

RELEASE IN PART  
B6

**From:** Sullivan, Jacob J <SullivanJJ@state.gov>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 2, 2010 11:46 AM  
**To:** H  
**Subject:** Fw: Barkat Press Conference Summary  
**Attachments:** King's Garden Press Release - March 2 2010.docx

Not bad

**From:** Rudman, Mara  
**To:** Sullivan, Jacob J; Abedin, Huma  
**Sent:** Tue Mar 02 11:30:29 2010  
**Subject:** FW: Barkat Press Conference Summary

fyi

**From:** Rubinstein, Daniel H  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 02, 2010 11:20 AM  
**To:** Feltman, Jeffrey D; Hale, David M; Connelly, Maura; Rudman, Mara; Goldberger, Thomas H; Cunningham, James B; 'dshapiro'  
**Cc:** Schlicher, Ronald L; Kumar, Prem G.; Sachar, Alon (NEA/IPA); Irwin, Matthew T; Marchese, Gregory M; Reed, Julia G  
**Subject:** FW: Barkat Press Conference Summary

Caveat – this is not a transcript

**From:** Pilz, Amanda C  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 02, 2010 6:19 PM  
**To:** Rubinstein, Daniel H; Marchese, Gregory M; Waters, John R  
**Subject:** Barkat Press Conference Summary

In a press conference held at 3 p.m. local time and covered by Israeli media as well as Al-Jazeera, Al-Arabiya, CNN, Al-Hurrah, the Egyptian Nile News, and Al-Quds, Jerusalem Mayor Nir Barkat briefed on his redevelopment plans for the East Jerusalem neighborhood of al-Bustan, located on the western edge of Silwan, directly south of Jerusalem's Old City and the al-Aqsa Mosque.

In the course of the press conference, Barkat acknowledged he had been asked by Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu to delay formal submission of the municipality's al-Bustan plans to the Local Planning Committee pending further conversations with al-Bustan's Arab residents, saying, **"Of course I accepted the Prime Minister's request, and I decided to delay the discussion of the Gan ha-Melech [al-Bustan] plan, and continue discussions with the local residents."**

Barkat briefed the attached talking points on his plans for al-Bustan/Gan ha-Melech, emphasizing the commercial and tourist potential of the site, and the need for improved infrastructure and public buildings in the area. He did not directly reference the issue of what home demolitions the plan might entail, or what relocation options were available for al-Bustan's current residents.

Following this briefing, Barkat answered questions from the press. These included queries on:

- *Whether the municipality had considered the political sensitivity of the announcement?* Barkat responded that the city's goal was to benefit of residents, city, and tourists, and that the municipality was not going to allow sensitivities, or those opposed to project, to stop progress toward that goal;
- *Why the municipality had not been providing social services, other than home demolition, to the al-Bustan neighborhood?* Barkat replied that service provision was inadequate because al-Bustan's homes were not built legally or to standard, and said that his redevelopment proposal would allow the city to provide better services;
- *How the municipality would pay for the plan?* Barkat said that funding "shouldn't be a problem," and that once the project started, the city would be able to secure funding for it.
- *Whether PM Netanyahu's request meant the failure of the plan?* Barkat said he respected the PM's request to give more time to work out issue with residents.

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**Amanda Pilz**

Deputy Political Chief

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