

June 5, 2019

Press Release

Following approval of the cable car by the National Infrastructure Committee, Emek Shaveh asks Attorney General to prevent transitional government from making a decision on politically motivated project

On Monday, June 3rd the National Infrastructure Committee (NIC) approved submitting the plan for a cable car to the Old City for final approval by the government. The committee's decision was to be expected once most of the objections to the plan had been rejected by the special investigator appointed on behalf of the committee.

Emek Shaveh's public objection, signed by Israeli intellectuals and hundreds of residents, concerned the irreparable damage that the construction of a cable car would wreak on the landscape and environment surrounding the Old City and to the residents of Silwan. In the objection we also argued that the cable car does not offer a solution to the problems of transportation to the Old City.

Additional objections were submitted by other organizations such as the Israel Association of Architects, the Society for the Preservation of Heritage Sites in Israel, 15 minutes, an organization for public transportation users, Moreshet Derech - the tour guide organization, Israel's leading environmental watchdog, Adam Teva v'Din, the Foundation for Karaite Judaism and others.

Besides destroying the view of the Ben Hinnom Valley and the Old City walls along its planned route, the cable car is a political project intended to strengthen the Elad

Foundation's hold on Silwan and is central to development plans by the Israeli government and settler organizations for East Jerusalem.

Because of the highly political nature of the plan, Emek Shaveh has asked the Attorney General to postpone a government discussion on the plan until after the elections. The cost of the project is two hundred million shekels and it is only appropriate that a project with such great budgetary, political and environmental implications would be advanced by the next government and not by the current transitional government.

In the past, the Israeli High Court of Justice has ruled the following on transitional governments: **“This reality in which a government serves as a transitional government by virtue of the law, but without enjoying the trust of the people, has legal consequences... during this period, the government is obliged to exercise restraint in all matters that are not a matter of necessity or urgency during the transitional period.”**

In addition to approaching the Attorney General, we are continuing our public campaign against the cable car together with the many partners to this struggle, and are looking into possible legal avenues.

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