
URGENT: Givat Hamatos Tender for 1257 HU Open for Bidding

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Today, the tender for construction on Givat Hamatos has been opened for bidding and will close on January 18, 2021, two days before the Inauguration of US president-elect Joe Biden. The opening of the bidding has been postponed three times since its publication in February. Originally designated for 1077 housing units, the **current tender is for the construction of 1257 housing units.** While the tender has been opened and its booklet for contractors published, the Israel Land Authority and Ministry of Housing are not yet accepting bids, which is most likely a technical issue and will be accepting them momentarily.

The opening of the tender significantly decreases the potentiality to effectively block Israeli building in the area. Concerted opposition and pressure to freeze the tender is therefore vital in this limited window of time.

If carried through, Givat Hamatos would become the first new settlement in East Jerusalem in 20 years. Located in a particularly strategic area, Givat Hamatos (along with Har Homa E and E1) has constituted a longstanding international red line due its impact on the prospects of a viable two-state framework with two capitals in Jerusalem. By creating a contiguous Israeli built-up area between the existing settlements of Gilo and Har Homa, construction in Givat Hamatos will serve to seal off the southern perimeter of East Jerusalem from Bethlehem and the southern part of the West Bank, while isolating the Palestinian neighborhood of Beit Safafa.

