

**RELEASE
IN FULL**

From: Mills, Cheryl D <MillsCD@state.gov>
Sent: Saturday, March 13, 2010 9:00 PM
To: H
Subject: FW: (AP) Israel to investigate settlement announcement during Biden visit

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From: O'Neill, Douglas S
Sent: Saturday, March 13, 2010 6:07 PM
To: NEWS-Mahogany; NEWS-NEA
Cc: SES-O_Shift-III
Subject: (AP) Israel to investigate settlement announcement during Biden visit

JERUSALEM - (AP) Israel's premier has ordered an investigation into how government officials announced plans for a new Jewish housing project in east Jerusalem during a visit by Vice President Joe Biden. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's office said he ordered the probe late Saturday after he met with top Cabinet ministers. While Biden was visiting earlier this week, Israel's Interior Ministry said it approved plans to build 1,600 homes for Jews in disputed east Jerusalem. Biden condemned the announcement, which overshadowed his visit. Netanyahu has apologized for the poor timing of the announcement, but given no sign he will cancel the construction orders. The Palestinians claim east Jerusalem as their capital, and Israel's annexation of the area is not internationally recognized.

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