level he believes strongly that the project of occupation and settlement harms and corrupts the state, and will eventually lead to its destruction. He does not want, or at least he is morally incapable, of participating in this injustice and this stupidity. It saddens his heart and contradicts his logic. He is also looking for horizons of actions which allow him to live at peace with himself, so what should he do?

He no longer wants to hear about a “political course” or a “political horizon” or about “our hand extended with peace” or about “a two-state vision” or about the “Bar Ilan speech”. Forty seven years have passed and the occupation is still here, and time after time he sees how the left and center parties make government coalitions with right wing parties which only dedicate its existence. He has despaired from the parliamentary field and is looking for ways of action. He knows that his position is the position of the minority, and that the factor of the population stands against him, and that the whole affair has probably been decided. But he just wants to contribute his own share of it. He wants to live at peace with himself. He sees that we only live once and that life is too short to waste on adding to the depth of the occupation.

It seems to him at times that he contributes to this occupation from his own tax money, but evading taxes is a crime, and tax rebellions are impractical. If he wants to boycott products made in the settlements they will soon explain to him that a boycott is a terrible thing to do and who should remember this more than the Jews? If he is unprepared to make shows in the settlements the he is told that it is impermissible at all to reject full citizens while being nourished on government aid. If he joins a human rights movement then he is accused of damaging his country’s reputation and public relations. If he works on the recruitment of foreign support or encourages international intervention then he is a petty Jew who serves those anti-Semitic “others”.

Any kind of violent resistance does not occur to his mind, of course, this is not his way and these are not his values. After a long bewilderment he chooses the narrowest and most basic of civil resistance terms and announces: I am out of the game. I, the petty one, will no longer participate in the physical and intellectual occupation of another people. I will not persecute them, I will not deprive them of their rights, and I will not help in stripping them of their lands. I will not bombard them from the air and I will not raid

their houses under the cover of the night. I will not make their lives bitter through road blocks and I will not disperse their protests with rubber bullets and other weapons. I will not blackmail them to turn them into spies and I will not gather any intelligence data which enable me to do these things until judgment day. I simply do not want and am no longer capable of participating in all of this.

They will then attack him from both the Right and the Left. They will curse him in anger and they will demand that he is interrogated and put to trial. They would explain to him that he is destroying democracy and that obedience is a supreme value. But he does not understand how they can seriously tell him about democracy in the shadow of a regime which keeps 4 million Palestinians under siege without any basic human rights. He does not understand how can blind obedience occupy such a sacred station especially in a state which supports the punishment of war criminals who obeyed military commands, and greatly respects the saints of the world's nations who refused to carry out these orders.

He goes back to asking: What is he to do?! He does not want to leave, he does not want to commit suicide. He wants to live in peace with his own conscience in the State of Israel without aiding in the occupation and settlement project. Help him please, dear readers: is there a legitimate way of doing so?

Ad-Dustur, September 21st 2014

Deportations

Israel Begins with the Relocation of 22 Bedouin Communities

Occupied Jerusalem – Al-Arab Al-Yawm- Walid Abu Sarhan- The occupation authorities commenced with their plans to relocate Bedouin communities in East Jerusalem through storming and photographing the houses. This occurred only a few days after delivering collective evacuation and demolition notices.

Hani Halabieh, an anti-settlement activist, explained how dozens of Israeli army helicopter-assisted squads accompanied by a bulldozer stormed the Bedouin communities in East Jerusalem. They photographed the premises in preparation for demolishing them.

These Bedouin communities fall into an area C according to the Oslo accord's classifications. This means that these areas fall under the administrative and security jurisdiction of the occupation authorities. Areas classified as A fall under the administrative and security jurisdiction of the Palestinian authorities while areas

classified as B fall under the security jurisdiction of Israel while being administrated by the Palestinian authority.

Israeli sources have recently revealed that the Israeli authorities are working on emptying area C from Palestinians, restricting the Palestinian existence in areas A and B which are already overpopulated with the possibility of giving these two areas the name of the “State of Palestine” in the future.

Al-Arab Al-Yawm, September 21st, 2014

Arrests

Israel Arrested 260 Juveniles in Jerusalem since June

Haaretz newspaper reported that the occupation authorities have arrested 260 juvenile Palestinians (under 18 year olds) dozens of whom are below the age of 12, the age of juvenile legal responsibility.

The report stated: “The involvement of minors in violent incidents in East Jerusalem is nothing new, but since this summer’s riots’ outbreak it has grown to unprecedented proportions. In recent weeks 260 minors have been arrested and even small children have begun taking part in the disturbances.”

“On Sunday two weeks ago, hours after the funeral of 16-year old Mohammed Sunuqrut, a few dozen masked individuals stormed the gas station on the seam line between the Issawiya and French Hill neighborhoods. They set gas pumps on fire and raided the convenience store”, the report added.

The report continued: “Earlier this week six minors, ages 13-15, were arrested on suspicion of carrying out the arson and looting. Their families deny the teens’ involvement and say the police’s so-called evidence is based on admissions extorted under pressure and accusations made by other children”.

The families of the arrested minors accuse the occupation police of treating them harshly, lamenting about the fate awaiting their children after they are released from prison. The father of a 13-year-old boy who served a sentence in Hasharon prison said he returned a different child. “He doesn’t want to go to school, doesn’t want to work, started smoking, won’t obey me, does whatever he wants,” the father says.

Attorney Lea Tsemel, who represents dozens of juvenile suspects, slams the police and legal system’s treatment of them, describing it as harsh and vindictive. She says police

almost automatically ask the court to place the children in custody for long periods, even when they're suspected of negligible offenses – and the court usually does so.

The chances of a Palestinian minor being released to house arrest or under other restrictions are slim, Tsemel says. This is because the parole officers who interview them generally don't speak Arabic and don't understand the circumstances. Consequently they issue "negative reports," says Tsemel, and the court refuses to release the minors.

alquds-online.org, September 20th, 2014

Illegal Settlement

886 Dunams to Build Skyscrapers in Jerusalem

The Israeli Housing Cabinet approved giving 886 Dunams to build several large commercial buildings in Jerusalem.

Israel's Channel 2 which reported the news explained that 12 skyscrapers will be built in the area. The buildings will include hotels, offices, company headquarters, and residential and commercial buildings.

The ministers of finance and housing Yair Lapid and Uri Ariel both said the project is of great importance for Jerusalem. Lapid said: "I think that all parts of the government believe in a strong Jerusalem and in promoting Israel as a leading, innovative and modern capital". Lapid added that "we will keep promoting the developing of the area and the housing possibilities in it, for our aspiration is for the people who will come and work at this business center to also live nearby".

Al-Quds, September 24th, 2014