Designing a Green East-West Joint Between Israel and Palestine: ECOWEEK Workshop information

About the workshop

Once a final status agreement between Israelis and Palestinians is reached, there will be a need to re-link the two different states and capitals through formal border crossing terminals. Jerusalem is therefore bound to become a central joint between the sides, and as such, major crossings will be situated in it. If carefully planned, these terminals could become the platforms allowing connectivity, exchange and normalization in between the two peoples.

Coming from this point of view- of sustainable co-existence- makes the objective of creating a green and sustainable terminal a natural one. SAYA, in partnership with Palestinian architects, have suggested a specific location and basic layout for such a border crossing terminal at the French Hill junction in North Jerusalem.

The aim of the workshop will be to further develop this initial scheme into a detailed design. The main focus would be to address its environmental performance and create a building plan and design which are sensitive to the environment at the same degree they aim to be sensitive to their future users.

About the site: The French Hill junction

The East-West terminal is proposed to be situated between two inter-city roads: Begin Road (North-South Israeli route) leading to R.443 (that will become a Palestinian road according to the Geneva Accord, and will also enable Israeli passage) and to Tel-Aviv, with Road 1 (Palestinian) leading to Jericho and Amman (through R.437), as well as to the Eastern ring road. The chosen location, an open space North-West of the Shu'afat – French Hill junction offers a great opportunity to create a facility that functions not only as an inter-state terminal, but also plays an important role in the urban environment on both sides of the border.

Firstly, its location at the intersection of main Israeli and Palestinian inter-city roads allows easy access from both sides of the future border both from within and outside Jerusalem. It therefore has potential to serve not only as a pedestrian crossing, but also as a crossing for vehicles, tourists and goods. Secondly, as the site is located in adjacency to the route of the palestinian Road 60, this crossing facility will adequately serve the needs of East-Jerusalem residents commuting daily to work in West Jerusalem. Thirdly, the proximity of the site to the light rail station (on the Israeli side of the border) will link it to local transportation systems and commuting routes. Lastly, the facility can function not only as a crossing terminal, but also as a major urban joint between East and West Jerusalem.

Image list

1. Image 1: Site location- aerial view
2. Image 2: Background information on site
3. Image 3: Proposed schematic structure for the terminal
4. Image 4: Terminal diagram
5. Image 5: Terminal programatic scheme